

Chapter IV

THE ESSENCE OF MAN

The ‘*Qalb*’ and the ‘*Xin*’ are the respective subject matter in Al-Ghazzali’s and Mencius’ expositions on the study of the man. Both literally translated as the ‘heart’, the ‘*Qalb*’ and the ‘*Xin*’ have their respective semantics related to human mind and intellect. The chapter seeks to define the role of the ‘*Qalb*’ and the ‘*Xin*’ as well as human intellect within the inner development of man. Their possibilities in commanding a person towards perfection will be hinted.

4.1 Al-Ghazzali’s Three Main Constitution of Man

Al-Ghazzali tries to explain man’s psychological make-up with a simple concept, namely the “three armies of soul”. In *Ihya Ulum-Id-Din*, Al-Ghazzali addressed *Greed*, *Anger* and *Intellect* as the ‘three armies of human soul’.⁹² *Greed* can also be termed as human will or desires. *Anger* is the power that exercises on behalf of *Greed* i.e. the attempt to one’s desires. *Intellect* sits in the third army of soul, and turns out the most important of the three interrelating inner powers of a person.

The third army of soul the *Intellect*, if it is studied in details, comprised of a consolidated power of five visible and invisible capabilities of man. The visible capabilities of man comprised of the five senses i.e. hearing, sight, smell, taste and touch. The invisible capabilities of man are closely related to human mind i.e. the

⁹² Maulana, Fazal-Ul-Karim (trans.), *Imam Ghazzali’s Ihya Ulum-Id-Din (The Revival of Religious Learnings Book 3)* (Lahore: Lahore, Kazi Publication, n.d.) p. 5.

power of idea, the power of thought, the power of memory, the power of retention and lastly, the ability to consolidate the above-mentioned powers. These capabilities are amazing because they make man a unique being. They are the secrets behind human *Intellect*. Al-Ghazzali gives a number of illustrations on how the three armies of soul interrelate.

One of Al-Ghazzali's illustrations depicts *Greed* as a tax officer of a town, with *Anger* its federal cop, *Intellect* its minister and *Soul* the king.⁹³ *Greed* the tax officer would become self-obsessed and extend its power beyond its boundary. The power misuse of *Greed* should be guarded, lest the credibility of the government be jeopardized. *Anger* the federal police dutifully guards on the former but it is beyond its power to rule over *Greed*. Hence the king, *Soul*, would have to summon his chief minister *Intellect* to check and execute over the entire government system. *Intellect* is obliged to fix both *Greed* and *Anger* in their places and maintain their performance.

Another illustration of Al- Ghazzali depicts *Intellect* as a rider, *Greed* as a horse and *Anger* as a hunting dog. An inexperienced rider cannot keep his horse and hunting dog in his service. It is when the rider gains more skills and learns to be more tactful with his horse and hunting dog that he may gradually have the command over them. Similarly, when the *Intellect* is mature, *Greed* and *Anger* will have to submit to it. When it is so, a person would be enhanced from within. In brief, *Intellect* safeguards a person from being ruined by the over-raging of *Greed* and *Anger*. It also enables a person to seek for true knowledge and appropriate conduct; above all, the illumination of the true knowledge to God.

⁹³ Ibid., p 6.

Al-Ghazzali gives a significant emphasis on the role of human intellect in religious learning and moral perfection. The *Intellect* ('Aql') is human discernment over the true nature of things of the material world as well as the power to understand the secrets of transcendental knowledge. When a person is guided by his *Intellect* to seek after knowledge of God and spiritual truth, he is depositing treasures into the 'Qalb' ⁹⁴, precisely, himself. In short, Al-Ghazzali suggests that the "Qalb", or the "self" is endowed with an inherent yearning for an ideal, which it strives to attain and realize.

4.1.1 The 'Qalb' and Human Intellect

Al-Ghazzali discusses the essential of man, the self, in four related terms, i.e. the "Qalb" (literally, the heart); the "Ruh" (literally, the soul); the "Nafs" (literally, the desire) and the "Aql" (literally, the intellect or reason). Each term has two layers of meaning, of which one of the meanings refers to the spiritual nature of man.

