

# The Status of Reason in the Philosophy of Ibn Rushd

Hamdi LAKHEL

University of Mohamed Kheider Biskra- Algeria

hamdi.lakhel@univ-biskra.dz

## Abstract

*This study titled “The status of Reason in the Philosophy of Ibn Rushd” reveals the truth that his philosophy is deeply and authentically rational in which reason is importantly present. It provides the key of knowledge and the beginning of every truth and certainty. Ibn Rushd’s rationalism, in spite of its foundation on the ideas of early Greek rationalist philosophers like Socrates and Plato, is marked by distinguishing religious features. This really made him a creator and innovator, allowing creating a unique rational philosophical framework that reflected his distinctive genius, which prominently influenced the European philosophical thought.*

**Keywords:** Reason, Philosophy, Ibn Rushd.

## *Introduction*

The study of the philosophical thought history throughout the ages and civilizations encounters several philosophical milestones authored by philosophers and thinkers who raised the banner of philosophy, believing in its capacity of shaping the individual, building society, and establishing a civilization. The most prominent is the Islamic philosophy which stands remarkably among them, distinguished in theme, methodology, and dimensions, and articulated by many Muslim philosophers’ ideas, notably Abu al-Walid Ibn Rushd. His heyday was marked by intellectual and philosophical thought, making it a turning point in Islamic philosophy. This is because his ideas advocated for convergence between wisdom and Sharia (Islamic Law), and his trust in proof (reason) as the pillar of truth surpassing religion, as he criticized the Sufi Illuminationist philosophy constructed by Al-Ghazali. He rejected it and advocated for the adoption of reason and rationalism to construct a philosophical framework through which a cognitive system capable of achieving the renaissance of the nation can be outlined. He is a profound rational philosopher who raised the status of reason, and made it the starting point of various truths in an era when Sufi religious philosophy was prevalent, and which only restricted itself to thinking within the religious framework and premade moulds. Ibn Rushd rationality has entered European

philosophical thought and affected many Christian and Jewish philosophers in the Middle Ages, and its impact moved on to the Renaissance and the modern era. Hence, our article emphasizes the status of reason in Ibn Rushd's philosophy, and confirms the authenticity of his rationality which he constructed from the content of his philosophy. Therefore, we bring up the following inquiries: What is the status of reason in Ibn Rushd's philosophy? Is his rationalism genuinely authentic? What is its impact on European philosophical thought?

### *1. Conceptual Definitions*

#### 1.1. REASON

Reason is an innate faculty which Allah Almighty bestowed upon humans, distinguishing them from other creatures, and through which, thinking is processed and knowledge is gained, thereby surpassing other beings. Reason is one of the topics of the philosophical metaphysics discussed by ancient and modern philosophers. Therefore, diverse opinions and perspectives concerning its meaning came into being.

The early Greek philosophers saw reason as an absolute universal essence that represents goodness and virtue. Only because it is cosmic, knowledge is attained. Heraclitus referred to it as "Logos", the cosmic reason that organizes and controls all natural phenomena and processes and directs their upshot in a permanent and eternal manner. Anaxagoras considered reason as "Nous", the universal reason, different from the cosmic reason. It is the first principle which initiated motion all over the universe. Plato viewed reason as a superior natural faculty capable of thinking and perception. He refers to the cosmic reason as an epitome of goodness and virtue in his famous book "The Republic" (Wahba, 2007, p. 423).

Plato asserted reason's capacity to get to the truth and self-perception, whether epistemic, ethical, political, or artistic... etc.

Ibn Sina considered reason as the rational power. It represents a neutral essence beyond all creations, phenomena, and substances. It is the speaking soul that everyone refers to as "I" (Saliba, 1982, p. 85).

As for Abu Hamid Al-Ghazali, he sees that the significance of "reason" varies between the masses and the philosophers and theologians. He states:

*As for "reason," it is a common term which the masses, philosophers, and theologians use with various meanings and connotations. The commonality requires a unified significance. The masses use it in three ways: firstly, as natural disposition; secondly, as general principles acquired through experience; thirdly, as human veneration and demeanour... (Al-Ghazali, p. 286).*

Ibn Rushd viewed reason as an essential pillar in human knowledge through which knowledge and truth can be attained, affirming through his theory that converges the theory of epistemology with the study of metaphysics that reason is neither the soul nor a part of it but a separate type of spirit like the eternal essence. (Aquinas, 1994, p. 91).

The material mind links up with the human reason via images or flowing reasoned insights which makes the active mind a repository for the human reason. (Bloch, 2008, pp. 28-29).

Ibn Rushd also confirmed that reason is one of the gifts of the soul. His brilliance lies in that he separates reason from the body, elevating its value and making it the pillar of all truths. He also highlighted the existence of different levels of the mind, most prominently the hylic mind as a concept derived from Aristotle but with elaboration and new interpretations.

Reason has also indicated causality and sufficient reasons according to Leibniz, who categorized reason into theoretical revolves around perception and acquiring knowledge, and practical centered on ethics and behavior (Arabic Language Academy, 1983, p. 120).

Descartes considered reason as a powerful natural disposition assisting humans to acquire knowledge as the source of thinking, analyzing, interpretation, doubt, and the various intellectual functions. Furthermore, it is the starting point of every science and knowledge. It is absolute, unique and the best common thing among people (Descartes, 1985, p. 126).

