

"Revisiting Averroes to Understand the "Other"

<"xml encoding="UTF-8?>

The historical events that marked the years 1989–1990, the fall of the Berlin Wall and with it the Communist bloc, paved the way for radically new perspectives in schools of thought and the collective imagination. The famous statement made by former American President George Bush Sr. announcing the “end of the Cold War” and the birth of a “new world order” provided this perspective with an official seal of approval. The entire world expected a radical change in international relations. Hopes were expressed, optimistic forecasts were made; the “end of history” was even announced with the definitive triumph of liberalism and democracy. In Third World countries there was hope that the West would renounce the “logic of war” that had characterised its relations with the rest of the world, applying more inspired policies now motivated by the values of Enlightenment, those of “liberty, equality and fraternity.” Many members of the modern elites of these countries believed that the West, having won the Cold War, would encourage democratic change in the Third World. Some even stated that the West would certainly demand, as a starting point for all forms of cooperation with Third World governments, a real democratisation of political and social life as well as honest and real respect for human rights etc. Therefore, as far as people in the Third World were concerned, the West’s future relations with their countries would essentially have depended on making “new foreign policy” choices, continuing to manoeuvre within the framework of the same logic of war, or proceeding instead towards a real “reconstruction” of their own policies and strategies in order to allow relations with the South to be set within what was called the “post-Cold War” period.

What has happened to those aspirations? In what way did the West perceive its future relations with the Third World in general and the Arab-Islamic world in particular? As far as politics are concerned, one must add that in the West, aspirations have now been replaced by scenarios created by professors of “strategic studies.” The observer preferring not to fall prey to the uncontrolled prejudices and reactions of fanatic and xenophobic right-wing environments, European and American, can satisfy all his curiosities by drawing on the self-proclaimed .authoritative ideas of these professors

The persistence of the logic of war

Ever since the fall of the Soviet Union, it is true that some Western analysts continued to ask

themselves, "After Communism, who will be the West's enemy?" This as if the "end of one war", in this case the Cold War, would just be an opportunity to spark another, or, in philosophical terms, as if the West's "I" could only affirm itself through the negation of the "Other."

Before analysing the epistemological foundations of such an attitude, let us first and briefly try and present the main theses of authors addressing the future of relations between the West .and Islam within the framework of this logic

The societal Cold War""

In an article published by "International Affairs" in July 1991, Barry Buzan proposed an outline of the new kind of security relations that started to take shape at a global level following the great changes that occurred between 1989 and 1990.

According to Buzan, the changes in the "Centre" (industrialised countries), which in his opinion establish the fundamental characteristics of relations between states, are basically four: the emergence of multiple-force centres replacing the bipolar centre that existed during the Cold War; a lower degree of division and ideological rivalry; the hegemonic tendency, at an international level, of a group of capitalist states drawn in by security problems. The fourth point, according to the author, is the consolidation of civil society's power, which may be less evident but will be a logical consequence.

These changes involving the Centre will have direct and indirect consequences on political, military, economic and social policies in the peripheries (non-industrialised countries). Among these consequences, the one that interests our argument directly is what the author calls "the collision of cultural identities" that in his opinion is clearly manifest in relations between the West and Islam due to different factors. "As noted above, this is partly to do with secular versus religious values, partly to do with the historical rivalry between Christendom and Islam, partly to do with jealousy of Western power, partly to do with resentments over Western domination of the post-colonial political structuring of the Middle East, and partly to do with the bitterness and humiliation of the invidious comparison between the accomplishments of Islamic and Western civilization during the last two centuries." This last factor, says the author, is perceived more deeply in the lands of Islam, due to geographic proximity, historical enmity and the "overtly political role that Islam plays in the lives of its followers. Rivalry with the West is made more potent by the fact that Islam is still itself a vigorous and expanding collective identity."

Hence, he states, if one adds the "danger" posed by immigration to the "clash of cultures" it is

easy to identify the characteristics of a “societal Cold War between the centre and at least part of the periphery, and specifically between the West and Islam in which Europe would be in the front line.” This will benefit Europe since it will help the development of the political complementarity process between its countries, consisting of a common problem for their foreign policy, around which it will be easy to create consensus. In other words “A societal Cold War with Islam would serve to strengthen the European identity all round at a crucial time for the process of European union.”