The "Qalb" is the physical heart as well as the spiritual entity. It does not only govern over the physical body but also the immaterial existence. The "Ruh" controls over the sensory organs and other limbs of the body. It is the "life" a person. It has a second meaning referring not the "life" but the immaterial subtle entity, the "soul" of a person. The "Nafs" refers to the passion or lower self, consisting of greed, anger and other evil attributes. It could be a person's greatest enemy in his strives towards perfection. It has a second meaning, also referring to the

⁹⁴ Literally translated as the "heart", which has a close connotation with the "mind" or even the person in totality, the "self".

soul of a person as described above. When the “*Nafs*” removes passion and is at peace, it is a satisfied soul, termed as *Nafs Mutmainna*. If it remains a party of evil as in its first meaning, it becomes a self-accusing soul, the *Nafs Lawwamah*. The “*Aql*” is the intellect to comprehend things of the material world. The second meaning of “*Aql*” is the power to understand the secrets of different learning.⁹⁵

In Al-Ghazzali's ethics, the study of self is usually the study of the ‘*Qalb*’. The “*Qalb*” is like a pond gathering waters from the various sources into its little entrapment. It also resembles a dartboard that captures the darts. It can also be imagined as a ballroom keeping its people with closed door.⁹⁶ In short, it is the center where knowledge, intellect and thoughts⁹⁷ work together to govern over the region of body. The body, in return, feeds the center with messages gathered by its agents, e.g. the five senses. In fact, the psychophysical tie which exists between the heart and the body, namely the heart, influences the body and vice versa; makes possible for a person to yield to its inherent nature and act morally.⁹⁸

The ‘*Qalb*’ determines man's choice in life with the *Intellect* (*Aql*) submitted to it.⁹⁹ As early as the Platonic era, philosophers had suggested that human *Intellect* distinguish man from other animals. It endows a person with the capability to contemplate and differentiate. Moreover, human *Intellect* develops along with a

⁹⁵ Maulana, Fazal-Ul-Karim (trans.), *Imam Ghazzali's Ihya Ulum-Id-Din (The Revival of Religious Learnings Book 3)* (Lahore: Lahore, Kazi Publication, n.d.) pp. 2-3.

⁹⁶ Muhd. Labib Ahmad, *Penyakit-penyakit Hati* (Kelantan: Syarikat Dian Sdn Bhd., 1979) p.25.

⁹⁷ Ibid., p. 10.

⁹⁸ Obermann, p. 161 in Zolondek, L., *Book XX Of Al-Ghazzali's Ihya ' Ulum Al-Din* (Leiden, E.J. Brill, 1963) p. 3.

⁹⁹ Pawiz Morewedg(ed.), *Islam, Philosophy and Mysticism* (New York: Caravan Books Delmer, New York, 1981) pp. 167-170.

person's life experience. A mature and experienced man is expected to exercise his *Intellect* better over his passion and action.¹⁰⁰

4.1.2 The role of the "*Judgment of the Heart*" in one's moral decision

In the previous discussion, it is learnt that a person's *Intellect* guides him towards grasping knowledge. It also watches over the proper limit of the nature of passion or the carnal soul. However, the *Intellect* purely guards over the cognitive tasks without the ability to remove or change the bad nature of man, a process named as "*dabi*".¹⁰¹ The faculty capable of doing so is the faculty of "*Justice*", i.e. the "*Judgment of human Heart*".

The "*Judgment of the Heart*" is sometimes named by Al-Ghazzali as the "motive of religion (*baith ad-din*)" while the demands of desire and anger he terms the "motive of passions (*baith al-hawa*)". The two motives are at war with each other in the soul of every sane adult human being.¹⁰² The fight between the two ensures man's continuous striving towards his perfection.

In actual fact, the "*Judgment of the Heart*" is sometimes called as the fourth constitution of man, which Al-Ghazzali has introduced to explain the idea of a moderating power (*qudra*) that balances the use of man's *Intellect*, *Desire* and

¹⁰⁰ Read on the full accounts on the "Four layers of meaning of human intellect" in Maulana, Fazal-Ul-Karim (trans.), *Imam Ghazzali's Ihya Ulum-Id-Din (The Revival of Religious Learnings Book 3)* (Lahore: Lahore, Kazi Publication, n.d.) pp. 113-114.

