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The Validity of Ibn Rušd's Idea for Contemporary Political Thought: Faith, Rationalism, Ethical Values

Abstract

The question of succession of governmental systems in the Arab-Islamic world was singled out by the Maghrebian scholar Muḥammad ‘Ābid al-Jābirī as a cardinal one, regarding Ibn Rušd as the very philosopher, whose thought can resolve the problem (with Ibn Ḥaldūn being the second). All other names in Arab-Islamic thought, who devoted their works to royal-sultanate advices had reduced the question of governance in the Arab-Islamic world to the acknowledgement of its the ideal nature at the times of Caliphate and the coup carried out by Mu’awiya – without describing what was the meaning of such a despotism, which covered the entire history of Islam. The paper is an attempt to sum up Ibn Rušd’s political thought, which is based upon faith, rationalism and human values. It is – in my opinion – an elaborate answer to radical Islamic thought and the so-called fundamentalism. The research is carried out on the basis of sources, and attempts to sum up the attainments of academic works published within the framework of activities of the 800th anniversary, in 1998, of the philosophers death.

Background

Ibn Rušd (1126–1198) was born in Cordoba in a family of outstanding judicial tradition; his grandfather Abū al-Walīd Muḥammad (died in 1126) was *qāḍī al-qḍāt* of Cordoba during the reign of Almorawids¹. The same should be said of his father, who held

¹ For Ibn Rušd’s life and thought, see e.g.: ‘Abbās Maḥmūd al-‘Aqqād, *Ibn Rušd*, Dar al-Ma’arif, 6th ed., Al-Qāhira 1992; Ġamīl Ṣalība, *Tārīḥ al-falsafa al-‘arabiyya*, Aš-Šarika al-‘Ālamiyya li-al-Kitāb, 3rd ed., Bayrūt 1995; Ibn Rušd, *Faṣl al-maqāl fī-mā bayna aš-šarī‘a wa-al-ḥikma min-al-ittiṣāl*, *aw wuḡūb an-naẓar al-‘aqlī wa-ḥudūd at-ta’wil (ad-dīn wa-al-muḡtama’)*, edited, preface and analytical introduction by: Muḥammad

that post until the ascendance to power in Cordoba by Almohads in 1146. The education of Abū al-Walīd Ibn Rušd followed the traditional mode of Qur'anic studies, shari'a and theology. He continued throughout his life his interest in philosophy, metaphysics and attributes (*ṣifat*) of God. In 1160, Ibn Rušd became *qāḍī* of Seville and later held many court appointments in Cordoba and Morocco. During his later life, when Almohads took over Al-Andalus, he was persecuted and banished due to his rational thought.

It was a period of persecution against intellectuals in the Arab East and Spain, symbolised by the ideas of Abū Hāmid al-Ġazālī (d. 1111), author of *Tahāfut al-falāsifa* ("The Incoherence of Philosophers")². On the one hand the dispute resembled a rejection of philosophy, on the other – the whole issue was politicised. In Baghdad, Abbasid rulers wavered, but at the end, seeking an ideological and social basis for their power chose the established tradition (the 'sacred' text) as the source of Islamic law, to the rejection of the intellectual (philosophical) interpretation of written tradition. The long history of the dispute could be briefly presented as follows.

The main theses of *Tahāfut al-falāsifa* were the rejection: of world's eternity, of the eternity of the *Qur'an*, the allegation of God's lack of knowledge of details, and the resurrection of only human souls (without bodies)³. The results of Al-Ġazālī's deliberations covered by his mentioned work involved not only accusations directed to philosophers and people within their range of influence, but above all religious verdicts (*fatwās*). Hence, advocates of philosophy (i.e., rationalism) were actually condemned, while others were not allowed to use philosophers' arguments and works. In conclusion, Al-Ġazālī introduced: firstly – prohibition of reading ancient works (*kutub al-qudamā'*) – above all, from the fields of philosophy and logic; secondly – condemnation (*takfīr*) of Muslim philosophers in connection with their violation of the principle of unanimity (*iğmā'*) in the process of interpretation (*ta'wīl*).

