



Al-Ghazali And Hume on Natural Causal Necessity and Miracles: A Comparative Analysis

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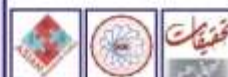
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Abstract:

This paper argues that Al-Ghazali and Hume arrived at similar conclusion rejecting natural causality as a logical necessity; however, they provide very different premises for this conclusion. Moreover, Hume's rejection of the natural causal necessity leads him to religious skepticism; whereas, Al-Ghazali's rejection of natural causal necessity leads him to have a strong faith in God and Miracles. The paper discusses the problem of causation in their philosophies focusing on the issues such as: causation as habit; uniformity in the natural order; causation is a mere a sequence of observed things; whether causal relation is ontological or epistemological; issue of miracles and diverse possibilities. Furthermore, the paper also focuses on the issue of Occasionalism and free will with special reference to Al-Ghazali and Hume.

Key Words: *Causation, Miracles, Natural Causality, Causation as a Habit, Religious Skepticism, Occasionalism, Free Will, God as an Agent.*

Introduction:

Causality is generally known as the relationship between any two events i.e., causes and effect. According to this theory, every effect must have a cause; since, without a cause no effect can occur or follow and vice versa¹. According to natural causation a particular cause has its own inherent power or capacity to produce an effect—the very nature and inner power of a cause necessitates the effect to occur and never fails to do so. If effect does not occur, it means that the cause may be absent or slowed down or interrupted by other causes². Various philosophers have explained causation differently; hence, it has a variety of interpretations. This paper aims to elucidate two important interpretations of causality in the history of philosophy, vis-à-vis each other, i.e., Al-Ghazali's and David Hume's. Both the philosophers concluded that the necessary connection between cause and effect does not exist--it is mere appearances and nothing more than our minds' habit. However, they provide very different premises for this conclusion. Moreover, Hume's rejection of the natural causal necessity leads him to religious skepticism; whereas, Al-Ghazali's rejection of natural causal necessity leads him to have a strong faith in God and Miracles. Their interpretations of causation distinguish them from the rest of the philosophers in the history of philosophy.

Al-Ghazali on Causality:

Al-Ghazali argues that there is no causal necessity between *cause* and *effect* based on past experience that we see in objects/events. He argues for the possibility of diverse events that may happen in the future—the past events cannot justify the future events. In order to explain his position, Al-Ghazali provides his famous example of 'flame' and a piece of 'cotton'. He argues that fire is incapable to burn cotton while bringing it into contact with fire. He contends that what we observe is just a succession of events. When a piece of cotton is taken near a flame, it burns and turns into ashes. The transient arrangement of events, the way they happen in close vicinity to one another, ought not to be confused with causality³. Al-Ghazali affirms the uniformity in the natural phenomena, which we experience; and he argues that God guarantees this uniformity. Therefore, all

future events can be predicted confidently which are based on past experiences. The things will remain as they are and will happen as they are and the way we expect them. The very natural course of things does not change⁴. This, natural cause and effect, connection is not due to their intrinsic power but exoteric power and this external power is God. Al-Ghazali accepts the 'existence of causation' and argues God creates all things with specific nature on which they are based, but this nature can be changed. The Divine power is capable of intervening in the natural arrangement and creates new conditions of causal relation that produces miracles⁵. Since, God has guaranteed the uniformity; therefore, it is not possible that a book can be turned into a horse because- this is not the habit of God⁶.

The Concepts of Agent, Act and Creation:

The term agent entails the concept of will and knowledge of things that are willed, which can only be used for the animated objects. Al-Ghazali argues that God is the only agent; He has the attributes of free choice, will and knowledge of things. Al-Ghazali rejects the opinion that God is the agent who acts necessarily and has no free choice. "Every agent is a cause but every cause is not an agent"⁷. Al-Ghazali in order to explain this point argues, "Fire, which is an inanimate thing, has no action. How can one prove that it is an agent? The only argument is from the observation of fact of burning at the time of contact with fire. But observation only shows that one is with the other, not that it is by it and has no other cause than it"⁸.

This reveals that Al-Ghazali denied the assumption that inanimate things are also agents- fire cannot be the agent because it is inanimate. If a person A throws person B in fire and the fire burns person B; fire is not the cause of the burning of B but only A is responsible for the action of killing B and not the fire⁹.