The author concludes saying, “For all these reasons and others, there may well be a substantial constituency in the West prepared not only to support a societal Cold War with Islam, but to adopt policies that encourage it.”

Faced with this perspective of relations between Islam and the West, how can we avoid asking ourselves the following question; Is this an analysis of facts and their possible evolution or are we in the presence of a real direct incitement to hostility

Clash of civilizations”

Two years after the publication of Buzan’s paper, almost unnoticed, perhaps due to its “classical” title and its “cold” style, Samuel Huntington readdressed the same issue but with a spectacular title, “Clash of Civilizations” also using provocative language, filled with detailed examples, thereby managing to ensure his article attracted great attention all over the world. Huntington presents his thesis in terms that conceal nothing. “It is my hypothesis,” he says, “is that the fundamental source of conflict in this new world will not be primarily ideological or primarily economic. The great divisions among humankind and the dominating source of conflict will be cultural. Nation states will remain the most powerful actors in world affairs, but the principal conflicts of global politics will occur between nations and groups of different civilizations. The clash of civilizations will dominate global politics.” Hence “civilization identity will be increasingly important in the future, and the world will be shaped in large measure by the interactions among seven or eight major civilizations. These include Western, Confucian, Japanese, Islamic, Hindu, Slavic-Orthodox, Latin American and possibly African civilization. The most important conflicts of the future will occur along the cultural fault lines separating these civilizations from one another.”

The author specifies that if Western civilization now seems “universal civilization” that “fits all men,” at a superficial level much of Western culture has indeed permeated the rest of the world. At a more basic level, however, Western concepts differ fundamentally from those prevalent in other civilizations. “Western ideas of individualism, liberalism, constitutionalism,

human rights, equality, liberty, the rule of law, democracy, free markets, the separation of church and state, often have little resonance in Islamic, Confucian, Japanese, Hindu, Buddhist or Orthodox cultures.”

Faced with such a state of affairs, countries belonging to these civilizations, will, according to this author, find themselves obliged to choose between three possibilities; countries such as Burma and North Korea may choose isolation in order to “protect” their countries from Western “corruption.” The author emphasises that the cost is very high. Consequently, only a very small number of states will run the risk of making such a choice.

Other countries, on the other hand, will remain linked to the West and follow in its footsteps in all fields, choosing in this way total Westernisation. Among these countries, the author lists Japan, Russia, Eastern European countries and those in Latin America.

There are, however, many countries that wish to achieve a degree of equilibrium with the West. They will try to develop their economic and military capacity, to cooperate with other non-Western countries against the West and to preserve their values and local institutions. In other words, they accept the modernisation but reject Westernisation. These are above all countries that according to Huntington – form the “Confucian-Islamic connection that has emerged to challenge western interests, values and power.”

To confront this Islamic-Confucian “challenge”, Huntington invites the West – and this is the objective of his articles – to “promote greater cooperation and unity within its own civilization, particularly between its European and North American components [...], to limit the expansion of the military strength of Confucian and Islamic states [...]; to moderate the reduction of counter military capabilities and maintain military superiority in East and Southwest Asia [...], to strengthen international institutions that reflect and legitimate Western interests and values and to promote the involvement of non-Western states in those institutions.”

Is it perhaps necessary to underline here the evidently political aspects of the “clash of civilizations?”

Well informed circles in the United States do not hesitate to state that a thesis of this kind, supporting the existence of a new danger, of a new “enemy”, is needed to persuade Americans .and their representatives of the need to maintain the defence budget at current levels

The “ideological conflict”

A civilizational clash is not so much over Jesus Christ, Confucius, or the Prophet Muhammad, as it is over the unequal distribution of world power, wealth, and influence, and the lack of respect and consideration shown by great countries to smaller ones. Culture is the vehicle of

the expression of conflict, not the cause. This is what Graham Fuller wrote for "Foreign Policy" in an article published two years after Huntington's. One should not, however, be under any illusions. This is not a pure and simple rejection of the "logic of war" at the basis of the thesis just presented. On the contrary, it simply means giving the same "enemy" a different name

According to Fuller the next conflict will be an ideological one. In fact, what characterises the state of the world following Communism's fall, is the domination of a Western vision in political and economic circles. This vision is founded on three main principles: 1) capitalism and the market economy; 2) human rights and liberal and secular democracy; 3) the nation-state as the context for international relations. These principles that fostered the progress and emancipation of Western societies cause tension and destabilising unrest in Third World countries, which will result in them adopting other principles and creating other visions that are not in agreement with those in the West.