André Lalande sees the mind as a natural disposition and principle with functions and manifestations that embodies in the activity of thought in two significant domains: the domain of intellectual activity, which coordinates knowledge and organizes it, and the practical domain, which undertakes the task of organizing behavior (Lalande, 2001, p. 1160).

Additionally, philosophers addressed the types of reason, including Aristotle, who saw four types: potential reason, active reason, effective reason, and absolute reason. Al-Farabi asserted that reason varies in meaning from the masses to philosophers to theologians, emphasizing four levels of reason which are: potential reason, active reason, effective reason, and beneficiary reason.

According to the aforementioned, it can be said that defining the concept of reason and determining its levels is challenging because of the differing starting points of each philosopher and the postulates on which they base their philosophical frameworks, and through which they attempt to define the meaning of reason.

1.2. IBN RUSHD

Ibn Rushd was an Arab Muslim philosopher born in Cordoba in 1126 CE. First, he studied Religious and Linguistic Sciences. Then, he focused on rational and empirical sciences such as Mathematics, Astronomy, Medicine, and Philosophy. He conducted deep research on philosophical issues and problems, presenting many ideas reflecting his innate genius. Despite being influenced by early Greek philosophers, he neither was a follower nor imitator but rather an explainer, interpreter, critic, and innovator.

Ibn Rushd was called “The Wise Man” because he was involved in Religious Sciences, bringing revitalization to them to the extent of holding the position of Chief Justice in Cordoba. He was also dubbed “a proficient scholar” who focused on Mathematics and Medicine. His book “The Colliget,” considered a significant reference in Medicine and still studied today, proves that. He was further known as as a critical philosopher, who delved into various philosophical issues and problems through reading, understanding, explaining and criticizing. He interpreted many logical issues with critiques and reservations. He was interested in metaphysical issues, especially those related to religious subjects trying to build a comprehensive philosophical system that coordinates philosophy with religion, wisdom with Sharia, making Muslim individuals capable of critical thinking, understanding, according to a distinctive rational perspective.

Mohamed Abid al-Jabiri states about him,

*Ibn Rushd explained Aristotle’s works but went beyond mere explanation to genuine philosophical endeavor. He was a jurist who surpassed the existing method in presenting issues of Sharia, Belief, Science, and Philosophy. Thus, he is still a model of the intellectual who combines heritage absorption with contemporary thought representation, as well as imbuing with critical spirit and scientific and moral virtue. (Al-Jabiri, 1998, p. 10)*

In his early days, Ibn Rushd was close to Prince Abu Ya’qub, offering him counsel and aiding in the managing the affairs of the principality as he was a chief judge. However, with Al-Mansur, things turned against him. He was accused of disbelief, atheism, corrupting people’s minds, and attempting to go against the ruler and doubting his ideas and beliefs. Here, Ibn Rushd underwent a terrible crisis. He was imprisoned, exiled, and his books were burnt. All this happened due to extremists and radicals – enemies of reason, philosophy, and renewal, who sought to harm him, and they succeeded.

It was narrated that one unconvincing reason for Ibn Rushd’s ordeal was when he wrote his famous book “the Animal” describing the types of the animals, especially the giraffe, where he mentioned: “I saw a giraffe at the Berbers’ king,

meaning Al-Mansur". When this reached Al-Mansur, it exacerbated matters for Ibn Rushd. This was sufficient for the prince to imprison and send him into exile, although he justified that he did not intend to offend the prince, but he failed (Al-Qaioumi, 1997, p. 469).

Ibn Rushd lived during a time when critical thinking was lacking and superficial ideas diverging from reason and logic were prevailing. Though European pens acknowledged his merit and the strength of his rational philosophy, his society necessitated philosophical awareness. However, contemporary Arab thinkers have keenly interested in Ibn Rushd's writings. Annual conferences are organized concerning his thought and philosophy, and the Ibn Rushd Prize for Free Thought has also been established. All these highlights Ibn Rushd's competence, prowess, and philosophical creativity in advocating for diligence, modernization, and renewal.

Ibn Rushd died in 1198 AD. He left behind a rich legacy encompassing various fields of knowledge such as Astronomy, Mathematics, Medicine, Literature, Jurisprudence, and Philosophy. Among his notable works, we mention:

- "The Decisive Treatise on the Connection between Philosophy and Sharia."
- "The Distinguished Jurist's Primer."
- "The Incoherence of the Incoherence."
- "Exposition of the Methods of Proof in Doctrines of the Religion."
- "The Necessary in Politics" (Shahata, 2017, p. 05).

## *2. The landmarks of Ibn Rushd's philosophy.*

The philosophy of Ibn Rushd is founded upon various principles, serving as landmarks of his philosophical approach. They include:

### 2.1. RECONCILIATION BETWEEN PHILOSOPHY AND RELIGION

Some Muslim philosophers, like Abu Hamid Al-Ghazali, stated that philosophy (wisdom) and Sharia (religious law) are contradictory, through various issues subject of contradiction between philosophy and religion especially in metaphysics such as creation, annihilation, and the nature of the world... etc. He emphasized that they are of different sources: philosophy is a human creation. It is from the non-religious Greek environment, whereas religion is a path of life revealed by Allah for his servants, ordering them to follow for salvation in this world and the hereafter. He asserted that early Greek philosophers like Socrates, Plato and Aristotle went astray for tackling super-rational and impossible issues. He rejected many of their ideas and called for avoiding metaphysical inquiries that necessitates absolute acceptance rather than intellectual inquiry. This is clarified in his book "The Incoherence of the Philosophers". Among these examples, he

challenged philosophers to subject their theological inquiries to their own logical standards. He stated:

*We debate with them in this book in their language – I mean in their terminology of logic – and clarify that what they stated for the validity of analogy in the category of proof in logic, what they stipulated for its form in the book on logic, and what they posited in the “Isagoge” and in “Categories” – which are parts of logic and its preliminaries – they were not able to accomplish any of it in their theological sciences. (All-Ghazali, 1966, p. 43)*

Ibn Rushd criticized many of Al-Ghazali's ideas, rejecting many of his arguments and asserting the contradictions it contains and the logic of negation he adopted, which led him to oppose philosophy, despite his several ideas where he praised philosophy, logic, and the contributions of Greek philosophers to human thought. Ibn Rushd confirmed that the issues Al-Ghazali opposed, especially those of Avicenna (Ibn Sina) and Al-Farabi, are originally philosophical. On one hand, he called for the refutation of delving into metaphysics, yet he tackled several philosophical topics such as substance, existence, and natural science... etc. Therefore, many specialists in Islamic philosophy regard Al-Ghazali's ideas criticizing philosophy and his statement that it opposes religion are philosophical ideas. They convey a philosophical style and intellectual framework founded upon deconstruction and critique.

Ibn Rushd considers philosophy and religion as complementary and agreeable, not contradictory. His viewpoint is that philosophy is a rational activity with the aim of contemplation of the universe to understand its secrets and intricacies, as well as obtaining knowledge of the Creator, His power, greatness, and justice. According to Ibn Rushd, philosophy demonstrates the supreme form of the mind. This is in line with the revelation of Allah via several verses in the Quran that urge for thinking, reflections, contemplation, and the use of reason. He emphasizes the utilization of both reason and religion for the pursuit of truth and attaining certainty, as they are harmoniously connected in serving human lack and aspirations for knowledge. According to Ibn Rushd, they are both necessary for human pursuit of achieving goodness, righteousness and virtue.

To clarify his stance concerning the relationship between philosophy and religion, and demonstrate the harmony between the two, Ibn Rushd authored his famous work “The Decisive Treatise on the Connection between Philosophy and Religion,” which serves as a definitive response and proof and thorough refutation of Al-Ghazali's philosophy. He rejected all the issues in which Al-Ghazali denied philosophy, and so criticizing philosophers. Ibn Rushd highlights the necessity and

importance of philosophy for humans, and its strong connection with religion. He states:

*If this Philosophy is indeed true and calls to contemplation leading to knowledge of the truth, then we Muslims know for certain that rational contemplation does not contradict what Sharia has revealed. Truth does not oppose truth, but rather asserts and testifies to it. (Ibn Rushd, 1997, pp. 33-34)*

Hence, it is evident that a key pillar of Ibn Rushd's philosophy is his assertion on the strong correlation between philosophy and religion, wisdom and Sharia (Islamic law), reason and revelation.

## 2.2. THE IMPORTANCE OF REASON IN ACHIEVING CERTAINTY

Among the pillars upon which the philosophy of Ibn Rushd is founded is his considering proof to be the basis of truth, describing it by various concepts, most notably reason. He asserts that proof is the pathway to true knowledge. It represents one of the types of rational knowledge that stems from the reason and uses the rational method. Its bases are logic principles as the source of all truth according to Ibn Rushd. He shifted towards studying and interpreting formal logic. Then, he addressed its issues and discussions, until he surpassed many initial topics of logic such as propositions, statements, and syllogism, while emphasizing proof as the focal of logic and the method of study with the aim of certainty and objectivity. It is both an intellectual and even religious requirement.

Ibn Rushd defended proof, believing in its inseparability from logic, and asserting the role of logical proofs in attaining truth and knowledge. Proof is the pillar of every theory and concept. It represents the method of sound reason and scientific knowledge aiming for truth and certainty. He demonstrates the role of evidential method and its impact on religious discourse, highlighting the epistemological perspective of proof and its contribution in accomplishing harmony between wisdom and Sharia (Islamic law).

Ibn Rushd, sees proof as the most significant and the best method of intellectual inquiry because Allah has invited us to know Him and His creations, which prove His existence – Glory be to Him, through proof rather than mere acceptance, imitation, or adherence without comprehension and rationality. Ibn Rushd said:

*As for Sharia (religious law), it calls for considering and seeking knowledge of existents with reason in many verses, confirming that it is imperative to utilize both rational and legal proof to attain knowledge of the reality of existents... (Ibn Rushd, 1997, p. 24).*

Ibn Rushd saw that proof, or what is sometimes referred to as evidential syllogism, as the pillar of knowledge of the Creator, Almighty Allah, in addition to

understanding the reality of existents because it represents rationality and insight, making it necessary for attaining such knowledge. Thus, he categorized people into different categories. The general public knows various religious and worldly truths via imitation and adherence, whereas the elite reflect and interpret. This is because knowledge of the universe and its Creator, Allah, is attained through proof, which is the key for comprehending various religious and worldly truths.

