Available at:
https://tsaqafah.journal.unida.gontor.ac.id/index.php/tsq
https://doi.org/ 10.21111/tsaqafah.v22i2.132

ISSN: 1441-0334
e-ISSN: 2460-0008
TSAQAFAH
Jurnal Peradaban Islam

Reviewed: 07-2026 | Revised: 08-2025 | Accepted: 10-2026

Burhān, Language, *Taʾwīl*, and Epistemic Authority: Interdependent Conditions of Interpretive Legitimacy in Ibn Rushd's Theory of Qur'anic Interpretation

Imam Wahyuddin (Corresponding author)
Universitas Gadjah Mada, Yogyakarta, Indonesia
Email: imam.wahyuddin@ugm.ac.id

Agus Himawan Utomo
Universitas Gadjah Mada, Yogyakarta, Indonesia
Email: ahutomo@ugm.ac.id

Arqom Kuswanjono
Universitas Gadjah Mada, Yogyakarta, Indonesia
Email: arqom@ugm.ac.id

M. Mukhtasar Syamsuddin
Universitas Gadjah Mada, Yogyakarta, Indonesia
Email: etsar@ugm.ac.id

Abstract

Although Ibn Rushd (Averroes) is widely recognised as one of the most influential Muslim philosophers, contemporary scholarship has generally examined his theory of Qur'anic interpretation through separate themes, including *ta'wīl* (allegorical interpretation), *burhān* (demonstrative reasoning), philosophy of language, and interpretive authority. While these studies have significantly enriched understanding of his thought, they have seldom explained how these concepts function together as a coherent epistemological framework governing the legitimacy of Qur'anic interpretation. This article addresses that gap through a qualitative conceptual analysis of Ibn Rushd's principal works, *Fasl al-Maqāl* and *Al-Kashf ʿan Manāhij al-Adillah*, combined with a critical synthesis of contemporary scholarship. The analysis demonstrates that *ta'wīl* is governed by demonstrative reasoning, Arabic linguistic convention, and the epistemic classification of scriptural texts, before reconstructing the logical relationships among these elements into a unified analytical framework. The study argues that *ta'wīl* is not the epistemological foundation of Ibn Rushd's theory of Qur'anic interpretation but a methodological consequence of demonstrative reasoning and linguistic mediation. It proposes an epistemic model of Qur'anic interpretation in which *burhān* provides epistemic justification, language mediates semantic meaning, *ta'wīl* regulates interpretive methodology, and epis-

temic authority legitimises interpretation through demonstrative competence and ethical responsibility. By integrating concepts previously examined in isolation, the article reconstructs Ibn Rushd's theory of Qur'anic interpretation as a coherent epistemological architecture rather than a theory centred solely on allegorical interpretation, contributing to contemporary debates in Qur'anic hermeneutics, Islamic philosophy, and the epistemology of religious interpretation.

Keywords: *Ibn Rushd; Qur'anic interpretation; burhān; ta'wīl; epistemic authority*

Introduction

The relationship between revelation and reason has remained one of the most enduring and contested questions in Islamic intellectual history.[1] At the centre of this debate lies the problem of Qur'anic interpretation: how should divine revelation be understood when the apparent meaning of scripture seems to conflict with demonstrative knowledge or rational certainty? This question extends beyond the technical domain of Qur'anic exegesis because it concerns the epistemological foundations of religious knowledge, the nature of language, and the legitimacy of interpretive authority. Qur'anic hermeneutics, therefore, is not merely a method of explaining scriptural meaning but a philosophical inquiry into the epistemic conditions under which interpretation may be regarded as justified.

In this article, the term hermeneutics is employed as an analytical rather than a historical category. It does not imply that Ibn Rushd formulated a hermeneutical theory in the terminology of modern European philosophy. Rather, it refers to his systematic reflection on the conditions under which scriptural meaning is understood, justified, and communicated: the relation between literal and figurative meaning, the epistemic grounds for *ta›wīl*, the linguistic limits of interpretation, the competence of the interpreter, and the differentiated communication of revealed meaning. In this analytical sense, the study follows Gracia's treatment of Ibn Rushd as contributing to the philosophical hermeneutics of sacred texts, while extending the inquiry from the possibility of definitive interpretation to the epistemic conditions of interpretive legitimacy. Ibn Rushd's discussions of *burhān*, language, *ta›wīl*, and interpretive authority may therefore be analysed hermeneutically without implying that "hermeneutics" was a category of his own conceptual vocabulary.