Al-Ghazali argues that the creation and agent are happening at the same time. The free will (action) of agent is the fundamental condition for the act of creation. Al-Ghazali gives the examples of the movement of finger in water that causes the movement of water. The finger does not move by itself. It is moved by the person whose finger it is. The movement of finger is not eternal but the creation of the movement is eternal, then there must be a series of eternal independent movement and each created by the will of the agent¹⁰.

Al-Ghazali further says that it is wrong to believe that water movement depends upon the movement of finger. The movement of water is not caused by the movement of the finger but created by God¹¹. Hence, act of divine will is sufficient for the creation of the physical world. Act is the predicate of animate being that have the capacity to accomplish the chosen action.

Sir William Hamilton in his *Lectures on Metaphysics and Logic* opines that Al-Ghazali is the first Philosopher who discussed this conception of causation; he did not deny the causation but maintains that God is the only 'efficient cause' in the nature. Hamilton says that for Al-Ghazali second causes are mere 'occasions' of 'efficient cause' and not the causes. The doctrine of Al-Ghazali was adopted by the scholars of some sects of Muslims and by this way the conception was passed from the East to the West¹².

McGinnis, while explaining Al-Ghazali, opines that the causal relation between the two events exists, but this relation is based on divine act¹³. Abrahamov argues

that Al-Ghazali presented the ‘dual causation’, natural as well as divine and for him both are cooperatively working and creating same effects¹⁴. God causes everything that happens in this world and He is the only ultimate cause.

Goodman also puts forth that Al-Ghazali is not restricted to causation. Al-Ghazali’s aim was not to analyze the applicability of causation and to answer that whether this cause-effect relation is necessary in the universe¹⁵.

David Hume on Causality:

Hume argues that each and every component of our thought originates from experiences and these experiences come to us from multifarious ‘sense impressions’ of the world we live in¹⁶.

In order to understand Hume’s philosophy of causation one has to understand ‘Hume’s Fork’. Hume argues that all possible knowledge can be divided into two distinct parts: the ‘relations of ideas’ and the ‘matters of facts’. The ‘relations of ideas’ does not need any experience that’s why they are independent of any observation—they are a priori and necessary; hence, they are rationally justified and they can be intuitively and demonstratively known. Denial of the truth claim of such a priori statements will lead us to self-contradiction. This kind of knowledge only refers to geometry, algebra and axiomatic statements. Statements of this sort are discoverable only by the very activity and task of thought, without relying on observation of the things that exist in the state of affairs. Despite the fact that there never was a circle or triangle in the nature, Euclid’s certainties would always hold their assurance, proof and truth. Since ‘relations of ideas’ do not deal in observation; they are, therefore, incapable of showing that one particular event can cause another particular event. As far as ‘matters of facts’ are concerned, they depend upon experience and are a posteriori; hence, they cannot be rationally justified and cannot be intuitively and demonstratively known as relations of Ideas. Denial of the truth claim of a posteriori statements does not imply any self-contradiction. Statements about the matters of facts are possibly contrary to each other; for, contradiction and inconsistency do not imply in this case. Our mind perceives it with some specific similar uniqueness and facility- as if they can correspond to the fact. The statement that the Sun would not ascend tomorrow is no less coherent, and it does not imply any contradiction to affirm that the Sun will ascend. The statements will only be contradictory to each other if either they cannot be demonstrated or demonstration is false, only then the distinctiveness cannot be perceived. This kind of knowledge refers to cause-effect relations among others¹⁷.

According to Hume, ‘matters of facts’ are based upon observation of cause-effect relations and this observation cannot be certain. Only a constant conjunction can be observed and not a necessary relation¹⁸. For example, the head on collision of one object enables the second object to move. Beebe eloquently summarizes the point, “the fundamental source of our empirical beliefs is something more animal than divine, namely custom or habit”¹⁹.

Hume provides two very different definitions of the term ‘Cause’—one definition explains the ‘philosophical relation’ and the other ‘natural relation’ between cause and effect. This leads us to two very different approaches: By philosophical relation he means that the comparison of ideas with one another, it is a ‘logical

approach'; by 'natural relation' he means association of ideas with one another, it is a "psychological approach"²⁰.

As far as Hume's logical approach is concerned, causation is based on the following three things: 'precedence', 'succession in time', and 'contiguity' of cause and effect in spatio-temporal order²¹. The causal relation between two events that precedes each other can only be observed; this relation cannot be proved like mathematical proofs, nor can it be logically demonstrated. He believes in theory of induction i.e., the probability of knowledge. The probable knowledge, that cannot be proved mathematically, is only for scientific and practical knowledge/ purposes. The 'uniformity of nature' is probable by its nature and not certain; as a result, it does not give us convincing surety. However, it serves practical purposes. To Hume there is no logical justification of causal necessity.

