

Q. Elucidate Ghazali's theory of state with reference to his concept of Imamate.

1. Introduction:

Abu Hamid Al-Ghazali, a prominent Muslim philosopher who did not believe in philosophy and present critic on Muslim philosophers of his era who were influenced by Greek philosophers. His concept of theory of state is according to principles of Islam and his concept of Imamate is also Islamic. He also used organic analogy to explain concept of state. Furthermore, he believed in human personal experiences, in examples of successors of Islam and in Quran and Sunnah.

2. Al-Ghazali Theory of State:

Context of Theory:

During Al-Ghazali's time, in 11th century, Islamic world was going under significant political, social and intellectual changes. This period is also known as Golden Period of Islam, characterised by advancements in various fields such as philosophy, science, mathematics and literature. However, there were also challenges and conflicts within the Islamic world. One such challenge was conflict between theological and philosophical school of thought particularly between Mutazilites and Asharites. This theological debate had implications for various aspects of Islamic governance.

Title	Torchbearer of Muslim Renaissance, Mujaddid / Reviver.
Writing	The Incoherence of Philosophers
Theory	Theory of State, Concept of Imamate

Main Points of Theory of State :

Ghazali's concept of state is Islamic concept derived from Quran, Sunnah and successors of Islam. Main points of his theory of state are as follows :

i- Ghazali's Idea of State :

Ghazali first explains the need of establishment of state and says that,

“Man needs company of another man.”

Then he further explains that man cannot live alone, but want to help others at each step.

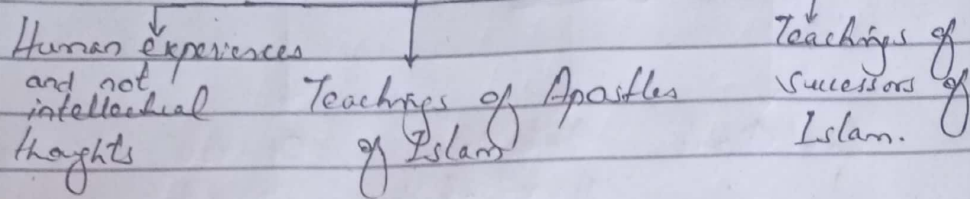
This identifies the need of a state where all individuals could ^{live} together.

ii- Definition of Politics :

After identifying need of state, Ghazali pays focus on politics and defines as “the science which deals with the proper order for state affairs of mundane category.”

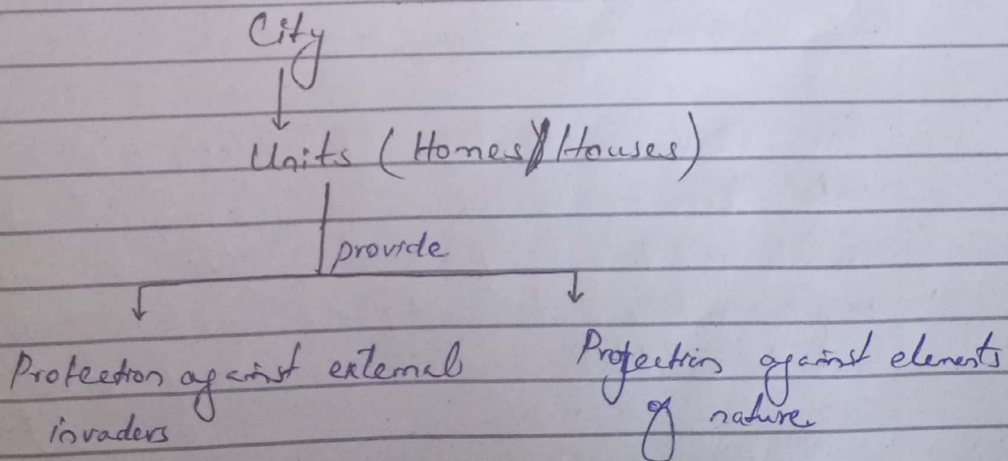
He says politics is necessary for proper functioning of state. State is a mean to end "a better after-life" which is dependent on worldly life. Politics is a mean to end "state." He also explained the basis of politics.