Among classical Muslim thinkers, Ibn Rushd (Averroes, 1126–1198) occupies a distinctive position because he rejects the assumption that revelation and reason constitute competing sources of truth. Instead, he argues that authentic revelation and demonstrative reasoning originate from the same

1 Massimo Campanini, 'The Mu'tazila in Islamic History and Thought', Religion Compass, 6.1 (2012), 41–50 <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1749-8171.2011.00273.x>.

divine source and therefore cannot genuinely contradict one another. His celebrated principle that "truth does not contradict truth, but rather agrees with it and bears witness to it" provides an epistemological foundation for his theory of scriptural interpretation. Consequently, apparent contradictions between revelation and reason arise not from revelation itself but from human interpretation. This epistemological commitment is reflected in his conception of *ta›wīl* as a disciplined movement from literal (*ḥaqīqah*) to figurative (*majāz*) meaning governed by demonstrative reasoning (*burhān*), Arabic linguistic convention, and the nature of scriptural texts.[2] Rather than permitting unrestricted allegory or rigid literalism, Ibn Rushd situates *ta›wīl* within a broader epistemological framework that also includes the distinction between *taṣawwur* and *taṣdīq*, the hierarchy of demonstrative, dialectical, and rhetorical reasoning, and the distribution of interpretive authority according to epistemic competence.[3] Taken together, these principles suggest that Ibn Rushd's theory of Qur'anic interpretation can be analytically reconstructed as a coherent epistemological architecture rather than reduced to a theory of allegorical interpretation.

Contemporary scholarship has substantially enriched the understanding of Ibn Rushd's hermeneutical project from several complementary perspectives. Studies of *ta›wīl* demonstrate that Ibn Rushd inherited important interpretive principles from al-Ghazālī while relocating the legitimacy of interpretation from dialectical theology to demonstrative reasoning.[4] Research in epistemology and philosophy of language argues that demonstrative reasoning and linguistic mediation together provide the epistemic foundation through which revelation becomes intelligible,[5] while other studies examine

2 Abu Walid Ibn Rushd, *Faṣl Al-Maqāl Fī Taqrīr Mā Bayna Al-Sharīʿah Wa Al-Ḥikmah Min Al-Ittiṣāl*, ed. by Muhamad Abid Al-Jabiri, 1st edn (Beirut: Markaz Dirasat Wihdat Arabiyah, 1998), p. 97.

3 Richard C. Taylor, 'Averroes on the Sharī'ah of the Philosophers', in The Judeo-Christian-Islamic Heritage: Philosophical & Theological Perspectives, ed. by Richard C. Taylor and Irfan A. Omar (Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 2012), pp. 283–304 (p. 288) <https://epublications.marquette.edu/phil_fac/261>.

4 M Okumuş, 'The Influence of Al-Ghazzali on the Hermeneutics of Ibn Rushd', Islam - Zeitschrift Fur Geschichte Und Kultur Des Islamischen Orients, 86.2 (2011), 286–311 <https://doi.org/10.1515/ISLAM.2011.023>; A Wohlman, Al-Ghazali, Averroës and the Interpretation of the Qur'an: Common Sense and Philosophy in Islam, Al-Ghazali, Averroës and the Interpretation of the Qur'an: Common Sense and Philosophy in Islam, 1st edn (London: Routledge, 2009) <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203865118>.

5 Richard C. Taylor, 'Averroes: God and the Noble Lie', in Laudemus Viros Gloriosos: Essay of Armand Maurer, CSB, ed. by Richard Edward Houser (University of Notre Dame Press; Notre Dame, Ind., 2007), pp. 38–59; Peter Adamson, 'Averroes: A Rationalist in Islam (Review)', Bulletin of the History of Medicine, 76.4 (2002), 807–8 (pp. 807–8) <https://doi.org/https://dx.doi.org/10.1353/bhm.2002.0157.>; Nasr Hamid Abu-Zeid, / The Discourse of Ibn Rushd Between Knowledge and Constraint', Alif: Journal of Comparative