Hume's psychological approach is also very important; it has great significance and seems more original. In his psychological approach, he interprets 'cause' in the following terms: 'contiguity', 'succession' and 'necessary connection' of cause and effect. Hume says that we see contiguity and succession, but there is only contiguity, which can be only known to us through observation. We cannot observe or experience the necessary connection between cause and effect. Contiguity and succession is a relation that is discovered instantly among the impressions. These two relations cannot make someone believe that one event is followed by the other. The necessary connection that we see between two events does not actually exist. It is added by our minds to our received impressions²².

Hulswit argues that causal relation cannot be rationally justified; for Hume it is not possible that causal necessity can be as rigid as logical necessity. The over and over observation of two events coming after one another is nothing but the association of two ideas in our mind²³. That's why it is mere illusion and not real. This illusion is the outcome of our expectations which are based on the habit of our minds and not a logical necessity.

Robinson opines that as far as Hume's two definitions are concerned, both are non-equivalent and because of this non-equivalence in their meaning, they lead us to two different extensions. Two events are in constant conjunction with one another and our mind not being able to determine that. On the other side, it is not impossible to say that there is no constant conjunction but this relation is because of our mind's habit²⁴. But Garrett argues that both definitions are equivalent if we study them subjectively or objectively²⁵.

Noonan opines that Hume's two different definitions of 'cause' are not problematic; they enable us to understand him clearly. First definition leads us to the idea that "what is going on in the world", and second is that "what is going on in the mind of the observer"²⁶. Blackburn argues that first definition tells us how the physical world contributes and second one tells us to understand the regularity in things that are based on different functions of our mind²⁷.

According to Fosl, Hume is a skeptic on the issue, which means that he suspends judgment (epoche) on the issue. He neither affirms that there is a necessary connection nor denies it in a metaphysical sense. More strongly, he holds that causal power, as conventionally described, is unintelligible and inconceivable.

Hume allows, at least conceptually, for a kind of certainty for causal reasoning. He distinguishes three kinds of inferences: 'demonstrations', 'proofs', and 'probabilities'. The first two are characterized by certainty, though the certainties of different kinds. The negation of demonstrations results in contradiction, but the negation of a proof does not. On the other hand, probability is characterized by uncertainty²⁸.

Comparison between Al-Ghazali and Hume:

Al-Ghazali and Hume both reject the concept of natural causality. Their lines of argument, however, are very different. Hume's approach towards causality was purely skeptical and critical; whereas, Al-Ghazali's approach was purely theological. Al-Ghazali in his book discussed the causality, not only to defend the authenticity of miracles, but also to defend some version of 'occasionalism'. He was an Occasionalist. Al-Ghazali offered a modified form of occasionalism that is compatible with causation. Al-Ghazali was not against causation but he opposed necessary causation²⁹. Hume denies occasionalism because it denies the effectiveness of matter. The relation between cause and effect is not self-sufficient and internal but it is external to them. Therefore, for both, the nature of causality is psychological which is based on our mind's habit, but not based on necessity. Al-Ghazali simply denies the necessity of causal connection between two things or events; on the other hand, Hume has an all-out reductive analysis of the conception of causality. For Al-Ghazali, there is one ultimate cause of everything and that is God. He allows the miracles. Hume's skeptical suspension of judgment concerning necessary metaphysical connection between causes and effects undermines cosmological arguments and it further implies that there is no contradiction in the idea of a phenomenon without a cause³⁰.

Hume also drew upon his skeptical philosophy concerning the contingency of apparent causal relations. It is so far possible that a coal placed on fire would not burn because there is no logical contradiction in the ideas and Hume's skepticism suspends the metaphysical attribution of necessity to any apparent or real causal order. Hume, as a skeptic, does not deny the existence of miracles. He suspends judgment on the issue. What he does deny is that we have no good reason to believe that they occur. He accepts that miracles might be happening all the time, but we are not in a position to know whether or not they are³¹.

Similarities and differences:

Hume's ideas on causality are similar, up to some extent, to Al-Ghazali. Al-Ghazali mentions that "the connection between what is habitually believed to be the cause and what is habitually believed to be an effect is not necessary"³². Hume also denied necessary causality when he mentions that "when we look about us towards external objects, and consider the operation of causes, we are never able, in a single instance, to discover any power or necessary connexion; any quality, which binds the effect to the cause, and renders the one an infallible consequence of the other"³³. Hume is thus far in agreement with Al-Ghazali, stating that all we can get from observation is the happening of one event after the other. There is no necessary connection between the two. But despite their many similarities, both Al-Ghazali and Hume provide very different arguments for this conclusion to their findings.