Ibn Rushd highlights the importance of reason as the pathway to truth and the basis for understanding religion and the world, not mere religious practices. According to him, religion alone cannot explain certain issues and matters that necessitate intellectual and logical action arising from reason. Therefore, he called for utilizing logic and reason as primary elements in attaining knowledge, goodness, and happiness. He rejected Al-Ghazali's arguments that favourite religion and deny the role of reason and philosophy. Meanwhile, he asserted the limitations of rational experience in proving different subjects. Thus, he considered religion as complementary to reason, because wisdom involves considering things in line with the nature of proof. Bernardino Longo states about Ibn Rushd's reason:

*In general, Ibn Rushd's logic is based on the theory of reason because reason establishes all arguments and is the ultimate objective of logic. Therefore, reason is the essential nerve of the science of logic. (Ibn Rushd, 1984, pp. 14-15)*

### 2.3. REASON IS THE PILLAR OF KNOWLEDGE AND ATTAINING CERTAINTY

Ibn Rushd believed that reason is the pillar of truth and the starting point of every knowledge seeking certainty. He viewed it positively, asserting that it is humanity's noblest and most distinguishing feature among other creatures. Through reason, knowledge and scientific inquiry are attained and humanity manifests itself. It is the basis of thought, analysis, creativity, and moral elevation of humanity. In his time, Ibn Rushd defended reason against critics who criticized philosophy and intellectual knowledge for rejection and disbelief due to the narrow insight and false opinions especially of some Sufi thinkers. They accused philosophy and reason for several accusations and rejected the role of reason and logic and emphasized the adequacy of religion alone for achieving certainty. Through their narrow interpretation, they mistook Quranic verses which call for insightful thinking, contemplation, and the use of reason to comprehend the universe and worldly phenomena. Likewise, some medieval Christian and Jewish thinkers who favoured theology making it the essence of all truth, in addition, to rejecting logical reasoning and rational method in obtaining knowledge and attaining truth.



Ibn Rushd's philosophy is founded upon rationality, believing that reason is the start of every change and knowledge. He stated:

*Reason is nothing more than understanding existents via their causes, and it distinguishes itself from all other perceptive faculties. Whoever elevates causes has elevated reason. The craft of logic establishes that there are indeed causes and effects. Knowledge of these effects is not absolute except by knowledge of their causes, and disrupting these causes nullifies knowledge. (Al-Khudairi, 1983, p. 122)*

According to this definition, it is evident that Ibn Rushd establishes a link between cause and effect, i.e., a link between the phenomenon and its material cause. He believes that events occur by being caused by something material. He associates a close connection between the cause and the effect in the occurrence of phenomena. This view contradicts that of Al-Ghazali's, who does not connect cause to effect. Similarly, he contrasts with Sufi thinkers who attribute phenomena to intuition.

Ibn Rushd claims that any truth not based on rational evidence is rejected because the truth he defends is associated to obvious and reasonable causes and reasons, founded on rational principles and proof. Thus, he defends reason in every instance and position. For example, concerning the issue of pleasures, he prefers intellectual and afterlife pleasures over worldly physical pleasures. He cited Quranic verses and Prophetic sayings to support his stance. Furthermore, he believed that the noblest sciences are rational sciences based on reason, logic, proof, and argumentation. These inherently beneficial rational sciences include knowledge about Allah, His attributes, angels, books, prophets, and the nature of existence itself. If a science directly leads to knowledge of Allah, it is beneficial. If it does not directly lead to knowledge of Allah, it is merely a craft or skill like any others. (Ibn Rushd, 2001, p. 559)

Ibn Rushd did believe in the role and significance of reason in achieving certainty, emphasizing its importance for humans. He adopted a sound methodology based on rationality, without imitation and adherence to preconceived notions of thought that have negatively impacted the Arab and Islamic nation for centuries. He called for that because it had drifted away from the spirit of reason, logic, and the method of proof reasoning, and followed the path of illuminative reason, which calls for imitation without critical thinking, analysis, interpretation, and reasoned debate. Therefore, he rejected this in his time, and warned against it. Thus, reason as the primary source of truth is the most important pillar of his philosophy.

#### 2.4. ADVOCATING FOR DILIGENCE (IJTIHAD)

Ibn Rushd lived between Al-Andalus and Cordoba, during the period of the 12<sup>th</sup> century, in the era of Almohad state which adopted the thoughts of Al-Ghazali and the Ash'ari doctrine, alongside the Sufi Illuminationist approach. This stagnated society and the cultural aspects across the Maghreb region, resulting in a decline in all aspects, together with the falling of the Islamic Caliphate, culture and thought. Here, Ibn Rushd addressed reality positively via a critical approach founded upon evidence, logic, and reason. He rejected imitation and the manipulation of religion and knowledge, and thinking for gaining positions or pleasing rulers. Instead, he adopted the path of a wise philosopher and scholar, seeking change and reform through highlighting various concepts such as the concept of diligence. He advocated for diligence in Sharia, societal issues, and religious rulings, regarding the general objective of Sharia, which is relevance in all times and places.

Ibn Rushd called for diligence, rejecting many ideas that restricted Muslim individuals in his era, causing them regression instead of being the creators of civilization and progress. His approach to diligence is founded upon reason and rationality, as cited in his book "The Distinguished Jurist's Primer". This book, despite being a jurisprudential book, Ibn Rushd took a different path in by presenting various opinions and rulings on a single issue, then providing the appropriate answer according to evidence and reason. Thus, he reviewed the issue and paved the way to diligence, to ensure its relevance to the time and place. He advocated for diligence through addressing issues of consensus and disagreement, by considering their evidences to verify their authenticity. His approach to diligence aimed at intercepting imitation and adherence, and promoting the pursuit of knowledge through diligence... (Ibn Rushd, 2009, p. 10).