interpretive authority by analysing the relationship between demonstrative knowledge, philosophical communities, and the ethical responsibilities of interpretation.[6] More recent scholarship further illustrates how these interpretive principles operate in concrete theological debates concerning divine attributes, omniscience, and human freedom.[7] Gracia adds a philosophical hermeneutical perspective by examining whether sacred texts admit a definitive interpretation and by relating interpretive legitimacy to both the nature of the text and the epistemic capacity of the interpreter.[8] His analysis, however, does not reconstruct the broader epistemological structure connecting the principal components of Ibn Rushd's hermeneutics. Despite these contributions, existing scholarship still tends to examine *burhān*, *ta›wīl*, philosophy of language, interpretive authority, and particular theological debates as relatively separate themes. Although the significance of each has been well established, their function as mutually dependent epistemic conditions governing the legitimacy of Qur'anic interpretation remains insufficiently theorised. Accordingly, Ibn Rushd's theory of interpretation has often been approached primarily through Aristotelian rationalism, allegorical interpretation, philos-

Poetics, 16, 1996, 6–35 <https://doi.org/10.2307/521841>; Massimo Campanini, 'Qur'an and Science: A Hermeneutical Approach /', Journal of Qur'anic Studies, 7.1 (2005), 48–63 <http://www.jstor.org/stable/25728164>; Oliver Leaman, A Brief Introduction to Islamic Philosophy, 1st edn (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1999), p. 170; Chryssi Sidiropoulou, 'Qur'anic Interpretation and the Problem of Literalism: Ibn Rushd and the Enlightenment Project in the Islamic World', Religions, 6.3 (2015), 1082–1106 <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel6031082>; Chryssi Sidiropoulou and Massimo Campanini, 'Reviewed Work(s): Averroes, the Decisive Treatise: The Connection Between Islamic Religious Law and Philosophy by Massimo Campanini', Philosophy East and West, 68.3 (2025), 1–14 <https://www.jstor.org/stable/26529875>.

6 Timothy Sean Quinn, 'Descartes's Revised Averroism', The Review of Metaphysics, 67.4 (2014), 769–89 <http://www.jstor.org/stable/24636441>; Francisco J. Romero Carrasquillo, 'Philosophy and the Metaphorical Interpretation of Religious Texts in Averroes, Maimonides, and Aquinas', The Muslim World, 109.4 (2019), 627–47 <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1111/muwo.12314>; Ali Mabrook, / The Evasive Defeat of Rationalism: From Ibn Rushd to Ibn Khaldūn', Alif: Journal of Comparative Poetics, 16, 1996, 89–115 <https://doi.org/10.2307/521845>; R Alizadeh, 'Reviewing and Criticizing Averroes's Viewpoint on Granting the People of Reasoning (Ahl Al-Burhān) the Right to Interpret the Quran Esoterically', Religious Inquiries, 13.1 (2024), 23–40 <https://doi.org/10.22034/ri.2024.360400.1643>.

7 Ali Hasan, 'Al-Ghazali and Ibn Rushd (Averroes) on Creation and the Divine Attributes BT - Models of God and Alternative Ultimate Realities', in Models of God and Alternative Ultimate Realities, ed. by Jeanine Diller and Asa Kasher (Dordrecht: Springer Netherlands, 2013), pp. 141–56 <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-94-007-5219-1_13>; A S Long, A R Mahmood, and M H Ismail, 'Free Will in Averroes' Compatibilism', International Journal of Islamic Thought, 27 (2025), 1–13 <https://doi.org/10.24035/ijit.27.2025.313>.

8 Jorge J E Gracia, 'Interpretation and the Law: Averroes's Contribution to the Hermeneutics of Sacred Texts', History of Philosophy Quarterly, 14.1 (1997), 139–53 <http://www.jstor.org/stable/27744734>.

ophy of language, or his response to al-Ghazālī, while the epistemic relationships among these dimensions remain insufficiently theorised.