The latter two issues were undertaken by Ibn Rušd as the head of Cordoba's jurists. He decided upon a *fatwā* to the effect of the abrogation of Al-Ġazālī's *fatwā* upon the first of the mentioned issues, thereby declaring that "investigating ancient works is a duty in the light of shari'a (*an-naẓar fī kutub al-qudamā' wāğib bi-aš-šar'*)" and that what had been said about the incompatibility of philosophy (*ḥikma*) and shari'a was a baseless call (*da'wa bāṭila*), „because we, members of the Islamic community, know that rational justification does not lead to contradiction with the shari'a, since truth does

¹ Ābid al-Ġābirī, Markaz Dirāsāt al-Waḥda al-'Arabiyya, 3rd ed., Bayrūt 2002 (1st ed., 1997); *Aḍ-Ḍarūrī fī as-siyāsa. Muḥtaṣar kitāb as-siyāsa li-Aflāṭūn*, transl. from Hebrew by Aḥmad Ša'lān, foreword, analytical introduction and commentary by Muḥammad 'Ābid al-Ġābirī, Markaz Dirāsāt al-Waḥda al-'Arabiyya, Bayrūt 1998; Muḥammad 'Ābid al-Ġābirī, *Al-Mutaqqafūn fī al-ḥaḍāra al-'arabiyya: Miḥnat Ibn Ḥanbal wa-nakbat Ibn Rušd*, Markaz Dirāsāt al-Waḥda, 1st edition, Bayrūt 1995.

² Abū Hāmid al-Ġazālī, *Tahāfut al-falāsifa*, commentary and explanations: 'Alī Bū Maḥmām, Dār wa-Maktabat al-Hilāl, Bayrūt 1994. A Comprehensive study of Al-Ġazālī's political thought, see: Katarzyna Pachniak, *Filozofia polityki muzulmańskiej na podstawie dzieł Abū Hāmida al-Gazalego* ["The Philosophy of Islamic Politics on the Basis of Abū Hamid al-Gazali's Works"], Dialog, Warszawa 2001, (esp. chapter entitled "Al-Gazālī as a Philosopher", pp. 26–29).

³ Al-Ġazālī, *Tahāfut...*, pp. 10–26.

not stand against truth, but supports and proves it". Hence, "*ḥikma* is the companion of *shari'a* and its sister by milk". Moreover, the verbal aspect of *shari'a* should be subjected to interpretation (the verbal meaning has to lead to the figurative meaning), which is in conformity with Arabic linguistic tradition. As to the accusation about the violation of unanimity in the process of interpretation as unwarranted (*bāṭil*), because "unanimity is not obligatory in the case of theoretical questions (rational sciences, issues of conviction) as in the case of practical questions (*'amaliyyāt*, i.e. theological)". Muslims were in agreement that there is no need to treat *shari'a* texts verbally, nor is there the need to ignore their verbal meaning. The dispute is about, "which of them should be understood verbally (*ẓāhiriyyan*) and which should be interpreted"⁴.

To sum up, the arguments of Ibn Rušd against Al-Ġazālī's were: 1) the latter often misleads readers by writing that he did not support any creed, while he clearly supports *Aṣ'arism*, 2) lack of knowledge about ancient philosophy; his knowledge was derived from Ibn Sīnā, 3) he did not understand the issue of God's traits according to Aristotle's advocates, attributing to them their negation, while they did not negate Divine traits, but only the similarity between them and those of people's⁵. Above all, Al-Ġazālī contradicts himself in the matter of applied methodology. In his *Al-Munqid min ad-ḍalāl* Al-Ġazālī is convinced about the inadequacy of reason on the path of reaching to conviction, while in *Tahāfut at-tahāfut* he expresses unshakable conviction that he overturns philosophers' arguments by means of rational proof. "In other words, he attempted to prove to philosophers that the rational (philosophical) argument was baseless, but in essence he himself had to reach to that [conclusion] by means of philosophical proof"⁶.