Attributing the concepts of causal necessity to custom or habit

Hume agrees with Al-Ghazali, speaking earlier in his *Enquiry* about cause and effect, that people are inclined to make a link of cause and effect between two events out of “custom or habit”. In his religious approach, Al-Ghazali mentions that the customary linking of cause and effect is based on nature. In his work *Treatise*, Hume discusses the principle of Uniformity of Nature that explains the transformation of what is unknown to us from the things that are known to; we generally conceive that the unknown resembles the known ones³⁴. Both Hume and Al-Ghazali accept that nature generally works in a uniform way-- and both state that causality is never necessary.

Al-Ghazali gives an assimilated version of different instances related to all associated objects that are observable. The group of occasions that comes after one another including the contact of cotton with flame, for instance, Al-Ghazali keeps up that each is conceivable without the other, restricting to the position that agent of the consuming of cotton is fire alone, and it is not an agent by its choice but by its very nature—whence after contacting of fire with the object receptive to it cannot stop itself to act according to its inner nature³⁵. From the above debate it can be inferred that the nature of fire necessitates the act of burning and the nature of cotton as a receptor is to burn after contacting with fire—which shows that fire is the only agent of the burning effect. Al-Ghazali denies both the cases and claims that neither inanimate objects are capable to bring any change in something with necessity, nor they bring anything by any means. Observation only depicts the spatiotemporal vicinity and contiguity between the two different occasions and not more than that (e.g., the consuming of cotton at the moment when it comes in contact with flame), and these do not prove that the observable objects are causally connected to each other. As Al-Ghazali opines that the coexistence of two events ‘with’ each other does not establish that one exist ‘by’ other³⁶. This does seem to resemble Hume’s argument, as he claims that a direct observation of two various objects and activities that occur in a relation with each other (if there is any) does not give us any idea of active power which shows that there is a connection between them. At the most we can observe, according to Hume, that these objects are constantly conjoined and that does not imply a causal relation. He states that such things (fire and heat) will always be put in such a way that they will be contiguously and successively related among them and not necessarily³⁷.

Logic: contiguity or necessity:

Al-Ghazali’s arguments apparently look purely theological and one may think that his arguments are not that much logical. For example, he states that God is the only Being who perform the consumption of cotton by making it black, causing its parts to separate from each other and converting it into ashes—either through His mediator(angles) or without any mediator³⁸. But Nadler argues that Al-Ghazali does have a logical orientation when he talks about necessary connections in nature. When one looks at it like this, Al-Ghazali comes very close to Hume’s assertion. Al-Ghazali’s argument on the existential distinction and independence between ‘causes’ and ‘effects’³⁹. Nadler also uses this argument and concludes that Al-Ghazali deals with logical relations: Plainly, this is a logically consistent

point; it requires no religious presumptions; nor does it, for Al-Ghazali, depend upon any. Al-Ghazali denies necessary connections out of ontological concerns. Hume, on the contrary, had an epistemological orientation: Hume's argument is that we are unable to rationally defend necessary connections in nature. Hume leaves the question open whether there are such connections. Al-Ghazali goes further in this matter than Hume and concludes that it is impossible for necessary connections to exist in nature because we are unable to justify them.

However, it is needed to concentrate on the idea implicit in Al-Ghazali's example, to uncover his powerful metaphysical language, is equivalent to the prominent epistemological issue of deducing causation on the basis of correlation: that is, the possibility that the real cause is a hidden third factor. For example, simple observation of a constant conjunction between events of type X with events of type Y is not sufficient to eliminate an unknown factor, C, which is, in fact, the cause of the constant conjunction of X and Y; creating the false impression that X and Y are causally related, when in fact, X and Y are only constantly conjoined, in virtue of C, which is the real cause. Now, it is plain to see that, if such a scenario constitutes an intelligible possibility, then we must be in possession of some meaningful concept of a causal relation that is essentially distinct from (i.e., not reducible to) any mere spatiotemporal correlation. That is to say, the intelligibility of the proposition that constant conjunction is not proof of causation entails our possession of an idea of causation that is not just constant conjunction⁴⁰.