This gap raises a fundamental theoretical question: if demonstrative reasoning, linguistic convention, *ta›wīl*, and epistemic authority all occupy central positions within Ibn Rushd's writings, what epistemological structure organises these concepts into a coherent theory of Qur'anic interpretation? This article argues that Ibn Rushd's hermeneutics is best understood not as a collection of independent interpretive doctrines but as a unified epistemic architecture governing interpretive legitimacy. Through a conceptual analysis of *Faṣl al-Maqāl fī Taqrīr Mā Bayna al-Sharī›ah wa al-Ḥikmah min al-Itti ṣāl* and *Al-Kashf ‹an Manāhij al-Adillah fī ‹Aqā›id al-Millah*, combined with a critical synthesis of contemporary scholarship, the study reconstructs the logical relationships connecting demonstrative reasoning, linguistic mediation, *ta›wīl*, and epistemic authority into an integrated epistemic model of Qur'anic interpretation.

Unlike previous studies that examine these dimensions separately, the present study theorises their internal logical relationship as successive epistemic conditions within a single interpretive architecture. Its principal contribution therefore lies not in introducing new interpretive concepts but in reconstructing the conceptual structure that connects ideas already dispersed throughout Ibn Rushd's writings. By explaining how demonstrative reasoning establishes epistemic justification, language mediates semantic meaning, *ta›wīl* regulates interpretive methodology, and epistemic authority legitimises interpretation through demonstrative competence and ethical responsibility, the article contributes not only to Ibn Rushd studies but also to wider discussions in Qur'anic hermeneutics, Islamic philosophy, and the epistemology of religious interpretation.

Method

This study employs a qualitative conceptual research design to reconstruct the epistemic relationships underlying Ibn Rushd's theory of Qur'anic interpretation. In this study, the category of hermeneutics is used heuristically to analyse the systematic relationships among meaning, justification, interpretive method, and interpretive authority in Ibn Rushd's writings, rather than as a historical claim concerning his own conceptual vocabulary. Rather than examining the historical development of Ibn Rushd's thought or producing an exegetical analysis of particular Qur'anic verses, the research seeks to identify and reconstruct the epistemological structure underlying his theory of interpretation. The study therefore belongs to the tradition of conceptual scholarship, whose principal objective is theory building through conceptual clarification, philosophical analysis, and the synthesis of existing

scholarship.[9]

The analysis is based primarily on Ibn Rushd's principal philosophical works, namely *Faṣl al-Maqāl fimā Bayna al-Ḥikmah wa al-Sharī'ah min al-Ittiṣāl*, and *Al-Kashf 'an Manāhij al-Adillah fī 'Aqā'id al-Millah*. These works constitute the primary textual sources for examining Ibn Rushd's conception of *ta'wīl*, demonstrative reasoning (*burhān*), linguistic convention, the classification of scriptural texts, epistemic authority, and the methodological principles governing Qur'anic interpretation.[10] Taha regards these two works as the cornerstone of Ibn Rushd's project of intellectual renewal (*tajdīd al-fikr al-dīnī*) because they formulate the two concepts that organise his hermeneutical thought: *maqṣad al-shar* (the purpose of the Divine Law) and *ta'wīl*.[11] Whereas *maqṣad al-shar* provides the normative orientation of interpretation, *ta'wīl* defines its methodological operation. Together, these concepts constitute the conceptual foundation upon which the present reconstruction of Ibn Rushd's epistemic model of Qur'anic interpretation is developed.

To situate Ibn Rushd's ideas within contemporary academic discussions, the study also engages critically with modern scholarship on his hermeneutics, including the works of Richard C. Taylor, Peter Adamson, Mesut Okumuş, Avital Wohlman, Nasr Hamid Abu-Zeid, Massimo Campanini, Oliver Leaman, Thomas S. Quinn, Jorge J. E. Gracia, George F. Hourani, Ebrahimi Dinani, Bello, Carrasquillo, Mabrook, Sidiropoulou, Ali Hasan, Abid Al-Jabiri, Long, Mahmood, and Ismail. These studies provide the principal interpretive perspectives through which Ibn Rushd's thought has been understood in contemporary scholarship and serve as the basis for identifying convergences, differences, and unresolved theoretical questions.