Basis of Politics



iii- Establishment of Cities :

He says that cities are joint habitation of citizens as people cannot live in isolation. Cities provide different function and are helpful in stability of a states.

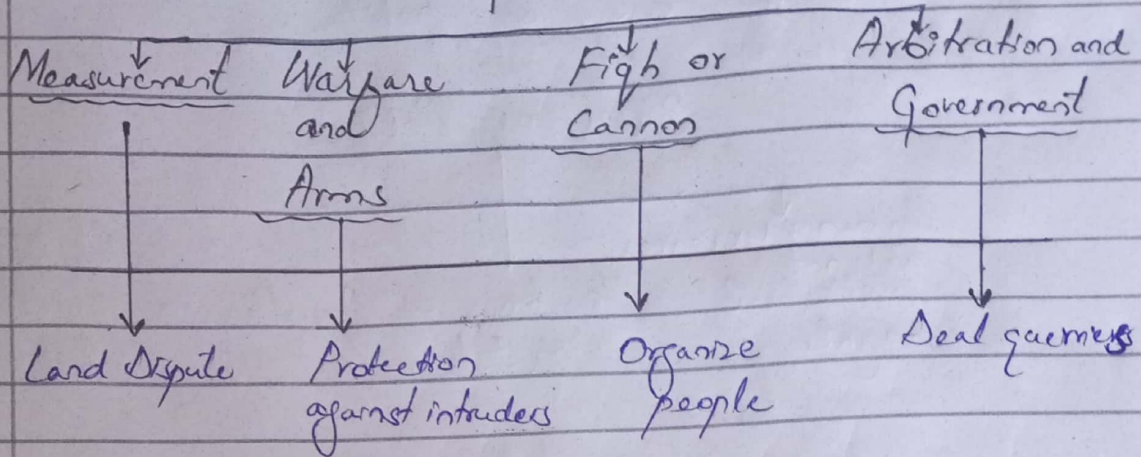


iv. Departments in a City :

He further divided the city into different

departments on the basis of functions which they perform.

Departments



v- Offices in a City:

Collector	Assessor	Treasure	Paymaster
Collect revenue	determin amants	in charge of collection	Authorrise expenditure

vi- Division of Labour:

For further simplification, Ghazali divided citizens into three classes i.e "Farmers" which includes people related to production; "Men of sword" includes people related to defense and "Men of Pen" which constitute wise portion of society.

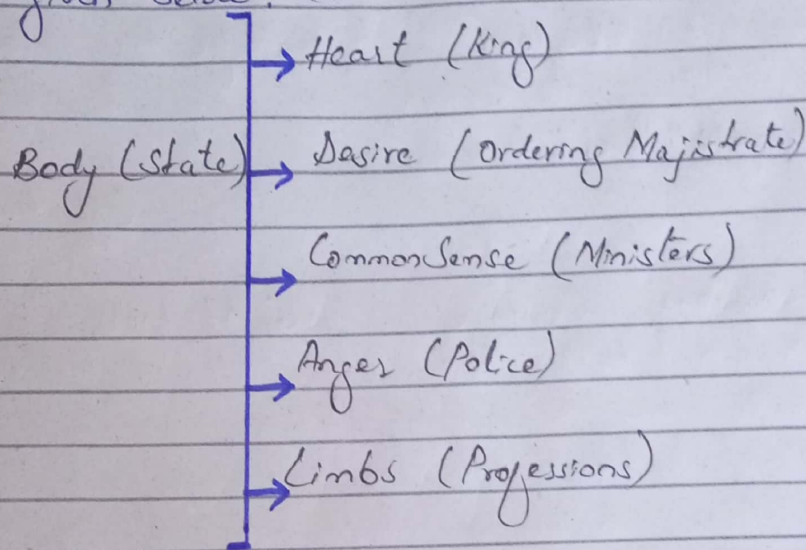
vii- Concept of Democracy:

Ghazali ideas on governance and leadership provides a valuable insight of ethical and

just governance which can be appreciated and discussed in the context of democratic ideals.

viii- Organic Analogy of State:

Just like Farabi, he used organic analogy to express elements of state. His organic analogy is given below:



3- Ghazali's Concept of Imamate:

In his theory, Ghazali first justified the need of establishment of kingship. The purpose of Imamate or kingship is necessary for political organization through which he could maintain peace and order as well as help in obedience of Islamic law.