Ibn Rushd believed in the role of diligence in constructing a thought, philosophical and cultural integrated framework, both in religious and rational sciences. For him, it is a secure pathway towards the nation's cultural rise. His rational evidential approach based on diligence had a great impact on Islamic and Western worlds.

These points advocated by Ibn Rushd are pillars of his philosophy. They highlighted his profound genius, and made him a source for many scholars and thinkers to draw from his thoughts and adopt his methodology of research and study.

*3. The Presence of Reason in Ibn Rushd's Philosophy*

A thorough study of Ibn Rushd's philosophy shows that it is a distinctly rational philosophy due to the presence of reason in various philosophical issues he addressed. Reason, or wisdom, is a pathway to truth, goodness, and virtue due to its faculties which enable humans to understand his behavior's path and actions' motives. According to Ibn Rushd, reason is the essence of ethical value. It assists to recognize good and evil, distinguish benefit from harm, and virtue from vice. Humans have the ability to recognize virtues and issue judges on the goodness of an action. This ability is called reason as the essence of the ethical action. Therefore, Ibn Rushd follows Aristotle in categorizing virtues, emphasizing that there are three types: theoretical virtue, practical virtue, and moral virtue, with his addition of the intellectual virtue based on reason as the most important. He states:

*It has also become evident that the rational soul consists of two parts, practical and theoretical. Therefore, the perfections are, similarly, categorized into those attributed to the practical virtues and others to the theoretical ones. Since the appetitive soul, which is one of the human soul's faculties and anti-contemplation force, its condition is also linked to the rational faculty. Therefore, human perfections are three: theoretical virtues, practical virtues, ethical virtues, and intellectual virtues related to reason. (Ibn Rushd, 1998, p. 153)*

Thus, Ibn Rushd's rationality in the field of ethics manifests itself in giving great emphasis to reason, making it a referential faculty to judge ethical actions. Furthermore, the rational soul has a superiority and capacity that makes it surpass other souls because it relies on reason and evidence. He also highlighted the ethical virtue and its role in constructing the ethical framework as the source of correct thinking, rectitude, achieving happiness, and establishing justice. It is worth mentioning that Ibn Rushd's assertion on the role of reason as a foundation for embodying ethics does not deny religion (Sharia), but rather confirms that it is the origin of virtues and various values, while reason distinguishes, examines, analyzes, compares, and judges to embody ethics in entirety and universally in life. He views that sovereignty is for the rational and not the sensible. Also, Greek philosophers, especially Plato and Aristotle, had a great impact on Ibn Rushd's ethical philosophy founded upon reason, a philosophy connected to high rational theoretical landmarks that elevate man to the level of perfection. Ibn Rushd stated about virtue: "Giving the enemy is virtue, whereas giving to a friend is not a virtue" (Al-Aqqad, 1992, pp. 19-20).

Regarding politics, Ibn Rushd highlighted the role of reason in establishing the political framework. Though, he was strongly influenced by the first Greek philosophers, such as Plato, Aristotle, and even Al-Farabi, he analyzed and

clarified the political problem. In his political philosophy, he addressed many issues and topics, such as the citizen's issue in the state, the role of woman in the political process, ruler and governed relationship, and the legitimate establishment of the political practice. Genuinely, he attempted to establish an integrated political approach alongside with the Islamic culture from one side and benefiting from the Greek heritage on the other side.

A careful contemplation of Ibn Rushd's political philosophy discovers that it was grounded upon reason and its role in the political practice by highlighting the role of the philosophers, sages, and scientists who possess wisdom and sound reasoning. Additionally, he defended the political model that is subject to the rational outputs, i.e., political action based on rational pillars.

In many of his political works, Ibn Rushd discussed the necessity of establishing a virtuous city where individuals live in harmony and concord according to absolute principles originating from religious basics and rational guidelines. A city where there is no place for injustice and tyranny, but rather justice, solidarity, and ideal ethical life. It is because humans have the faculty of reason that enable them encounter this challenge via the perfection of reason above anything else. Hence, he saw the perfection of human reason is of great importance because of its relation to religious laws and wisdom. Here, he stated: "Religious laws teach practical virtues, and wisdom teaches theoretical virtues" (Fakhoury, 1960, p. 463).

Hence, Ibn Rushd clearly confirmed the role of philosophy, i.e., reason, in establishing political practice through a set of laws that manage individuals' in their city.

Ibn Rushd discussed civic governance, asserting the necessity of founding the city upon justice and knowledge. Justice originates from Islamic Sharia principles, and knowledge is related to the activity of reason, that is, the authority of rational law. Additionally, justice, as high ethical virtue, relates to this rational knowledge. Therefore, justice is the fruit of knowledge, while injustice results from ignorance. Here, it comes obvious the influence of Socrates in Ibn Rushd's political philosophy.