Ibn Rušd undertook the intellectual challenge by defending philosophy and rationalising religion in a series of well-established arguments as presented above. However, the damage was already done – intellectuals (above all philosophers) could not avoid political persecution. Nowadays, in the new search for rationalising faith, and keeping radical Islam at a secure distance from power, there appears the need for the conceptions and arguments of Ibn Rušd, who was a great authority on Islamic law and whose works are quite relevant for contemporary discussions.

Theses

- Arab-Islamic nations seem to be tradition-oriented;
- The search for democratic models during the last waves of democracy was not tradition-oriented (it was envisaging the European model or models)⁷;

⁴ Ibn Rušd, *Faṣl al-maqāl...*, op. cit., pp. 12, 85-ff.

⁵ Ibn Rušd, *Tahāfut at-tahāfut*, introduction by Aḥmad Šams ad-Dīn, Dar al-Kutub al-'Imiyya, Bayrūt 2001, p. 14.

⁶ Ibid., p. 15.

⁷ *Al-Mulḥaq raqam 1: Mašrū' dirāsāt ad-dīmuqrāṭiyya wa-naṣaṭātuhu*, in: 'Alī Ḥalīfa al-Kuwarī (ed.), *Al-Istibād fī nuṣūm al-ḥukm al-'arabiyya al-mu'āšira*, Markaz Dirāsāt al-Waḥda al-'Arabiyya, Bayrūt 2005, pp. 545–556.

- So the apparent failure in the Arab-Islamic world of the European model (of nation state and representation) enhanced the call on the part of radical Islamists for return to the past (tradition) – ultimately treating the early Islamic state model as a goal, regarding categories attached to the West as irrelevant⁸;
- In the aftermath of few decades of Islamic revivalism (in Iran, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Algeria, Egypt, etc.), we note the presence on the scene of Islamic-oriented political forces and ideologies;
- The question is how to isolate and reduce the impact of radicals, reorient the moderates, and construct a tradition-oriented model – in order to help the public understand other interpretations of tradition;
- Such was the project of the late Moroccan thinker Muḥammad ‘Ābid al-Ġābirī (in general and specifically in relation to reviving the heritage of Ibn Rušd)⁹;
- Preparations in the Arab world for the 800th Anniversary (in 1998) of Ibn Rušd's death was treated as an occasion for new editions of the works of the great thinker, and a new (contemporary) reading of his thought;
- The following works of Ibn Rušd were published in preparation for, and in connection with, the mentioned Anniversary:
 - *Faṣl al-maqāl*. Edited, preface and analytical introduction by Muhammad ‘Ābid al-Ġābirī, Markaz Dirāsāt al-Waḥda al-‘Arabiyya, 1st edition, Bayrūt 1997, 3rd ed., 2002.
 - *Aḍ-Ḍarūrī fī as-siyāsa. Muḥtaṣar kitāb as-siyāsa li-Aflāṭūn*, transl. from Hebrew by Aḥmad Ša‘lān, foreword, analytical introduction and commentary by Muḥammad ‘Ābid al-Ġābirī, Markaz Dirāsāt al-Waḥda al-‘Arabiyya, Bayrūt 1998;
 - *Tahāfut al-tahāfut*, Markaz Dirāsāt al-Waḥda al-‘Arabiyya, Beirut 1998; *Tahāfut al-tahāfut*, introduction and commentary Aḥmad Šams ad-Dīn, Dar al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyya, Bayrūt 2001.
 - *Bidāyat al-muḡtaḥid wa-nihāyat al-muḡtaṣid*, Markaz Dirāsāt al-Waḥda al-‘Arabiyya, Bayrūt 1998.