¹⁰¹ Quesem, Muhammad Abul, *The Ethics of Al-Ghazali: A Composite Ethics in Islam* (Petaling Jaya: Muhammad Abul Quesem, 1975) pp. 50-51.

¹⁰² Ibid., p. 51.

Anger.¹⁰³ The “*Judgment of the Heart*” is not purely cognitive, for it neither represses nor fulfills the demands of man’s *Desire* and *Anger* with reasons. The “*Judgment of the Heart*” is an ability that moderates within man to guard over the balance of man’s three main constitution.

This “*Judgment of the Heart*” will determine on the state of the heart, prior to a person’s will and ability, which results in an outward action. Parviz Morewedge, deriving from his detailed study on the texts of *Ihya Ulum-Id-Din*¹⁰⁴, concludes that Al-Ghazzali has provided a description of the psychological sequence of stages preceding a man’s action. The sequence of stages is as follows¹⁰⁵:

i. the *Thought (khatir)*; ii. the *Desire (raghbah)*; iii. the “*Judgment of the heart*” (*itiqad, hukm al-qalb*); iv. The *Will (iradah)*; v. the *Ability (qudrah)*; iv. the *Act or Action*. [Refer to the Appendix I for Chart (A)]

The first three stages reveal the state of a person’s heart that forms a motive. The motive (*baith*) can be countered by a counter-motive (*sarif*); followed by a second motive and its counter-motives; and so forth. Man is held responsible when the heart is struggling in these stages. It is because that the final motive formed at the end of these three stages will press for an action, whether a virtuous act or a vicious act. [Refer to the Appendix II for the illustrations.]

Al-Ghazzali concludes that the resolution of the conflict depends on the relative strength and weaknesses of the motives. The motives depends in turn to the

¹⁰³ Ibid., p. 59

¹⁰⁴ For further reading, one may refer to the chapter entitled “Will or Intention” in Book 4 of the *Imam Ghazzali’s Ihya Ulum-Id-Din (The Revival of Religious Learnings)*.

attributes of the heart, whether of the virtuous or the vicious attributes. A man who is open for correction will adopt the nobler motive.

In the process of decision-making, a person at times faces the question of choice (*ikhtiyar*) that he has to make. When the person weighs between the many choices, some moments of hesitation (*taraddud*) take place. Hence, if an action requires of hesitation and moral choice of a person, such action is described as an *Elective* action (*fi'l ikhtiyari*). For an *Elective* action, knowledge plays a deciding role to lead a man to good behaviors or evil behaviors. It is good if a man adhere himself to good knowledge, knowledge that is praiseworthy (*mahmud*) and not knowledge that is blameworthy (*madhmum*). The praiseworthy thought is believed to come from the divine, known as *ilham*, or Godly inspiration. Blameworthy thoughts are known as *waswas*, or temptation, and their source is of the devil. Choosing between the good and evil is thus a choice of adhering to God or otherwise.

In Al-Ghazzali's classification, besides the *Elective* actions, there are also actions that are *Natural* (*fil tabii*) and actions that are *Voluntary* (*fil iradi*).¹⁰⁶ The *Natural* act does not involve any hesitation or question of choices. They are naturally carried out for example, action like reaching out one's hand to touch the other without any ulterior intention. The *Voluntary* act might involve some hesitation but it definitely does not give rise to the question of choice. A *Voluntary* act could be as immediate as the act of closing one's eye when threatened by a pointed instrument. Unlike the elective act, a *Voluntary* act is an act when there is no room for the

¹⁰⁵ Parviz, Morewedge (ed.), *Islam Philosophy and Mysticism* (New York: Caravan Books Delmer, 1981) p. 167.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid., p. 163.

question of moral deliberation or moral choice. It is not an act of will as it is a response to its stimulating cause.