Ibn Rushd stressed virtue founded upon reason as the first step to build the virtuous and righteous citizen. From this, the virtuous city comes into being, if it is built upon justice, reason, and individuals recognize their limits and capabilities, and act according to their qualifications without exceeding their physical and mental abilities. As for Ibn Rushd's discussion of authority and governance regimes, he resolutely defended the rule of the wise philosopher, who has sound

reasoning in understanding phenomena and rules wisely and reasonably, establishing justice, goodness, and truth. Thus, the rule of reason prevails.

Often, Ibn Rushd compared the situation of Plato and Aristotle with the existence of sophists who sought to extinguish the light of reason and philosophy, undermining rational human spirit. He contrasted it with the situation in his time, where many claim knowledge and thought, yet they are enemies of knowledge, philosophy, and reason. Their thinking is illuminationist, their approach is suffi and static. They rejected renewal and creativity, and preferred what is ugly and disparaged what is beautiful (Ibn Rushd, 1998, p. 59).

In summary of Ibn Rushd's philosophical-political thought, we find that his political theory is related to his ethical theory. Both of them revolve around a fundamental pillar, upon which ethical value and political practice rely, that is reason.

Concerning knowledge, Ibn Rushd sees that humans are driven by passion and desire to get to truth and attain knowledge through posing questions, leading to inquiry, contemplation, and thinking. Here, reason is a key tool in acquiring knowledge. Humans, also, inherently seek knowledge because of reason as a distinguishing feature, which continuously urge them towards achieving truth and certainty. Furthermore, Allah the almighty created humans to contemplate and think about the surrounding phenomena to reveal their governing laws. The most crucial knowledge that humans must achieve is the knowledge of their Creator, Allah the almighty, through reason. He stated, "The Sharia promotes knowledge of Allah and His creatures through reason" (Ibn Rushd, 1997, pp. 25-26).

Knowledge in Islamic sciences is also attained through reason by asserting in many of his writings that religious law necessitates reason to achieve its higher purposes in creation and existence. Therefore, in religious issues, he emphasizes the role of argumentation, evidence, and rational thinking, beyond imitation. His jurisprudential innovations surpassed expectations because of his call to diligence and the adoption of a rational approach in research, analysis, and verification by using reason and interpretation to reveal hidden truths of arising issues. As for empirical sciences like Astronomy, Medicine, and Physics, he was open-minded, considering these empirical sciences require experimentation and sensory experience, but always in line with reason. Investigation, experimentation, understanding, and analysis of experiments and facts cannot occur without utilizing reason, which is the primary source of knowledge.

Accordingly, Ibn Rushd emphasized reason, wisdom, and philosophy in explaining the relationship between reason and revelation. He viewed that human affairs cannot be rectified except through an enlightened reason and philosophy

that understands religion and enhances its embodiment, making true religious devotion a defender of the strong relationship between wisdom and religious law, as we mentioned before.

Hence, Ibn Rushd's rationality manifests in several fields of knowledge: ethics, politics, epistemology, alongside religious law and other philosophical subjects, in which reason was present powerfully as a foundation, guide, and organizer, yet they cannot all be addressed here. Here, it is confirmed to us that Ibn Rushd's philosophy is distinctly rationalistic, and he is indeed a philosopher of reason par excellence.

#### *4. Ibn Rushd's Rationalism Characteristics*

Ibn Rushd's rationalistic philosophy is characterized by:

##### 4.1. GENUINE RATIONALISM

Ibn Rushd studied philosophy proficiently across its various fields and areas of study. He deeply studied Greek philosophy, and explained numerous Greek philosophical sources in ethics, education, politics... etc. Yet, he was not merely a transmitter; rather he innovated in his interpretation, adding new ideas and criticizing many Greek philosophical viewpoints. He sought to imbue his philosophy with Arab-Islamic cultural perspectives. Thus, he developed another philosophical framework representing a distinct rationality. According to this, many scholars defend Ibn Rushd's rationalistic philosophy, believing that he was a productive and creative thinker who surpassed Greek philosophy with his own creative ideas to the extent that many logic thinkers and renaissance and contemporary philosophers forgot about Plato and Aristotle, and relied upon Ibn Rushd's philosophy, particularly in Italy. The emergence of Latin Averroism is good evidence of Ibn Rushd's genius and his authentic rationalistic philosophy. Ernest Renan mentioned in his famous book "Averroès and Averroïsme", that Ibn Rushd had Jewish and Christian disciples. They were greatly influenced by his ideas, and they adopted his philosophy as a basis for their philosophical frameworks. Among them, the Jewish Ben Daoued, who referred to Ibn Rushd as embodying "the spirit of Aristotle and his reason" (Renan, 1957, p. 195).

##### 4.2. HARMONIOUS RATIONALISM WITH RELIGION:

The rationalism in Ibn Rushd's philosophy elevated the status of reason, giving it a significant and distinguished place as a human faculty capable of attaining truth. He viewed reason as a necessary, important, and effective tool. It is the basis of all knowledge. Therefore, he defended reason and considered it as the start of his philosophical inquiry, meanwhile criticizing opinions that rejected

reason and attempted to undermine the value of humans, like those from Sufism, Illuminationist thought, and static philosophies grounded upon imitation and adherence in serve of personal interests or material benefits. However, Ibn Rushd defended reason with evidence and truth, highlighting the role of reason, evidence, logic and argumentation in constructing the philosophical framework. Additionally, his rationalism does deny other concepts such as religion, which he defended against adversaries, considering Sharia as the constitution of Allah for His servants, asserting its necessity for salvation in both worldly and spiritual realms. As Chief Judge, he ruled using Sharia of Allah and His provisions, emphasizing that reason and religion do not conflict but rather harmonize alongside each other, serving truth, goodness, and virtue. He asserted the strong correlation between reason and revelation. He stated: “Wisdom is the companion of Sharia, despite the enmity, hatred, and disputes between them; they are inherently affectionate in essence and instinct” (Ibn Rushd, 1997, p. 18).