The analysis proceeded in four stages. First, Ibn Rushd's primary texts were examined to identify the principal concepts constituting his theory of interpretation, including *ta›wīl*, *burhān*, linguistic convention, the classification of scriptural texts, taṣawwur, taṣdīq, and epistemic authority. Second, the secondary literature was examined through an integrative review following Snyder (2019).[12] The procedure involved identifying relevant scholarship,

9 H E Green, 'Use of Theoretical and Conceptual Frameworks in Qualitative Research', Nurse Researcher, 21.6 (2014), 34–38 <https://doi.org/10.7748/nr.21.6.34.e1252>.

10 Zeinab Mahmoud El-Khodeiry, Ātsar Ibn Rushd Fī Falsafah Al-Ushūr Al-Wusthā (Cairo: Dar Al-Tsaqafah li Al-Nashr wa Al-Tauzi', 1983), p. 117; Ahmed Fouad El-Ehwany, 'Ibn Rushd', in A History of Muslim Philosophy, ed. by Mian Muhamad Sharif (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1963), pp. 540–63 (p. 547).

11 Azmi Taha, 'Masyru' Al-Tajdīd Al-Fikrī 'inda Ibn Rushd', in Al-Athā Al-Fikrī Li Ibn Rushd: Halaqah Dirāsiyah, ed. by Fathi Malkawi and Azmi Taha, 1st edn (Oman: International Institute of Islamic Thought, 1999), pp. 167–203 (p. 167).

12 Hannah Snyder, 'Literature Review as a Research Methodology: An Overview and Guidelines', Journal of Business Research, 104 (2019), 333–39 <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2019.07.039>.

extracting its principal conceptualisations of *burhān*, *ta›wīl*, linguistic mediation, and interpretive authority, and critically comparing convergences, divergences, and conceptual relationships among these interpretations. The reviewed literature was then synthesised thematically to determine how these concepts have been positioned within contemporary scholarship and to identify relationships that remain insufficiently theorised. This process identified a theoretical gap concerning the relationships among the major components of Ibn Rushd's hermeneutics. Third, the concepts derived from the primary and secondary sources underwent philosophical conceptual analysis to reconstruct the logical relationships among demonstrative reasoning, linguistic mediation, disciplined *ta›wīl*, and epistemic authority. Finally, these relationships were synthesised into the epistemic model of Qur'anic interpretation proposed in this article. This model is an analytical reconstruction of the epistemological structure implicit in Ibn Rushd's writings rather than a historical claim that he explicitly formulated such a framework.

Result and Discussion

Ibn Rushd's Concept of Ta'wil

Ibn Rushd (520 H/1126 CE–595 H/1198 CE), born in Córdoba into a prominent Andalusian family of jurists, was trained in fiqh, Arabic, medicine, logic, natural philosophy, and metaphysics. He later served as qāḍī in Seville and Córdoba and as physician to the Almohad caliph Abū Ya›qūb Yūsuf. His formation in both the Islamic sciences and Aristotelian philosophy provided the intellectual background for his systematic treatment of the relationship between reason and revelation.[13]

The concept of *ta'wīl* occupies a central position in Ibn Rushd's theory of Qur'anic interpretation.[14] Unlike many later discussions that approach *ta'wīl* primarily as a theological device for resolving doctrinal ambiguity, Ibn Rushd defines it first and foremost as a linguistic and epistemological operation governed by objective methodological principles. His discussion in *Faṣl al-Maqāl* demonstrates that interpretation is neither unrestricted symbolic speculation nor a subjective attempt to accommodate philosophical conclusions to revelation. Rather, *ta'wīl* is a disciplined process through which the semantic meaning of revelation is reconstructed when demonstrative certain-

13 Catarina Belo, 'Averroes (d. 1198), The Decisive Treatise', ed. by Khaled El-Rouayheb and Sabine Schmidtke, The Oxford Handbook of Islamic Philosophy (Oxford University Press, 2016), pp. 278–95 (p. 278) <https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199917389.013.37>.