According to the author, we should expect an ideology to emerge in the Third World opposing Western values. The manner in which this "next ideology" will confront the West will depend on what kind of leaders will present themselves as the defenders of the interests of those countries. Countries that are candidates for this role are those having the required qualities, hence roots in a historical civilization, a sense of cultural supremacy and continuity concerning the role played from a historical perspective, a role unopposed at a regional level, experience in the field of the application of ideologies of change and a particular sense of frustration about being unable to achieve a historical-cultural vocation due to Western colonialism.

The author places China, India, Iran, Egypt and Russia at the top of the list of countries called upon to play a "pilot" role in the ideological battle against the West. He quotes other countries such as Brazil, Indonesia, Southern Africa, which he believes are capable of playing a non-negligible role in this ideological conflict, albeit specifying that he has no intention of drafting a list of the West's enemies. The objective of the article, according to the author, is restricted to "sensitising us" to the nature of the problem, so that the means to prevent the formation of a .bloc hostile to the West

An epistemological model

It is not for us to dispute these analysts and professors of "strategic studies". Huntington has answered criticism addressed at him by stating that his work consists of proposing a "model" and that his model cannot be considered non-credible until it is replaced by more appropriate one to warn the West! It is the logic of scenarios in the field of "strategy", that of "taking action against." However, we can and must pose the problem from another perspective, that of

“taking action with.” In this framework, the first critical question that emerges is the following one; “What makes people think of relations between one or various parties in terms of “taking action against”? This question moves our attention from the field of politics to that of epistemology.

Seen from this perspective, the aforementioned theses, in spite of their apparent differences, turn out to all be based on the same epistemological model, the model dominating Western ideas for centuries, that of the “I” only recognisable through the “Other”, an “Other” chosen and modelled so as to allow it to carry out the required role, that of confirming the “I” and the organisation of its “being.”

One finds the rootedness of the epistemological model in Western reason ever since the beginning of history. Starting with the Greeks, Western reason could proceed with an affirmation only through its negation. In philosophy, Parmenides, for example, was able to speak of “being” only by presenting a “non-being”, of the “finite” only assuming the existence of the “infinite.” When his disciple Zeno tried to support his teacher’s theories, he based his arguments on the idea that “all determination is negation.” In modern times, Spinoza even stated the opposite saying, “all negation is determination.” The great philosopher of history, Hegel, simply put together Zeno and Spinoza’s ideas founding dialectics, coming to the conclusion that “all determination is negation and all negation is determination.” Hence the importance of negation in Hegel in particular, and in European philosophical thought in general. In this school of thought, affirmation always involves negation and the European “I” is recognisable only when mirrored in the “Other.” The famous contemporary philosopher Jean Paul Sartre expressed this well. “In order to get any truth about myself, I must have contact with another person,” he said. “The other is indispensable to my own existence, as well as to my knowledge about myself.” He also added, “I need the mediation of others to be who I am.” In general, “concern about others is a fundamental characteristic, perhaps the most essential one in contemporary thought.”

From a socio-historical perspective, this “concern about others” is more evident. As Cato the Elder said, “What would Rome be without its enemies?” Greek and Roman individuals see their identity as “citizens” as opposed to the slaves inside the “city” and the “barbarians” outside it. In the Middle Ages it was Islam (Mohamed and the Saracens) who played the role of the “other” allowing Christian Europe to recognise itself. In modern times it is the East/West duality that is at the basis of Europeans’ feelings about who they are. This duality is rooted in the European conscience to the extent that an English poet was able to define the West only by exclaiming, “East is East and West is West and never the twain shall meet.” At the time the

East covered the geographical area that the West would later divide into the Near, Middle and Far East (in relation to Europe).

When the former Soviet Union replaced the Other/East, Europe discovered the "Other" it needed, but this time at an economic level. The Communist world that extended to the east of Western Europe became the "East" replacing the Orient. The West therefore rediscovered its definition by counter-positioning itself to the East (the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe). Since the fall of the Soviet Union, a new North/South duality has emerged replacing the old one after the "East" lost its function as the "Other" needed by the West to define itself. Finally, in addition to these geographical counter-positions, Western reason does not hesitate to use colours to indicate its "Other"; "red peril" for Communism, "yellow peril" for Asia and "green peril" for .Islam

Equilibrium of interests and cultural specificity

Are we perhaps condemned to remain prisoners of the logic of war that cannot perceive relations with others if not in terms that bring to mind hostility, such as peril, counter-position, conflict, threat etc.?