#### 4.3. RATIONALISM ALIGNS WITH PHILOSOPHY

A careful contemplation of Ibn Rushd’s rationalism discovers that he is a rationalist philosopher who didn’t consider reason merely as the foundation of knowledge in one field but as the starting point for all truths across various fields of knowledge. He elevated the status of reason, considering it the source of all knowledge and creativity. Therefore, he gave emphasis to logic, reasoning, and rational thought, and urged for their consideration at every stage of intellectual development. His rationalism did not imitate theologians or some scholars of his time who viewed reason as a structure devoid of spirit, like the Mu’tazilites and Kharijites... etc., but rather aligned with philosophical spirit. He believed undoubtedly that reason could attain knowledge and achieve certainty, relying solely on rational evidence. He rejected theoretical metaphysical argumentation that exclude reason and depend on other concepts such as intuition, hearing, sight, and other Illuminationist concepts where contradictions and ambiguity are apparent. These criticisms were addressed by Ibn Rushd. Here, it can be emphasized that Ibn Rushd’s rationalism was founded on philosophical understanding founded upon rational principles relying on evidence, logical reasoning, and logical judgment. Therefore, many sources affirm that Ibn Rushd’s fame is mainly attributed to his interest and pursuit of philosophy that drew attention to his brilliant and crafty ideas (Buluz, 2012, p. 50).

Hence, it can be said that Ibn Rushd’s rationalism aligns with philosophy because he endeavoured to renew philosophical thought in the Maghreb region and Andalusia by making the Islamic intellect go back to its authentic rationalism,

which is the source of its strength and the distinctive feature of its progress, deeply embedded in his religion.

#### 4.4. RATIONALISM INTERACTED WITH ITS CONTEXT

By observing the rationalism pioneered by Ibn Rushd we find that it interacted positively with its context. Ibn Rushd lived during a time of prevailing problems, complex societal conditions, intellectual confusion, and cultural disappearance. Strange ideas contrary to Islamic society prevailed, conflicting with the spirit of the Islamic religion, which calls for reason, diligence, knowledge, and work, rejects blind imitation, and advocates for all noble ethical principles that elevate both the individual and society. Therefore, it was imperative on a proficient philosopher like Ibn Rushd to act in defense of his religion, philosophy, and philosophical convictions, aiming for intellectual reform and change in a society where heresies, superstitions, and illusions were misleading minds. Hence, Ibn Rushd strived, through his writings, thoughts, and numerous debates, to disseminate his philosophical thought based on reason and rationalism. He made efforts to establish a new culture, meaning a new thought grounded on intellectual creativity, philosophical insight, and logical proof, making individuals think rationally, far from desires, myths, and superstitions. He sought to construct an integrated philosophical framework founded on reason and the outputs of intellectual and philosophical thinking. This is asserted by Salvador Gómez, who stated:

*Ibn Rushd is not the rational atheist as Renan claimed, nor is he the Aristotelian pagan who deprived us of the personal eternity of the human soul, but rather, he is an authentic Muslim who strived to delve into the meanings of Quranic revelation to reassure his fellow believers in the dilemmas that reason or the scholars of other religions might pose. (the Algerian Ministry of Religious Affairs, June 10-19, 1976, p. 98)*

#### *5. The Impact of Ibn Rushd's Rational Philosophy on European Philosophical Thought*

A deep study of Ibn Rushd's rational philosophy discovers the truth that he had a great impact on Islamic philosophy because of his quantitative and qualitative philosophical innovations. He managed to construct an integrated philosophical framework based upon reason and rationalism, making him a philosophical reference in the Arab and Islamic countries. He evidently impacted Ibn Khaldun in Tunisia, Malek Bennabi in Algeria, Mohamed Abed Al-Jabiri in Morocco, and many others. Ibn Rushd's philosophy did not restrict itself locally oriented but expanded and spread globally. With his widespread philosophy, he



influenced European philosophical thought. The philosopher Michael Scot was the first to introduce Ibn Rushd's philosophy to Europe in 1230 CE in Toledo, thus receiving the title of the founder of "Averroism" in Europe as an enlightened philosophy. His influence in Europe was prominent, incomparable by any other philosopher (Dhannoon Taha, 2004, p. 01).

Ibn Rushd had a major impact in Europe, especially on Italian logical philosophers where they adopted his method of logical reasoning, on which they constructed their philosophical framework, such as Marcus Antonius Zimara who was influenced by Ibn Rushd's logical ideas based on evidence and attempted to explain them to utilize in his Epistemological theory. In addition to the researches of Baldwinus, whose studies followed Ibn Rushd's logical ideas and defended them, particular those related to the proof methodology in logic. In his part, Fortunatus Carlius explained the Second Analytics (The Proof) of Aristotle, being influenced by Ibn Rushd (Al-Khudairi, 1983, p. 15).