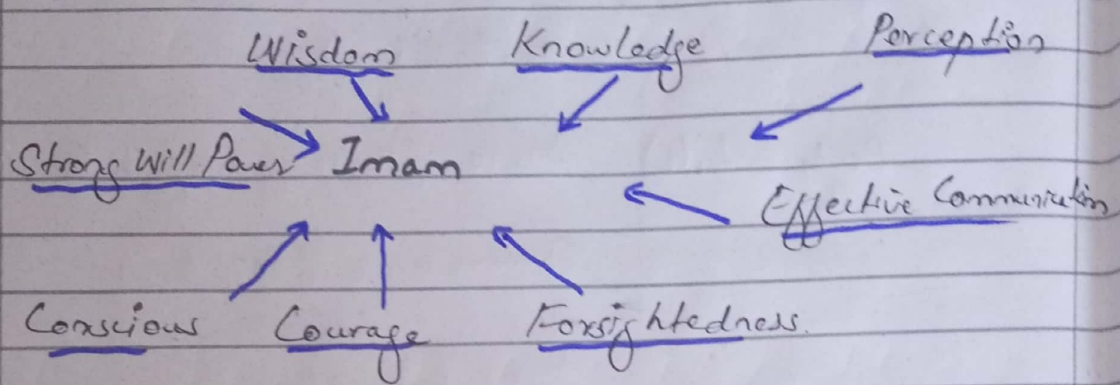
i- Ruler or Sultan as Heart of State:

He recognized Imam or Sultan as heart of state i.e. if the heart of body works

efficiently, then other organs of the state will work in an effective way.

ii. Qualities of Imam :

For Imamate, the candidates possessed the following qualities as mentioned by Ghazali:



iii. Functions of Imam :

Ghazali said that Imam has privileged other over citizens of state however, he must ensure following functions:

- The first and foremost function of Imam is to ensure justice.
- Imam is responsible for protection and spread of Islam.
- Imam must ensure protection of his territory.
- He is responsible to appoint his cabinet or his sub-ordinates.
- He must ensure that rule of law must prevailed.
- Imam must have connection with the

- ordinary citizens of state.
- g. He should deal both powerful and weak in same way.
 - h. He must wage Jihad for glory of Islam.
 - i. Imam should not indulge in luxurious food and clothing.
 - j. He should have set an accountability mechanism for his subordinates.

iv- Provided Example of Routine of Past Kings:

He provided example of routines of past kings for Imam to make balance in their responsibilities and functions.

One part for prayer



One part for state function



One part for food and rest



One part for recreation and hunting

v- Secret Service for Imam:

Ghazali says that, "King without secret service is like a body without soul." The secret service will inform Imam about inner affairs of state and about external threats. As a result, he will take precautionary actions to protect his states.

4- Analysis on Ghazali's State and Imamate:

Ghazali's legacy continued to be relevant in contemporary discussions about the compatibility of faith, not only in Islamic tradition, but also in interfaith and philosophical dialogues. Al-Ghazali's contributions as a torchbearer of Islam and his unique concept of state and Imamate continued to be celebrated for their profound impact on development of Islamic thought and philosophy.

5- Conclusion:

In a nutshell, Ghazali's idea of state and Imamate was based on Islamic principles. He wanted to build boundary around the circle of Islam which was devastated by the rationalist Muslim philosophers i.e. Mutazilites. He wanted to impose true spirit of Islam at both state and kingship levels.

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