4.2 Mencius's Three Main Constitution of Man

Unlike the Platonic dualism of good and evil in the West, Confucius laid down a 3-layered division within the human person that regulate one's ethical choices, i.e. the 'Yu' (欲, *Desire*), the 'Ren' (仁, *Benevolence*), and the 'Zhi' (智, *Intellect*).¹⁰⁷ The three powers, however, if given choices of priorities should be of different levels i.e. the 'Ren' comes before the 'Yu' and the 'Zhi' comes before both the 'Ren' and the 'Yu'. It is to be notified that even though the 'Zhi' should logically rule over the 'Ren' in such structure, the 'Zhi' is not any sovereign than the 'Ren' for it was supposed to operate in favor of the 'Ren'.

Confucius anchored his ethics on the Learning of Benevolence (*Renxue*) on the basis of the above rationale. Mencius' teaching no doubt, inherited the framework of the *Renxue* but he took the freedom to expound on the possibilities of human heart or mind, the 'Xin'.¹⁰⁸

The three divisions of human nature in the Confucius cum Mencius framework should be examined before the discussion gets complicated. The 'Yu' (*Desire*), 'Ren' (*Benevolence*) and the 'Zhi' (*Intellect*) are different powers that operate within a person in ethical choices. The 'Yu' or Human *Desire*,

¹⁰⁷ Chinese academic has expounded intensively on the 3 divisions but rarely arrange it in layers as Yang Zhepo did in his PhD. thesis. Please refer to Yang, Zhepo, *Menzi Xingshan Lun Yanjiu* (Beijing: Zhongguo Shehui Kexue Chubanshe, 1995) for the full accounts of his argument.

addresses what Al-Ghazzali coined as 'Greed', the natural tendency of a person to acquire things for the self. Confucius did not teach against one's desiring for sumptuous food and wine¹⁰⁹, good accommodation¹¹⁰ and other forms of material enjoyment¹¹¹. He even empathized with one's undeserved poverty when the country is prosperous economically¹¹². However, our being practical with our inclination or the 'Yu' do not give it a free license to ask for the unnecessary. Confucius has a teaching on 'Yi' (义, *Rightful or Righteousness*) against the 'Yu'. To him, man cannot do away with his 'Yu' but one could exercise self-control over it. Xuncius, one of Confucius' greatest disciples argued that the 'dark' side of human nature cannot be won over except through proper education. Confucius did not discuss deeper in the "Yu" and relating issues but went on to expound on the power of *Ren* and establish his well-accepted *Learning of Benevolence (Renxue)*.

In terms of the level of priorities in motives, *Benevolence* comes before the self-centered *Desire*. The root word of *Benevolence*, 'Ren', has a very wide range of meaning. It expresses Confucius' ideal in interpersonal relationship i.e. benevolence¹¹³ and servicing others¹¹⁴. Confucius so frequently mentioned on 'Ren' that it had become the synonym for the queen of all virtues. In the *Confucian Analects*, 'Ren' was expressed in many virtues e.g. *Filial piety* ('Xiao'), *Benevolence* ('Ti'), *Faithfulness* ('Zhong'), *Forgiving* ('Shu'), *Courtesy* ('Gong'), *Mercy* ('Kuan'), *Trust worthiness* ('Xin'), *Grace*

¹⁰⁸ In most of the scholarly writings, Mencius' "Xin" has always been translated to the "Mind". The discussion here keeps both the translation of the "Heart" and "Mind" together to remind the reader of its fuller meaning embedded in Mencius' discussion.

¹⁰⁹ Refer to "Lunyu, 10.8" in Legge, James, *The Chinese Classics, Vol. 2* (Taipei: SMC Publishing Inc., 1994)

¹¹⁰ "Lunyu, 7.4".

¹¹¹ "Lunyu, 7.14".

¹¹² "Lunyu, 14.1". The logic is that a country naturally prospers when it enjoys political stability.

¹¹³ "Lunyu, 12.22".

('Hui'), Steadiness ('Gang'), Perseverance ('Yi'), Uprightness ('Mu'), Non-treacherous ('Ne'), Benevolence ('Ai-ren'), etc.¹¹⁵ Each virtue is merely a segment of 'Ren' but 'Ren' embraces them all. Therefore, 'Ren' can be defined as the *Ethical State of Mind* in the Confucian studies, i.e. the moral framework of a person's behavioral choices.