Contemporary context and applications

The question of succession of governmental systems in the Arab-Islamic world was singled out by Al-Ġābirī as a cardinal one, regarding Ibn Rušd as the very philosopher, whose thought can resolve the problem (with Ibn Ḥaldūn being the second). All other names in Arab-Islamic socio-political thought, who devoted their works to royal-sultanate advices had reduced the question of governance in the Arab-Islamic world to the acknowledgement of its the ideal nature at the times of Caliphate and the

⁸ See: Jerzy Zdanowski, *Współczesna muzułmańska myśl społeczno-polityczna: Nurt Braci Muzułmańskich* [“Contemporary Islamic Socio-Political Thought: Muslim Brothers’ Orientation”], Askon, Warszawa 2009.

⁹ That was not in line with Latin Averroisme – see: Ernest Renaud, *Averroes et l’averroisme: Essai historique*, Biblioteque de l’ecole de chartes, Ire ed., Paris 1852.

coup d'état carried out by Mu'āwiya – without describing what was the meaning of the despotism, which covered the entire history of Islam.

In his work *Aḍ-Ḍarūrī fī as-siyāsa*¹⁰ – commenting Aristotle's *Rhetorics* – Ibn Rušd drew attention to the consideration that governmental systems mentioned by the latter (being in conformity with Plato's classification) emerge in a pure form only at the analytical level. However, in the real world, they emerge in a complex form, while at the times of Ibn Rušd the dominant system of government in the Maghreb was a mixture of monarchy, aristocracy, timocracy, democracy and others. Ibn Rušd conceived the question of system complexity and the resultant issue of the scientific (rational) pattern, or rational inspiration. From where are we advancing to democracy? Earlier and now we find the answer in the concept of the "complex state" (*ad-dawla al-murakkaba*). Hence, there are the timocratic, oligarchic, democratic and despotic forms of government. Each time Ibn Rušd brings into mind the Andalusian and Arab-Islamic realities. The behaviour of the people of the timocratic state (i.e., people who long for glory and honour, and who sometimes join that with the desire for riches and slaves) could sometimes and occasions be compared with the behaviour of repressive masters. In Ibn Rušd's opinion, this pattern is more close than others to the ideal state, because its inhabitants seek virtues in the first place, while their deeds are in the first place praiseworthy deeds. Such a society is based upon dignity and honour¹¹.

Ibn Rušd reaches to the mentioned moment or argument, when he proceeds to the explanation of how the common (democratic) state (town, *madīna*) transformed into a suppressive and submissive state (of his times). He writes that most societies (communities) headed by Muslim monarchs were kingdoms established upon the leadership of dynasties (families), i.e. Almohads, Fatimids and others. They do not follow laws other than natural customs (*a'araf*). Obviously all properties in such countries (*buldān*) are owned by the appropriate ruling families. This leads to the division of people into two categories: one called the public (*ḡumhūr*), the other – masters (*sāda*)¹². After explaining Plato's concept about the way the ideal state transformed into a timocracy (state of honour), Ibn Rušd comments that an analogical transformation took place in Islamic history, when the ideal state of early Islam became timocratic one at the time of Mu'āwiya – and the same was observed by him in Al-Andalus¹³. The pattern of timocracy is hopeful, when it encourages the attainment of honour and dignity, but it could also produce hedonism as the object of life. The latter states are doomed to extinction, in favour of systems based upon shari'a¹⁴.

The present article is intended – as it was mentioned – to focus upon the main contemporarily relevant ideas of Ibn Rušd's political thought. The depth of Ibn

¹⁰ Ibn Rušd, *Ḡawāmi' Siyāsat Aflāṭūn*, transl. by Franz Rosenthal, Cambridge 1969, p. 120; Al-Ḡābirī, *Al-Mutaqqafūn...*, op. cit., pp. 140–141.