In a notable argument related to the "no necessary connection", Hume demonstrates that the causal relation between the naturally occurring events is rationally unjustified. Hume uses his argument in this regard to openly demonstrate that in case we do know about the causal relations (as he eventually concluded that we do not), in the light of that reason does not reveal to us that there is necessarily logical connection between events. In short, Hume contends that any occasion or thing is 'separable' and discrete from some other occasion or thing, and thus the idea of one is completely logically distinct from the idea of the other. Accordingly, the possibility of the existence/non-existence of an object, in itself, does not entail the possibility of the existence/non-existence of the other object. If the occurrence of event X does not involve the occurrence of event Y, at that point there is no necessary connection that can be discovered between X and Y. If reason cannot locate a necessary connection between two events, then the idea of necessary connection cannot be assigned as a defining characteristic to the conception of causation⁴¹.

Hume concludes that we cannot have any idea of 'power' and 'efficacy' for all ideas are the exact copies that are derived from impressions and there is no such impression that derives 'power' and 'efficacy'. This argument leads to a problem: If we cannot have any idea of "power" and "efficacy", then making Hume's copy principle of meaning as a base, the very proposition that no impression implies "power" and "efficacy" is rendered meaningless. But if this proposition is meaningless, then how can it be a premise in an argument on the basis of which we conclude that we have no idea of "power" or "efficacy"? What is it that we were looking for among our impressions, that our failure to find them led us to

conclude that we have no idea? Al-Ghazali's argument, which also entails our possession of a meaningful idea of causation over and above constant conjunction, does not face this conundrum or puzzle, simply because he does not conclude that we have no such idea. His position, again, is simply that we do not find causation within our experience of observable things⁴².

Epistemology, Ontology and Theology:

In respect to the relation between theology, ontology and epistemology, Al-Ghazali and Hume differ. Al-Ghazali's theological statements are justified not only by ontological concerns, but also by epistemological concerns as well. Both Al-Ghazali and Hume argue that to follow after does not mean to follow from. Al-Ghazali explains that God is the one who has established the arrangement of causality, in that sense God is always the final cause. This means that the sequencing force in nature is very important in it, but it surpasses nature at the same time. This is the essence of Islamic epistemology- we cannot fully know nature due to the power that is both inherent and transcendental in it. Al-Ghazali's Islamic point of view gives us a level of certainty sufficient for us to get along, but it does not promise us absolute certainty. The same goes for Hume, his findings do not give us full certainty concerning causality and the patterns of nature.

Even though we are unable to decipher nature completely, both Al-Ghazali and Hume state that we cannot know things for certain. In this sense ontology and epistemology are intrinsically related with one another. According to Hume, knowledge of pure mathematics is one of those things that we can know for certain because it relies only on the relations of ideas, without making assumptions about the world. Experimental observations, directed without any assumption of material objects' existence, allow us to use our experience in the forming of helpful habits. Other epistemological efforts, especially those claiming to achieve useful abstract knowledge, are pointless and deceptive. Hume accepts the limitations of human knowledge while following the valid aims of mathematics and science⁴³.

What do we know for certain according to Al-Ghazali? Why do miracles not prevent our empirical understanding of the physical world? Acknowledging that if the miracles do this, then one would state that what he knows about something is that he has experienced earlier; but what it would be really at the moment he is not sure about its existence or even it can be turned into something else (see Al-Ghazali's example of book and horse). We have already seen Al-Ghazali's answer to this problem: God is the source of our knowledge. It seems that Al-Ghazali demarcates the observational knowledge of the world, which makes in us the habit of expectation of a particular cause after the occurrence of an event, with a specific knowledge made in us by God. According to Al-Ghazali, knowledge through experience is not knowledge of necessary objects but it is just the habit of knowing something; only that knowledge is certain that God causes among the others⁴⁴.

Hume at this point turns to the philosophical conception that cause-effect relation between two events is the God's free will. It is only God who produces the effect with/after the occurrence of cause. However, as it is impossible to have an idea of

necessary connection between natural events, then how it can be possible to allow the will of God with certainty. This theory is incapable to prove and explain the possibility of necessary connection⁴⁵.

So, if there is no justification for the concept of causation, then why we adopt this idea. Al-Ghazali and Hume opine that this concept is just because of the habit of our mind. Nature will, in general, pursue certain principles and laws and this occurs to be the manner in which nature works. Physical objects are created with specific nature, by which they act in a specific way. Hume maintains that there is uniformity in natural order of the physical world⁴⁶. According to Al-Ghazali, this physical world is the creation of God, which acts in a specific way. And God is capable to suspend this natural order among the events⁴⁷.