The other layer that comes on top of 'Ren' is 'Zhi', the *Intellect*.¹¹⁶ 'Zhi' drives a person to learn¹¹⁷ with which self-improvement is possible. The study on 'Zhi' was extensively expounded by neo-Confucianists like Zhuxi¹¹⁸ and Feng Youlan¹¹⁹. The 'Zhi' referred here, overrules 'Ren' and 'Yu' in structure but not necessarily become more superior than 'Ren' as its ultimate purpose is to inculcate 'Ren'¹²⁰ in a person. In other words, the 'Zhi' is in service for the 'Ren'.

In fact, in the Confucius school of thoughts, the division of human intellect from the heart or other moral elements is not as rigid as that in the West. The Western philosophy differentiates between the stage where a person *knows and believes* with another stage where the person is *convicted and prepared to behave accordingly*.¹²¹ In the Western understanding, the rational mind where the Intellect exercises upon is separated from the faculty where moral considerations take place, i.e. the 'heart'. In the Confucius school of thoughts, and in fact in the general Chinese

¹¹⁴ "Lunyu, 6.30".

¹¹⁵ Yang, Zhepo, *Menzi Xingshan Lun Yanjin* (Beijing: Zhongguo Shehui Kexue Chubanshe, 1995) p. 5.

¹¹⁶ This hierarchical structure relating to "Yu", "Ren" and "Zhi" is proposed in Yang's thesis.

¹¹⁷ "Lunyu, 16.13".

¹¹⁸ Zhuxi's theory of "Ge Wu Zhi Zhi" and "Dao Wen".

¹¹⁹ Feng Youlan's theory of "Renshen Jingjie".

¹²⁰ The broader meaning of Ren is referred here.

understanding, 'Ren' works together with the 'Zhi' as the moderator of human reflections and moral choices. The laps between *knowing the right thing to do* with *being convicted to behave accordingly* do not exist in the Confucian framework because the presence of 'Ren' is simply omnipotent!

A number of scholarly works attempted to compare between Confucius' and Mencius' ethics with Kant's ethics. The major differences between them, again can only be clarified provided the unique semantics embedded in 'Ren' is fully understood. 'Ren', unlike the *Rational Morality* in Kant, involves much of one's feelings as well as the intuitive thoughts. Mencius, succeeded Confucius in developing the *Learning of the Heart/Mind (Xinxue)* to expound on how *Ren* and other good attributes work within a person.

4.2.1 The 'Xin' and Human Intellect

In "*Lilou, Part 2, 19.1-2*", Mencius said, "There is only a slight differences between man and the beast. Some people waste away the special gift to man but a superior man will treasure and safeguard it. The ancient sage-king Shun understood the principles of the natural environment as well as the interpersonal relations. Therefore, he observed the way of *Ren-Yi* and was not hypocritical in it." He argued that although human and beast are both living things with physical bodies, man has the said but the beasts do not possess it.

¹²¹ Yang, Zhepo, *Menzi Xingshan Lun Yanjiu* (Beijing: Zhongguo Shehui Kexue Chubanshe, 1995) pp. 20-22.

The “*Xin*” decides on the characteristics of a man, not only from the beast but also from other men. Mencius was once asked by his disciple Gongduzi on the question why “all are equally men, but some are great while some are mean” .¹²² Mencius then answered with certainty that the use of the “*Xin*” was the deciding factor.

Mencius says that the “*Xin*” is to be treated separately from other parts of the body. He addressed the “*Xin*” as “the superior part of man's body”, namely the “*dati*”. According to him, the “*dati*” does not only serve the functioning purposes of the body but has the extra ability of contemplation. The “*Xin*” helps a person to gain wisdom by learning from everyday experiences. It helps to correct behavioral errors and prepares a person for perfection. Therefore, “those who follow the part of body which is superior (*dati*) are great men; those who follow that part which is inferior (*xiaoti*) are mean persons Let a man first stand fast in the supremacy of the nobler part of his constitution, and the inferior part will not be able to take it from him. It is simply this which makes the great man!”¹²³

Generally, the “*Xin*” serves the many intellectual functions: firstly, the *Contemplative* (Cognitive and Reasoning) function; secondly, the *Justification* (Moral Judgment); and thirdly, the *Enlightenment* (Understanding the *Tian*). With the framework laid by Mencius, these various intellect content of the “*Xin*” dignifies the person and calls him to be who he *originally* is.