¹¹ Ibn Rušd, *Ḡawāmi'*, op. cit., pp. 210–211.

¹² Ibid., p. 214.

¹³ Ibid., p. 223.

¹⁴ Ibid., p. 227.

Rušd's thought was derived from his long-standing legal practice, as well as his wide knowledge of Arab-Islamic sciences as he wrote among others in the mentioned *Bidāyat al-muğtahid* about jurisprudence and *fiqh* of the four sunni creeds. His defence of philosophy and Greek sciences (i.e. of rationalism and logic) differed from that of Al-Kindī and Al-Fārābī or Ibn Sīnā in the sense that it constitutes a defence of philosophy (rationalism) by means of the instrument of shari'a. Hence his opposition to Al-Ġazālī, who condemned philosophy and philosophers, was based on the *shari'a*. The same applied to *Ash'arites*, who used Qur'ānic verses and *ḥadīth* to condemn philosophers and their advocates. Ibn Rušd emphasised the methodological and genetic distinction (separation) of religion and philosophy, simultaneously acknowledging their conformity with the endeavour towards truth and virtue (*faḍīla*). It should be added that he concentrated his attention on the relationships between religion and the society. He insisted upon differentiating between the "public" (*āmma*) and intellectuals (*'ulamā'*) – with the public understanding the apparent (verbal, *ẓāhir*) meaning of the exegeses (*ta'wīl*), while not the complex interpretation. This comprises an important component of Ibn Rušd's socio-political thought.

Shari'a obligates to the application of rational criterion in numerous Qur'ānic verses, among them: *Al-Ḥaṣr*: 2 (*Fa-a'atabirū yā ūlī al-abṣār*), *Āl 'Imran*: 191–192 (*Wa-yatafakkarūna fī ḥalq as-samawāti wa-al-ard*). The idea is to deduct the unknown from the known. Criteria postulated by *shari'a* are the same as proof (*burhān*). Shari'a had pointed out to the need of knowing God and all existence by means of proofs. Hence, it is not acceptable to regard shari'a-accepted rules as *bid'a* (i.e. unwarranted innovations)¹⁵.

To achieve that goal (application of proof criteria, *al-qiyās al-'aqlī*, and investigation of existence), it becomes worthwhile to return to ancient philosophers' (*qudamā'*) writings, make use of their efforts, attain truth – acknowledging that truth does not negate truth. Interpretation (*ta'wīl*) means extracting meaning of the word from the real notion to the figurative notion, which is done by *faqīh* on many occasions of *shari'a* rules/verdicts (*aḥkām*). The latter cannot be discretionary, they must be based upon indisputable (*yaqīnī*) criteria of knowledgeable people (*ar-rāsiḥūna fī al-'ilm*, *Āl 'Imran*). However, as to the consensus concept, there cannot be *iğmā'* (unanimity) in theoretical questions requiring interpretation (*ta'wīl*).

Ibn Rušd's *Kitāb al-kašf 'an manāhiğ al-adilla* ("Book on elaborating proof methodologies") in turn was a critical assessment of *aš'arite* school arguments, proposing instead other proofs to be introduced to the public. In this field, he worked out *Bidāyat al-muğtahid wa-nihāyat al-muqtaṣid* as a textbook of the Māliki creed, understood in the comparative context of other sunni schools of Islamic law. The Māliki treatise dealing with shari'a and *fiqh* was the outcome of Ibn Rušd's function as a *qāḍī*. In effect, *Bidāyat al-muğtahid* covered *fatwās* on a variety of issues – a work which had been influencing *shari'a* authorities since his times up to present days. Hence, he himself

¹⁵ Ibn Rušd, *Faṣl al-maqāl...*, op. cit, p. 86.

advocated that according to Islam women were equal to men in every respect and possessed equal capacities to participate in times of peace and war. Moreover, he brought about opinions and *fatwās* of previous judges and other authorities about the status of women. Examples were: consensus about the participation of women in financial transactions; (in compliance with Abū Ḥanīfa) acceptance of their testimony in bodily affairs like divorce, marriage, slave emancipation and restitution of conjugal rights; and (in compliance with Māliki creed) introduction of will-testaments not related to wealth.