Al-Ghazali argues that allowing the causal necessity between the things would deny that God has created everything with His free will. Since, miracles do not pursue any law of causation; therefore, proposition that states the necessary causal relation can never be true, because causality is not compatible with the occurrence of miracles. Thus, whenever all-powerful God intends to perform miracle, He ceases temporarily the natural course of action of the physical world and permit such a deviation of natural laws to happen.

According to Marmura, Al-Ghazali as a theologian affirms the principle of nature's uniformity and offered theological legitimation for this. This nature's uniformity is not an end in itself, but made by God Who is capable, all powerful and greatest. Who makes us the certification with uncommon exemption of miraculous happenings; this is uninterrupted uniformity and will go on continuously⁴⁸.

Hume, on his evidential grounds, denied the logical possibility of miracles. Laws of nature are basically universal and the occurrence of a miracle by its very nature is the violation of these laws, then the occurrences of miracles are not possible. Miracles would only occur if the generality of the law of nature is to be violated. The occurrence of miracle is contradictory to law of nature because miracle is the violation of the general principle possessed by nature and a natural law will not remain natural law, if it is violated. There is no logical justification for the miraculous happening, so it is meaningless to believe that miracles can occur⁴⁹. Nature holds the general principle that is merely a whole of constant conjunctions—based on past experiences and leads to hold the same belief in the future but not with the principle of necessitation.

Being a theologian, Al-Ghazali holds that the causal relation of one event with the other is based on God's will. God's will is absolutely capable to cause one event by the other. According to Al-Ghazali, the occurrences of miracles are possible and for him nature is nothing but the miracle of God⁵⁰. On the other hand, because of skeptical tendencies towards religious doctrines, Hume came up with most serious objection against the miracles. Hume never discusses the "will of God" in the theory of causality, but guaranteed that our mind's habit determines the causal relation and it is not a necessary relation.

Conclusion:

David Hume examines the Theory of Causation in his important works: *A Treatise of Human Nature*, and *An Enquiry concerning Human Understanding*.

Hume elucidated that there is no causality to be perceived in nature and that we make causal links out of custom or habit. However, it is argued that Hume was not the first one after all, because Al-Ghazali coined the same ideas centuries before him. In his text *The Incoherence of the Philosophers* he also stated that there is no causality to be perceived in nature. He also mentions that we assign an effect to a cause out of habit because we expect a certain effect when given a certain cause; it is what we have always observed.

The question then is how much Hume resembles Al-Ghazali. It is already mentioned that they both claim that there is no causality to be perceived in nature. Concerning the nature of this causality they are in agreement; causality is never necessary. But the reasons why they argue so are different. Al-Ghazali makes this claim out of theological motivations; he wants to sustain the God's omnipotence and allows that miracles are logically not impossible. For Hume the issue of natural cause-effect relation is one of philosophical inquiry among others. He tries to prove that our knowledge and thoughts can be traced back to sensory experience in his Enquiry.

Both Al-Ghazali and Hume claim that we make causal links out of habit and they also both allow for nature to generally work in a uniform way. Hume states this because he does not fully deny the existence of causality; he just argues that we cannot perceive it. Al-Ghazali, on the other hand, is more radical. According to him causality does not exist at all and the reason why nature generally works in a uniform way is because God created in us the faith that things happen in this way. God can stop nature from working in a uniform way and this is how miracles are possible.

According to both thinkers certain knowledge is possible. Hume explains that this only goes for the domain of pure mathematics, while Al-Ghazali states that only God's knowledge is certain. When it comes down to experiential knowledge, nothing is necessary.

We have seen two theories on causality that appear to be same. Yet the implication of these theories is completely different. Al-Ghazali's theory proves God's omnipotence and the existence of miracles; whereas, Hume's theory proves that everything can be explained within the boundaries of nature. Both criticize the mechanistic causal determinism between the events.

To understand the nature of physical world and ability of human mind to perceive objects, numerous parallels can be drawn from the conclusions of both philosophers:

1. The concept of causal necessity is an intrinsic system working consistently in the physical world. The concept of causal necessity is ineffective and invalid.
2. It is impossible for human mind to perceive causal necessity of the operating system of physical world with certainty.
3. Possibility and impossibility within the domain of physical science need serious reconsideration, on the basis of which we entail the existence/non-existence of something.

4. It requires a reconsideration of the sources and methods used for acquiring knowledge about the physical world.



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