14 Mourad Wahba, Mulāk Al-Haqīqah Al-Muthlaqah (Cairo: Maktabah Usrah, 1999); Mourad Wahba, 'Mufāraqah Ibn Rushd', in Ibn Rushd Mufakkir-an 'Arabiyy-an Wa Rāid-an Lil Al-Ittijāh Al-'Aqlī, ed. by Athif Al-Iraqi (Cairo: Majlis Al-A'la li Al-Tsaqafah, 1993), pp. 29–38.

ty requires moving beyond the literal sense.[15]

Ibn Rushd provides a precise linguistic definition of *ta›wīl*:

> معنى التأويل هو إخراج دلالة اللفظ من الدلالة الحقيقية إلى الدلالة المجازية، من غير أن يُخَلَّ في ذلك بعادة لسان العرب في التجوّز، من تسمية الشيء بشبيهه أو بسببه أو لاحقه أو مقارنه، أو غير ذلك من الأشياء التي عُدِّدت في تعريف أصناف الكلام المجازي

> *The meaning of ta'wīl is to transfer the signification of an expression from its literal meaning to a figurative meaning, without departing from the established conventions of the Arabic language in the use of figurative speech, such as naming a thing by what resembles it, by its cause, by something consequent upon it, by something associated with it, or by other forms enumerated in the classification of figurative discourse.*[16]

This definition also demonstrates that Ibn Rushd does not regard literal and figurative meanings as mutually opposed categories. Instead, both belong to the semantic resources of the Arabic language through which revelation communicates truth. Literal meaning therefore constitutes the primary level of textual understanding, whereas figurative meaning becomes legitimate only under specific epistemological conditions.[17] *Ta'wīl* should be understood not as replacing literal meaning but as its rational extension whenever the apparent meaning conflicts with demonstrative certainty.

> ونحن نقطع قطعًا أن كل ما أدّى إليه البرهان، وخالفه ظاهر الشرع، أن ذلك الظاهر يقبل التأويل على قانون التأويل العربي.

> *We maintain with certainty that whenever demonstrative proof (burhān) establishes a conclusion that appears to conflict with the apparent meaning (ẓāhir) of the Divine Law, that apparent meaning must be interpreted (ta'wīl) according to the accepted conventions of the Arabic language.*[18]

---

15 Sidiropoulou and Campanini, pp. 6–7.

16 Ibn Rushd, Faṣl Al-Maqāl Fī Taqrīr Mā Bayna Al-Sharīʿah Wa Al-Ḥikmah Min Al-Ittiṣāl, p. 97.

17 Ibn Rushd, Faṣl Al-Maqāl Fī Taqrīr Mā Bayna Al-Sharīʿah Wa Al-Ḥikmah Min Al-Ittiṣāl, p. 98.

18 Ibn Rushd, Faṣl Al-Maqāl Fī Taqrīr Mā Bayna Al-Sharīʿah Wa Al-Ḥikmah Min Al-Ittiṣāl, p. 98.

Ibn Rushd further emphasises that the legitimacy of *ta'wīl* rests on the consensus (*ijmā›*) of the Muslim scholarly tradition.[19] He explicitly states that Muslims have unanimously agreed that not every scriptural expression should be understood literally, nor should every expression be interpreted allegorically. The real disagreement concerns identifying which texts require interpretation and which should remain upon their apparent meaning. This observation shifts the debate away from the permissibility of *ta'wīl* itself toward the epistemological criteria governing its application. The existence of *ta'wīl* is therefore not controversial; rather, the central question concerns the conditions under which it becomes methodologically justified.

Accordingly, Ibn Rushd rejects two opposing interpretive extremes, as articulated in *Al-Kashf 'an Manāhij al-Adillah fī 'Aqā'id al-Millah*. On the one hand, he criticises the rigid literalism of the *Hashawiyyah*, who insist on preserving the apparent meaning of every scriptural expression regardless of demonstrative evidence.[20] On the other hand, he criticises forms of theological *ta'wīl* that are grounded in dialectical speculation rather than demonstrative reasoning, a critique directed principally at the methods of the Asharite *mutakallimūn* rather than at allegorical interpretation itself.[21] Both tendencies, in Ibn Rushd's view, fail to maintain the proper relationship between language, demonstrative reasoning, and the purposes of revelation. Legitimate interpretation must therefore remain simultaneously faithful to the linguistic structure of the Qur'an and to demonstrative truth.

The role of Arabic linguistic convention is particularly significant within Ibn Rushd's conception of *ta'wīl*. Figurative interpretation cannot be based upon personal speculation or theological preference but must emerge from recognised forms of Arabic expression. Metaphor, analogy, causation, and other accepted rhetorical devices constitute the linguistic framework within which interpretation may legitimately move from *ḥaqīqah* to *majāz*. Language therefore functions not merely as the medium through which revelation is communicated but also as the epistemological boundary regulating the scope of interpretation. By grounding *ta'wīl* in linguistic convention, Ibn Rushd transforms interpretation from a purely theological activity into a rational discipline governed by semantic principles.