In Western countries voices are raised almost everywhere against this way of seeing future relations between the West and other countries. People are starting to question the real meaning of this unfortunate dichotomy, as well as the reality it proposes to conceal. What does the East/West duality really mean through the history of European expansion, from Rome to the empires of modern colonialism? What does its current North/South replacement mean? The North obviously indicates a geographical area Europe is part of, but how should one define Europe itself? "Since it neither a geographical entity, nor a historical or political one, and nor is it an economic entity", can one define it a "civilization?" Some European historians challenge this and state that since the end of the Ancien Régime "we have no European civilization, but three well-determined intended civilizations, none of which coincide with Europe's conventional borders; a Mediterranean civilization, a continental civilization and an Atlantic civilization." And how could we define the extremely varied, atomised, lacerated, unstable area that is the "South"? Could one even wonder if it has a specific existence? How can one define "Islam" in the expression "Europe and Islam" which refers to two realities that are totally different, one geographical (Europe) and the other religious (Islam)? And if the word Islam indicates countries that profess this religion, can one perhaps state that these countries represent a coherent entity? For what reason should Iran, or Pakistan, or even Egypt become allied with Sudan, or Indonesia or Morocco, against Europe? Are relations between these countries

perhaps not marked by almost total independence one from the other, while instead they are all together joined to Europe by bonds of dependence and relations of neo-colonialist exploitation?

Observed objectively, free of all egocentric logic, North/South relations nowadays clearly appear in the form of hegemonic relations of a capitalistic kind at a global level. The behaviour of Western countries and of world economic order, imposed on "Third World" countries (both at a bilateral level and through international organisations) creates exploitation relations that effectively transform these countries into proletarian nations, that only, or almost only, shared exploitation transforms into an ensemble. The expression that adequately expresses the antagonisms arising within this situation is obviously a conflict of interests and not a "clash of civilizations."

What is the difference between these two expressions? Let us leave aside political and moral (or ethical) considerations, and observe matters only from an epistemological perspective. Contrary to what one may think, the expression "conflict of interests" opens the door to a rational addressing of the conflict. The "conflict of interests" is an intelligible fact. It can be circumscribed and its causes can be understood to then master them. It can therefore be resolved in a rational manner, achieving a minimum equilibrium between the various interests. It is a possible achievement, without needing to resort to threats or hostility. The best evidence is the fact that industrialised countries have achieved, within their societies, a lasting and dynamic balance between classes, thanks to social legislation such as a sliding wage scale, welfare, unemployment etc. All this has abolished the Marxist theory of a "class struggle", "absolute poverty" and the "inevitability" of a revolution in Europe.

Conversely, the expression "clash of civilizations" refers to something unintelligible. It does not allow a rational processing and is above all founded on mistaken premises. Relations between civilizations, in the past and in the present, were and are not clashes, but interpenetration. The clashes and battles that took place within one civilization, such as the European one, have been far more numerous and destructive than those of opponent countries belonging to different civilizations. It is sufficient to remember the two world wars that humankind has experienced .and took place within Western civilization arising from conflicts of interest

One can obviously mention what the Western media now call "Islamism".

But what exactly does that mean?

Everyone agrees on the need to distinguish between the Islamic religion, or any other, and the political use some make of it. But one must also distinguish between extremism as a normal

socio-cultural phenomenon, occupying its usual place on the fringes of society, and the extremist currents that in a given period involve entire populations. In this last case, socio-economic factors are of the utmost importance. Algerian, Egyptian and other Islamists represent, or at least speak in the name of populations expressing legitimate social and economic claims. They are effectively elites that have emerged from these populations and are trying to play a role in authoritarian systems based on social injustice. The very nature of these systems – which leave no space for political arguments that may call things by their real names – encourages extremism and the systematic use of symbolic capital accessible to everyone; religion. And if this “Islamism” attacks the West, it is because it is perceived as the protector, or rather even the promoter, of these systems, which is not entirely untrue. Various Western countries, with great influence at a global level, give priority to their material, economic and strategic interests, compared to the values they instead say they support. Today’s Islamism is,

at least to a certain extent, one of the consequences of a neo-colonialist international order. These considerations should not, however, allow us to forget cultural differences that one can find within any civilization. Of course these differences are greater between cultures that do not belong to the same civilization, but there is nothing authorising one to believe that a clash is inevitable. In our era, as in all others, two kinds of relations prevail at a global level. A relationship of interpenetration of civilizations, founded, more nowadays than in the past, on the spreading of manufactured goods, scientific knowledge, means of communication and exchanges, and a relationship of conflict of interests that can always be kept under control with equilibria aimed at attenuating divergences and paving the way for global cooperation in a context of really peaceful coexistence.