¹²² Refer to “*Gaozi, Part 1, 15: 1-2*” in *The Work of Mencius*.

¹²³ Refer to “*Gaozi, Part 1, 15: 2*”.

When the “*Xin*” guides one to contemplate, one will turn *inward* to examine himself in every aspects.¹²⁴ When the “*Xin*” seeks to dispose its originally good properties, one would adhere to the principles of benevolence and righteousness in his moral deliberation. The “*Xin*” also decides on how a person is going to wrestle with the external controlling power over man, especially *Tian*, the Heaven. It is when one apprehends himself that he apprehends the Heaven, establishes his Heaven-ordained being and serves the Heaven in proper respect.¹²⁵

4.2.2 The role of ‘*Ren*’ and ‘*Yi*’ in one’s moral decision

Mencius, commenting on the problem of the people of his time, said that they sought for fame but would not be dignified for they had lost the nobility of man. A person who seeks to be dignified by men should “satisfy others with his *goodness*”, as the way appraised of by the *Book of Poetry*.¹²⁶ Mencius interpreted this “*goodness*” as the dual core virtue, namely, *Benevolence* (仁 , *Ren*) and *Righteousness* (义 , *Yi*).

This dual principle of *Ren-Yi* was weighed upon the profit-calculative kind of value system, *Li* (利), when Mencius asked to offer political counsel to King Lianghui. The conversation was recorded in “*Lianghui Wang, Part 1, Chapter 1*”. The king said, “Venerable sir, since you have not counted it far to come here, a distance of a thousand miles, may I presume that you are likewise provided with counsels to profit my kingdom?” Mencius replied, “Why must Your Majesty use that word ‘*profit*’ (*Li*)? What I am ‘likewise provided with, are counsels to

¹²⁴ Refer to “*Lilou, Part 1, 4:2*”.

¹²⁵ Refer to “*Jinxin, Part 1, 1:1-3*”.

benevolence and righteousness, and these are my only topics! If Your Majesty say, 'What is to be done to profit my kingdom?' the great officers will say, 'What is to be done to profit our families?' and the inferior officers and the common people will say, 'What is to be done to profit our persons?' Superiors and inferiors will try to snatch this profit the one from another, and the kingdom will be endangered... If righteousness be put last, and profit be put first, the people will not be satisfied without snatching from each other... (Therefore, I hope) Your Majesty also agrees that Benevolence and Righteousness shall be the only themes. And why raise the interest of 'profiting (from people or things)' ? ”

In fact, the same advice against *Li* was given to a scholar the name of Songkang, who was on his way to offer political counsel to the Kings of Chu and Qi to cease hostility and warfare. of Song as a response to the warfare between the states of Qi and Chu. The conversation was recorded in “Gaozi, Part 2, Chapter 4” . Mencius said, “I will not venture to ask about the particulars, but I should like to hear the scope of your plan. What course will you take to try to persuade then?” Sungkang said that he was going to tell the kings how unprofitable their courses would be. Mencius quickly responded saying, “If you manage to persuade kings of Qin and Chu to stop the clashing of weapons on the ground of profit, then all people in the armies will attempt on the pursuit of profit upon cessation of war. Ministers will serve their sovereign for the profit of which they cherish the thought; son will serve their fathers, and younger brothers will serve their elder brothers, from the same consideration; -- and the issue will be that of the abandoning of benevolence and righteousness! Sovereign and minister, father and son, elder brother and the younger,

¹²⁶ The *Book of Poetry* is one of the most important books in Chinese Classics used by Confucius as the teaching text. It is regarded as a book that comprises the principles that beautifies the moral

will all cherish the thought of profit.” Mencius pointed that such a state of society is definitely facing its ruin.