The most known and important of Ibn Rušd's works is *Tahāfut at-tahāfut* ("The Incoherence of Incoherence"), which is an original defence of Aristotelian philosophy written in opposition to Al-Ġazālī's *Tahāfut al-falāsifa*. In Al-Ġazālī's opinion Aristotelian thought, above all as presented by Avicenna's works, was self-contradictory and stands in contradiction to Islamic belief. Ibn Rušd argued that Al-Ġazālī's arguments were falsely based, while the Ibn Sīnā presentation of Aristotle was not genuine, because of being an unwarranted attempt to reconcile Plato's thought with that of Aristotle¹⁶.

Ibn Rušd argued that the allegation of a conflict between philosophy and religion is false – we can surely say that there are two different ways of reaching to the same truth. The first being the truth of religion based on faith – i.e. it could not be the subject of verification, nor of any contemplation leading to understanding. The other kind of knowledge of truth is acquired through philosophy, which was only attainable for a small minority with an intellectual capacity to understand philosophical search.

Faṣl al-maqāl – in turn – argued for the soundness of philosophical search for truth and its compatibility with the truth of faith. Basically, in this work Ibn Rušd does not attempt to reconcile philosophy (then closely related to politics and rulers in the form of ideology) with religion, but declares with conviction the compatibility of shari'a with philosophy (intelligence, *ḥikma*), and the absence of contradiction between them. In fact, illusory contradiction between philosophy and the verbal meaning of shari'a are merely biased interpretations of *Mutakallimūn* (*Salafīyyūn*, fundamentalists), who have "led to misunderstanding, hatred and wars, to the disruption of *shari'a* and antagonising of people"¹⁷. According to him, philosophy and *shari'a* are derived from the same source – source of truth (*al-ḥaqq*). Naturally, truth cannot stand opposite to truth, but only in conformity with it, as well as its affirmation. Moreover, both philosophy and *shari'a* are directed towards the attainment of virtue.

Not having access to Aristotle's *The Republic*, Ibn Rušd commented Plato's *Politics*, regarding the presented ideal state and legitimised it as similar to the early Medina Islamic state and to the Almohad state. For him, a sage philosopher at the head of the Islamic state should be installed as the commander and head of the nation.

¹⁶ Muhsin S. Mahdi, *Al-Farabi and the Foundation of Islamic Political Philosophy*, with a foreword by Charles E. Butterworth, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago–London 2001.

¹⁷ Ibn Rušd, *Faṣl al-maqāl*, op. cit., pp. 121–123.

Ibn Rušd then classifies Plato's systems of government that end with the worst (tyranny) as follows: 1) Aristocracy, being the best type of government, representing the ideal minority, and it is directly oriented towards the attainment of virtue – thereby a just system of government; 2) Timocracy, which is dominated by ambitions of people fond of honour or endeavouring for dignity (glory) – hence their orientation was to achieve objectives of progress, domination and the sublime; 3) Oligarchy, which is the rule of minority, whereas wealth would have a high position; 4) Democracy, being the rule of the nation, while freedom is highly evaluated; 5) Tyranny, which is the rule of the unjust individual, or the oppressive ruler, where complete injustice prevails without the feeling of shame¹⁸. For Plato, extreme forms of politics were represented by the Persian monarchy and Athenian democracy – with the first resembling excessive power, and the second excessive freedom¹⁹.