It is therefore necessary to look to the future of relations between Western countries and Arab and Muslim countries at two different levels, that of the conflict of interests and that of cultural specificities.

At the first level, conflict of interests between states can be resolved through the honest and sincere application of the so-called “game theory”. The main rule in this method consists in playing on equality. Western countries must abandon their colonialist behaviour and acknowledge the relationship of interdependence that unites them to underdeveloped countries in a different perspective than that of a “master.” Cooperation and participation make sense only if based on a balance of interests, far from all forms of hegemony. If to this one adds economic and technological aid in favour of development, one can quickly achieve levels of cooperation that remove the misleading hypotheses of a “clash of civilizations.” Experts who address the future and the relations between the planet’s countries in the context of a vision of

peace and prosperity, have scientifically proved that should industrialised countries decide to give the 10% of their budgets currently destined to defence and weapons to development projects in countries we earlier called “proletarian nations,” the problem of inequality and poverty in the world would assume a different nature and a different future. We are convinced that in that case, the spectre of a clash would be silenced, leaving room for a positive evolution of the historical process of interpenetration and inter-cultural relations characterising our era. As far as the differences between cultures are concerned, it is certainly not useful to try and annul them, a process that in any case would prove impossible. What we need to do is elaborate an intercultural process founded on reciprocal respect and the right to be different. The model we propose here comes from our great “European-Arab” thinker, the famous .Andalusian philosopher Ibn Rushd

Ibn Rushd’s rules for dialogue

We owe the “rules for a dialogue between cultures” to the great Andalusian philosopher, Ibn Rushd (Averroès), whose work was translated into various languages for the first time in Toledo soon after his death, resulting in Latin Averroism, the enzyme for so-called modern Western civilization.

Our philosopher was experiencing a situation similar to the one we are experiencing today. A situation dominated by the counter-position and otherness relationship between the Arab “I” and its “Other.” After the fuqahâ, doctors in Islamic law, broadly denigrated the “sciences of the elders” considered “Intrusive” sciences, as well as “harmful” and “not conforming with Islam”, the great Muslim theologian al-Ghazâlî started a campaign against philosophy and its sciences, accusing Muslim philosophers of “renewal” and impiety.

Ibn Rushd, who had perfect knowledge of Muslim law and Greek philosophy, and was also well-aware of the political circumstances that motivated al-Ghazâlî’s condemnation, unwaveringly proceeded to clarify the relationship between religion and philosophy. As a jurist, he tried on one hand to determine Islamic law’s position regards to the “ancient sciences” and, on the other, to re-establish the relationship between religion and philosophy, trying also to “eliminate the confusion” concerning Aristotle’s discourse and that of his translators. This involved redefining the relationship between the Islamic “I” and the philosophical “Other”. Ibn Rushd dedicated many books to this project, among them the famous Tahâfut al-Tahâfut (The Incoherence of incoherence or the destruction of destruction, Editor’s note), the object of which was to enact the negation of negation and to achieve the overcoming of a deceptive discourse considering contradictory and antagonist things that distinguished themselves only due to

what marked their differences. To better understand the importance of Rushd's progress and to emphasise his undeniable modernity, we will try and identify the epistemological principles on which our philosopher founded his ideas. These are principles of universal value. They can be used by all cultures suffering from the influence of relations of adversity and hostility, as is happening today in the case involving Europe and the Arab world, so as to re-establish their .links

Understanding the "Other" in his environment

The first principle can be translated into modern language as the need to understand the "Other" in his/her reference environment, a need Ibn Rushd sees as the application of an axiomatic method in the interpretation of the Elders' philosophical discourse. Addressing al-Ghazâlî, who wished at any price to prove the "incoherence" of the discourse of the "philosophers", Ibn Rushd wrote: "We strongly advise all those who have chosen to search for the truth [...], to avoid systematically rejecting statements discovered which they believe are inadmissible and instead to try and understand them, following the path that those supporting them believe leads to a search for the truth. In order to achieve a decisive outcome, they must devote all the time needed, following the order imposed by the nature of the question studied." It is by following this methodological process that the philosopher will manage to understand philosophical theses from within the system they are part of.