Thomas Aquinas and other Christian and Jewish medieval philosophers were also influenced by Ibn Rushd's philosophy. The greatest philosophers and theologians especially those of the modern Renaissance attributed themselves to Ibn Rushd, and prided themselves on it. They were called "Latin Averroists". Many European institutes and universities adopted Ibn Rushd's rational philosophy leading to the emergence of a new philosophical school called "Averroist School", from which Descartes and Spinoza derived their opinions, particularly the relationship between philosophy and religion (Buluz, 2012, p. 73).

Ibn Rushd became an icon of his time, both domestically and internationally. His impact on European philosophy during the Renaissance and the modern era was crucial. Many modern philosophers such as Descartes and Kant were influenced by his distinctive rational philosophy, which exceeded philosophical inquiry to become a method for seeking truth in various fields of knowledge. Here, we have presented some examples and ideas as illustrations but not limited to, highlighting the impact of Ibn Rushd's rational philosophy on European philosophical thought.

### *Conclusion*

Finally, we conclude that Ibn Rushd was indeed a proficient philosopher worthy of study because in spite of the challenging circumstances and hardships, he managed to construct an integrated philosophical project with its pillars, dimensions, and goals founded upon reason, which made it the ground of every truth and the starting point of every research experience seeking certainty. Reason was prominently present in his creative philosophy. His rationalism was

characterized by depth and authenticity because he was a distinct rational philosopher. He had a major impact on the thinking of many philosophers in Europe; therefore, it is crucial to study and understand his rational philosophy and benefit from it to establish a new philosophical project that reinstates humanity's lost rationality, which is on the verge of collapse in our world today.

### **References:**

1. Al-Aqqad, A. M. (1992). *Ibn Rushd*. Cairo, Egypt: Al-Maaref Publishing House.
2. Al-Ghazali, A. H. (1966). *Knowledge Criterion in the Art of Logic*. Cairo, Egypt: Al-Maarif House.
3. Al-Jabiri, A. M. (1998). *Ibn Rushd: Biography and Thought*. Beirut, Lebanon: Center for Arab Unity Studies.
4. Al-Khudairi, Z. M. (1983). *The Influence of Ibn Rushd on Medieval Philosophy*. Cairo, Egypt: Culture Publishing House.
5. Al-Ghazali, A. (1966). *The Incoherence of the Philosophers*. Cairo, Egypt: Al-Ma'arif Publishing House.
6. Al-Qaioumi, M. I. (1997). *History of Islamic Philosophy in Morocco and Andalusia*. Al-Jeel Publishing House.
7. Aquinas, T. (1994). *Centre Averroes*. (A. De Libera, Trans.) Paris, France: G. F. Flammarion.
8. Arabic Language Academy. (1983). *Philosophical Lexicon*. Cairo, Egypt: General Organization for Government Printing Offices.
9. Bloch, E. (2008). *Avicenna and the Aristotelian Left* (C. Moillard, Trans.). Premières Pierres Edition.
10. Buluz, M. A. (2012). *Educating the Faculty of Diligence through the Book of The Distinguished Jurist's Primer*. Riyadh, Saudi Arabia: Kunooz Eshbelia House for Publishing and Distribution.
11. Descartes, R. (1985). *Article on Methodology* (3<sup>rd</sup> edition). (M. H. Mohamed, Trans.) Cairo: General Egyptian Book Organization.
12. Dhannoon Taha, A.-W. (2004). *Studies in the Civilization and History of Andalusia*. Beirut, Lebanon: Islamic Orbit Publishing House.
13. Fakhoury, H. (1960). *History of Arabic Philosophy*. Cairo, Egypt: Arab Thought House.
14. Ibn Rushd (1984). *Explanation of Aristotle's Reason and Summary of Reason*. Kuwait: National Council for Culture, Arts and Letters.

15. Ibn Rushd. (1997). *The Decisive Treatise on the Connection between Philosophy and Religion*. Cairo, Egypt: Al-Ma'arif Publishing House.
16. Ibn Rushd. (1998). *Summary of Plato's Politics*. Beirut, Lebanon: Al-Tali'a Publishing House.
17. Ibn Rushd. (1998). *The Necessity in Politics*. Beirut, Lebanon: Center for Arab Unity Studies.
18. Ibn Rushd. (2001). *The Incoherence of the Incoherence*. Beirut, Lebanon: Center for Arab Unity Studies.
19. Ibn Rushd. (2009). *The Distinguished Jurist's Primer*. Beirut, Lebanon: International Ideas Home Company.
20. Lalande, A. (2001). *Lalande's Philosophical Encyclopedia* (2<sup>nd</sup> edition). Vols. Volume 3 (R-Z). (A. K. Khalil, Trans.) Beirut: Oueidat Publications.
21. Renan, E. (1957). *Averroès and Averroïsme*. Cairo, Egypt: Reviving Arabic Books Publishing House (Dar Ihya al-Kutub al-Arabiyya).
22. Saliba, J. (1982). *The Philosophical Lexicon* (Vol. 2). Beirut, Lebanon: Lebanese Book House and School House.
23. Shahata, G. (2017). *Ibn Rushd's Works*. United Kingdom: Hindawi Foundation.
24. The Algerian Ministry of Religious Affairs. (June 10-19, 1976). *Lectures and Discussions. the Tenth Conference of Islamic Thought*, Vol. 1. Annaba.
25. Wahba, M. (2007). *The Philosophical Lexicon*. Cairo, Egypt: Modern Qubaa Publishing House.