Mencius sounds very hard against the profit-calculative or materialistic attitude for it is the main issue in one’s moral deliberation: the motive of man’s action. When the profit-calculation becomes the main cause for one’s action, man will be self-obsessed, less considerate and downplaying his obligations to community life. If the principle of *Ren-Yi* replaces the profit-calculation kind of motive in one’s moral deliberation, goodness will extend from one’s heart to the others. Thus, the community life turns beautiful and Mencius’ ideal of the humane government will reap its fruits.

4.3 Man’s Moral self as expressed in the 4 Cardinal Virtues

In Al-Ghazzali’s ethics, a man of good moral character will testify his moral integrity through the virtuous acts. On the other hand, a man of poor moral character can be told from his vicious acts. Al-Ghazzali perceives four cardinal virtues of which become the roots of other sub-virtues of a man of good character. There four are, namely, the virtue of *Wisdom (hikma)*; the virtue of *Courage (shaja’ a)*; the virtue of *Temperance (iffa)* and the virtue of *Justice (adl)*.¹²⁷ Interestingly, Al-Ghazzali has also contrasted these four cardinal virtues with altogether seven major vices with their sub-vices!

character.

¹²⁷ Quesem, Muhammad Abul, *The Ethics of Al-Ghazali: A Composite Ethics in Islam* (Petaling Jaya: Muhammad Abul Quesem, 1975) p. 80.

Al-Ghazzali holds an idea of moderism and he introduces the concept of the mean (*wast*) in the moral moderation of man.¹²⁸ He says that the either extremes of excess or deficiency is not good. It is commendable that one keeps a state between the extremes, i.e. the mean. The mean state of the heart is the soundest state of a man. Keeping the mean is a virtue and deviating to the extreme of things is a vice. Al-Ghazzali thus explains the birth of virtues and vices as a state of soundness or unsoundness within the heart of a person.

The four cardinal virtues can be nurtured by the moderation of man's three main constitution, i.e. the *Intellect*, *Anger* and *Desire*. When man has a sound *Intellect* to distinguish between true and false of a claim, between right and wrong in a thought and between good and evil of an action; the virtue of *Wisdom* will be generated in his soul. When a person submits his *Anger* to the guidelines and correction of reason and Shariat, he gains the virtue of *Courage*. Likewise, when the faculty of *Desire* is sound and led by the way of the truth, it develops the virtue of *Temperance*. Lastly, when the "*Judgment of human Heart*" is capable of balancing between the raging powers of the *Anger* and *Greed*, the virtue of *Justice* will be groomed.¹²⁹

The four virtues of *Wisdom*, *Courage*, *Temperance* and *Justice* are believed to dwell with a person when the three faculties of his soul (or, the 3 constitutions of him) as well as the "*Judgment of his Heart*" are sound. On the contrary, when all the faculties are at the wrong extremes, seven major vices will emerge! These major vices of man are *Stupidity* and *Wickedness*, as opposed to *Wisdom*; *Rashness* and

¹²⁸ Ibid., p. 81.

¹²⁹ Ibid. It is good to define *Justice* as a virtue and the "*Judgment of human Heart*" as the 'fourth' element of man's constitution.

Cowardice as opposed to *Courage*; *Greed* and *Annihilation of Desire* as opposed to *Temperance* and *Injustice* as opposed to *Justice*.

With the intention to help one treat all the destructive vices and nurture the constructive virtues, Al-Ghazzali has carefully named and identified all the four cardinal virtues and the seven major vices of man and also each of their sub-divisions! The sub-divisions of the virtue of *Wisdom* are virtues like soundness of management; excellence of mind; clarity of ideas; rightness of opinion; awareness of the subtle actions and the hidden evils of the soul; etc. The sub-divisions of the virtue of *Courage* are virtues like liberality; intrepidity; manliness; self-control; endurance; forbearance; fortitude; repression of anger; dignity and amiability. The sub-divisions of the virtue of *Temperance* are virtues like generosity; modesty; patience; remission; contentment; piety; kindness; helpfulness; wit and lack of covetousness. There is, however, no sub-division for the virtue of *Justice* in Al-Ghazzali's classification. [Refer to the Appendix III for Chart (B)].