In addressing my Arab compatriots, I have always stressed the need to respect this principle on our path to the re-establishment of a dialogue between our cultural tradition and global contemporary schools of thought and so as to identify the attitude we can assume in our reciprocal relationships. One must also acknowledge that the West's image of the Arab world and of Islam in general does not in turn take into consideration this fundamental methodological principle and is therefore unable to take into consideration the Arab reality in its peculiarity and specificity.

Let us all therefore, European and Arabs, borrow Ibn Rushd's axiomatic method to at last understand the "Other" within his reference system. It is only this intra-cultural approach that will allow us to achieve reciprocal and profound understanding. Should this occur, the two shores of the Mediterranean would become for us simply the two banks of one same "river" as happened in the days of Ibn Rushd. At the time, the expression "the two shores" (al-'adwataan) applied both to the Tangiers side and to Gibraltar, as well as those of the Oued (river) Fes, dividing this city into two, with one part inhabited by Andalusians and the other by "kairunians", who came from Kairouan in Tunisia, at the time called Ifriquia, as if Europe and Africa were just

.two banks of the same river

The right to difference

The second principle we should borrow from Ibn Rushd, so as to re-establish a fruitful relationship between Europe and the Arab world, is what today would be called the “acknowledgment of the right to difference.” It is this principle that our philosopher applies in moving towards the redefinition of the links that may exist between religion and philosophy. He reproaches Ibn Sînâ (Avicenna) for having damaged both religion and philosophy with his syncretism that consisted of integrating the principles of religion with those of philosophy, which could only result in serious consequences. It would sacrifice both religious and philosophical principles, and even distance them all, leading to unavoidable scepticism. He energetically defended the non-contradiction of religious and philosophical truths, because, “one truth does not contradict another, but becomes reconciled with it, bearing witness in its favour.” However, concordance does not mean equivalence, and testifying in favour of something does not mean identifying with it. The right to difference must be respected

Understanding, tolerance and indulgence

This brings us to the third principle of Rushd’s epistemology that we wish to highlight. It is both a methodological and an ethical principle and consists of “understanding” in the sense of tolerance and indulgence.

Our philosopher reproaches al-Ghazâlî of not respecting the rules of dialogue aimed at the search for truth in his objections to philosophers. Al-Ghazâlî said, “My objective was to question their theses (those of philosophers) and I succeeded.”

Ibn Rushd replied saying, “This is not worthy of a scientist, because as such a scientist can have no objective but the search for the truth and must not spread doubt and render spirits perplexed.”

Answering those Muslim scientists who identified in the sciences of the Elders a number of opinions in discordance with the spirit of Islam, Rushd said, “When we discover among our predecessors in ancient nations a reflected theory of the universe in conformity with the conditions that evidence requires, one must examine what has been said about it, what they stated in their books. If these things correspond to the truth, we will welcome them with great joy and be grateful to them.

If they do not correspond to the truth we will bring this to their attention, we will warn people about them, albeit excusing the authors”.

He also added, “Being just consists of looking for arguments in favour of one’s opponent

exactly as one does for oneself.”

In my opinion, these are the main elements of Rushd’s epistemology of dialogue. The specificity of this epistemology lies in its definition of a way for overcoming, or at least calming, the antagonism in a relationship of otherness, the relationship between the “I” and the “Other.” At a time when post-Cold War ideologues try and transform the so-called “clash of civilizations” into tomorrow’s reality, assigning to Islam the role of the West’s “Other”, its future enemy after the fall of Communism, it is the duty of all the defenders of world peace to battle against this state of mind disseminating diffidence and beckoning hostility. And if to this “Western” state of mind one adds what I would call the psychology of the colonised regards to the former coloniser, which fuels even more the hegemonic behaviour of various Western powers, we can conclude that peace, stability and above all trust, will greatly depend on the development of a dialogue founded on an epistemology of reciprocal understanding like the one briefly outlined, the founding father of which remains without doubt .the great Andalusian philosopher Ibn Rushd

Translated by Francesca Simmons