Conclusion

The question of the relationship between religion and philosophy is a core issue, representing through the centuries (and contemporary Arab thought) the connection between what is original (indigenous) and what is contemporaneous. In the past the subject matter was the relationship between philosophy, “ancient sciences” (*‘ulūm al-qudamā’*) called “rational sciences” (*‘ulūm ‘aqliyya*). It arises the issue of attitude towards “Western” thought and “modernity”. Ibn Rušd was unique in his position. In other words, in his treatment of the relationship between religion and philosophy, he concentrated upon the relationship between religion and society. In this framework, he insisted upon differentiating the “public” (*‘amma, ġumhūr*) from the people of knowledge (*‘ulamā’*). Ibn Rušd insisted that the public should necessarily be offered the apparent (*ẓāhir*) meaning of texts and should be saved the dissemination of interpretation (*ta’wīl*). The contradicting interpretations of *mutakallimūn* had led to conflicts, hatred and wars – to the disunity of people. In essence philosophy and *shari’a* are sisters born of what is right (*ḥaqq*, true), and what is true cannot contradict truth, but supports it and becomes its testimony, while both endeavour towards one object – i.e., virtue (*faḍīla*)²⁰.

In answering the question of Islam's compatibility with modernity (democracy, liberalism – to follow) Ibn Rušd's understanding of philosophy and logic seemed to be derived from the angle of *shari’a*. *Shari’a* had obligated to view existence through reason. Hence, rationalism is an obligation according to religious law. Then, there is no doubt about Islam's compatibility with contemporary requirements. Looking at contemporary consequences of our philosopher's thought, it is furthermore the question of national

¹⁸ ‘Abd al-Ġalīl Kāzīm al-Wāli, *Al-Ġudūr al-fikriyya li-al-istibdād*, in: ‘Alī Ḥalīfa al-Kuwārī (ed.), *Al-Istibdād...*, op. cit., p. 307.

¹⁹ ‘Abd al-Ġalīl Kāzīm al-Wāli, op. cit.; Cf.: Dawlat Ḥiḍr Ḥanāfīr, *Fī at-tuġyān wa-al-istibdād wa-al-diktātūrīyya: Baḥṭ falsafī fī mas’alat as-sulṭa al-kullīyya*, Dār al-Muntaḥab al-‘Arabī, Bayrūt 1995, p. 58.

²⁰ Al-Ġābirī, foreword and analytical introduction, in: Ibn Rušd, *Faṣl al-maḡāl*, op. cit., p. 50.

Arab-Islamic cultural identity as a backbone of its participation in human civilization, which secures it immunity in the process of openness to other cultures²¹.

The contemporary project – presented briefly above – attempts to restore to Ibn Rušd's rationalism its strength and force influence, which could have been its share, if not for the decline of the Islamic world (also due to the one-sided and superficial interpretation of tradition given by Al-Ġazālī). We can say that today we have to deal with a similar phenomenon and background, while our efforts are doomed to failure, or at best as a dream (*ḥulm*) – as described by Muḥammad al-Miṣbāḥī²². None the less, political thought is motivated by its own rules and when an idea becomes ripe an imperative arises to formulate it. Hence, the project connected with Anniversary celebrations of Ibn Rušd (and surely not only the anniversary) bore fruit in the shape of numerous academic papers devoted to the thinker, but above all – scholarly editions of his work, that altogether stimulate future discussions on such cardinal matters.

²¹ Al-Ġābirī, *Al-Mašrū' al-nahḍawī al-'arabī. Murāğ'a naqdiyya*, Markaz Dirāsāt al-Waḥda al-'Arabiyya, 2nd ed., Bayrūt 2000, pp. 176–177.

²² Muḥammad al-Miṣbāḥī, *Al-Ġābirī wa-al-ḥulm al-muzdawāğ bi-al-'aqlāniyya*, in: *Al-Turāt wa-an-nahḍa. Qirā'a fī a'amāl Muḥammad 'Abid al-Ġābirī*, Markaz Dirāsāt al-Waḥda al-'Arabiyya, Bayrūt 2004, p. 214.