The sub-divisions of the vice of *Stupidity* are vices like folly; little experience in affairs despite soundness in the power of imagination; and insanity. The sub-divisions of the vice of *Wickedness* are vices like slyness, deceit, trickery and cunning. . The sub-divisions of the vice of *Rashness* are vices like boastfulness; haughtiness; fury; pride and conceit. . The sub-divisions of the vice of *Cowardice* are vices like abjection; lack of self-respect; impatience; baseness; small-mindedness; and aversion from receiving rights. . The sub-divisions of the vice of *Greed and annihilation of desire* are vices like cupidity; greed; shamelessness; impurity; extravagance; miserliness; ostentation; tendency to defame the character of others;

boldness; preoccupation with useless activities; flattery; envy; rejoicing in others' misfortune; self-humiliation before the rich and despising the poor; etc. There is no sub-division for the vice of *Injustice* in Al-Ghazzali's classification. Briefly, Al-Ghazzali believes in man's responsibility in the purification of the soul from vices and its beautification with virtues. His *Book 3* and *4* of the *Ihya Ulum-Id-Din (The Revival of Religious Learnings)* were written in this respect.¹³⁰

As for Mencius, the four cardinal virtues are rooted in the attributes of empathy, sense of guilt, modesty and moral judgement, which are supposedly natural in man. In "Gongsun Chou, Part 1, 6:5", it is said that "the attribute of empathy is the principle of *Benevolence* (仁 , *Ren*). The sense of guilt is the principle of *Righteousness* (义 , *Yi*). The attribute of modesty is the principle of *Propriety* (礼 , *Li*). The moral judgement is the principle of *Wisdom* (智 , *Zhi*)."

Mencius resembles the four principles within men to the four limbs of their physical body. All men have them but the limbs are yet to be fully exercised for full development and growth. There is no question of who having the four cardinal virtues and who has not. All men have these 'limbs' but some choose not to stretch them and play the thief with them.¹³¹

The virtues of *Benevolence* and *Righteousness* have been discussed in the previous section. What comprise *Propriety* and *Knowledge* in Mencius' teachings? The virtue of *Propriety* is with regards to one's moral behavior and relations with others. Its application is to make the division of one with one's subordinates clear. For

¹³⁰ Book 3 of the *Ihya Ulum al-Din* was entitled as "The Book of Destructive Vices" and Book 4, "The Book of Constructive Virtues".

example, there are appropriate behavioral expressions that constitute *Propriety* in the relationship between the sovereign to the officials and the master to the servant, the elderly to the young ones, etc. In "*Jinxin, Part 2, 12:2*", it was said as such, that "without the rules of propriety and distinctions of right, the high and the low will be thrown into confusion".

The virtue of *Wisdom* is defined in "*Lilou, Part 1, 27:2*" as such: "The richest fruit of wisdom is this – the knowing those two things (benevolence and righteousness), and not departing from them." *Wisdom* is one of the *Four Cardinal Virtues* of man. *Wisdom* is also the ability to differentiate between things and observe the principle of *Ren-Yi*. In the conversation between the Master Confucius and his disciple Zigong, wisdom is found in one who learns without ceasing.¹³²

It was believed and advocated by Mencius that "*Benevolence, Righteousness, Propriety and Knowledge* are not infused into us from without. We are certainly furnished with them." "Hence it is said: 'Seek and you will find them. Neglect and you will lose them.' Men differ from one another in regard to them - it is because they cannot carry out fully their natural powers."¹³³

The objective of Mencius' "*Xin*"-bounded ethics with its *Four Cardinal* properties is to create a wholesome man who has a sound unity of the mind and body, knowledge and deeds, his destiny with the Heavenly mandate. This is part and parcel of the totality of the "*Inside, Sage; Outside, King (Nei Sheng Wai Wang)*" theory in

¹³¹ "*Gongsun Chou, Part 1, 6:6-7*" in *The Work of Mencius*.

¹³² "*Gongsun Chou, Part 1, 2:19*".

¹³³ "*Gongsun Chou, Part 1, 6:7*".

the Confucian thoughts – that the rectification *within* a person will bring about the capability of managing that of the *outside* world.