Seen from this perspective, Ibn Rushd's definition of *ta'wīl* already contains the essential foundations of his broader hermeneutical project. Interpretation is neither an autonomous theological technique nor an unrestricted philosophical exercise. Instead, it represents a linguistically disciplined

19 Ibn Rushd, Faṣl Al-Maqāl Fī Taqrīr Mā Bayna Al-Sharīʿah Wa Al-Ḥikmah Min Al-Ittiṣāl, p. 99.

20 Abu Walid Ibn Rushd, Al-Kashf 'an Manāhij Al-Adillah Fī 'Aqā'Id Al-Millah, ed. by Muhamad Abid Al-Jabiri, 1st edn (Beirut: Markaz Dirasat Wihdat Arabiyah, 1998), pp. 101–2.

21 Ibn Rushd, Al-Kashf 'an Manāhij Al-Adillah Fī 'Aqā'Id Al-Millah, p. 103.

method that mediates between revelation and demonstrative knowledge. The transition from literal to figurative meaning is therefore not the starting point of Qur'anic interpretation but the outcome of a regulated epistemological process. This understanding provides the conceptual basis for the next section, which examines the epistemic conditions under which *ta'wīl* becomes necessary and legitimate within Ibn Rushd's theory of interpretation.

The Epistemic Structure of Interpretation

Having established the linguistic nature of *ta'wīl*, Ibn Rushd proceeds to formulate the epistemological conditions under which interpretation becomes both necessary and legitimate. His discussion demonstrates that the central problem of Qur'anic interpretation is not whether *ta'wīl* should be practised, but rather under what epistemic circumstances the apparent meaning of revelation ought to be interpreted figuratively. Consequently, interpretation is governed not by theological preference but by an ordered epistemic structure that determines when, by whom, and according to what criteria *ta'wīl* may be employed.

Ibn Rushd begins by distinguishing between scriptural texts that should remain upon their apparent meaning and those that require allegorical interpretation. He argues that texts whose literal meanings have been unanimously accepted (*ijmā*) by the Muslim community should not be subjected to *ta'wīl*, provided that such consensus has been established with certainty.[22] Likewise, texts that have been unanimously interpreted figuratively should continue to be understood through *ta'wīl*. The remaining category consists of texts concerning which scholars disagree regarding whether they should be interpreted literally or allegorically. In such cases, interpretation becomes an act of *ijtihād*, yet one that remains governed by the established principles of *ta'wīl* rather than individual preference. This distinction reveals that interpretation is never arbitrary but always constrained by epistemic and methodological considerations.

> وقد يدل على أنَّ الإجماع لا يتقرر في النظريات بطريقٍ يقيني، كما يمكن أن يتقرر في العمليات، أنه ليس يمكن أن يتقرر الإجماع في مسألةٍ ما في عصرٍ ما، إلا بأن يكون ذلك العصر عندنا محصورًا، وأن يكون جميع العلماء الموجودين في ذلك العصر معلومين عندنا، أعني معلومًا أشخاصهم ومبلغ عددهم، وأن يُنقل إلينا في المسألة مذهبُ كلِّ واحدٍ منهم فيها نقلَ تواترٍ. ويكون مع هذا كلِّه قد صحَّ عندنا أن العلماء الموجودين في ذلك الزمان متفقون على أنه ليس في الشرع ظاهرٌ أو باطنٌ، وأن العلم بكلِّ مسألةٍ يجب ألَّا يُكتم عن أحد، وأن الناس طريقُهم واحدٌ في علم الشريعة.

22 Ibn Rushd, Faṣl Al-Maqāl Fī Taqrīr Mā Bayna Al-Sharīʿah Wa Al-Ḥikmah Min Al-Ittiṣāl, pp. 98–99.

> *This also demonstrates that consensus (ijmāʿ) cannot attain the same degree of certainty in theoretical matters as it can in practical matters. Unlike practical rulings, consensus concerning theoretical questions cannot be established with demonstrative certainty. For consensus on any theoretical question in a given age can only be established if that age is fully ascertainable to us, if all the scholars living in that period are known to us—namely, their identities and their total number—and if the opinion of every one of them concerning the issue has been transmitted through tawātur (mass transmission). Even if all these conditions were fulfilled, it would still have to be established that the scholars of that age unanimously agreed that the revealed Law contains neither an outward (ẓāhir) nor an inward (bāṭin) dimension, that knowledge concerning every religious question ought not to be concealed from anyone, and that all people follow a single path in the understanding of the Sharīʿah.*[23]

This passage reveals that Ibn Rushd does not reject *ijmā* as a juridical principle; rather, he questions its epistemic reliability in matters of theoretical knowledge. Because the conditions required to establish unanimous consensus in doctrinal questions are virtually impossible to satisfy, *ijmā* cannot function as the ultimate criterion for determining the legitimacy of interpretation. In theoretical matters, demonstrative reasoning (*burhān*) therefore carries greater epistemic authority than inherited consensus.

Gracia's philosophical interpretation helps clarify the significance of this argument. Rather than asking how scripture should be interpreted, Gracia asks whether sacred law admits a definitive interpretation at all. From this perspective, Ibn Rushd occupies an intermediate position. He neither accepts that every scriptural text possesses one universally definitive interpretation nor embraces unrestricted interpretive pluralism. Rather, the possibility of definitive interpretation depends upon both the nature of the scriptural text and the epistemic competence of the interpreter. Literal texts concerning the foundations of religion admit greater interpretive stability, whereas symbolic and metaphysical passages require demonstrative *tawīl* whose legitimacy depends upon *burhān* rather than unanimous agreement.[24]

This epistemic distinction is reflected in Ibn Rushd's well-known classification of scriptural texts into three categories. The first consists of texts that must not be interpreted allegorically because they concern the fundamental principles of religion, such as the existence of God, the Last Day, and other

23 Ibn Rushd, Faṣl Al-Maqāl Fī Taqrīr Mā Bayna Al-Sharīʿah Wa Al-Ḥikmah Min Al-Ittiṣāl, pp. 99–100.

24 Gracia, pp. 139–41.

foundational doctrines that constitute the basis of faith.[25] The second comprises texts that require *tawīl* for those possessing demonstrative knowledge (*ahl al-burhān*), including scriptural descriptions of divine attributes such as God's *istiwā* and the prophetic traditions concerning divine descent (*nuzūl*). For individuals lacking demonstrative competence, however, such interpretation may neither be necessary nor appropriate.[26] Between these two categories lies a third group of texts whose interpretive status remains uncertain, giving rise to legitimate scholarly disagreement concerning whether they should be understood literally or figuratively.[27]

Having established the epistemic limits of consensus and the classification of scriptural texts, Ibn Rushd explains the deeper epistemological foundations on which this classification rests. Rather than treating these categories as merely exegetical distinctions, he grounds them in the very nature of knowledge itself. The meanings contained within revelation are not homogeneous but differ according to the relationship between linguistic expression and the realities they signify. Consequently, the legitimacy of *ta›wīl* depends upon two fundamental epistemological principles that explain both the structure of religious knowledge and the methodological conditions governing interpretation.

The first principle concerns the epistemic structure of knowledge itself. Revelation, according to Ibn Rushd, constitutes a form of knowledge (*‹ilm*), and every act of knowledge consists of two inseparable dimensions: *taṣawwur* (conceptualisation) and *taṣdīq* (assent or affirmation of truth). The purpose of revelation is therefore not merely to communicate concepts about reality but to lead human beings toward rational affirmation of that reality. Since intellectual capacities differ, assent is attained through three distinct modes of reasoning: demonstrative (*burhān*), dialectical (*jadal*), and rhetorical (*khiṭābah*). Likewise, conceptualisation may arise either through direct cognition of an object itself or through its representation.[28] Human beings frequently understand metaphysical realities through analogy, metaphor, and symbolic representation rather than through direct perception. The distinction between *taṣawwur* and *taṣdīq* therefore provides the epistemological foundation for explaining why revelation communicates through different forms of discourse appropriate to different intellectual audiences.[29]

25 Ibn Rushd, Faṣl Al-Maqāl Fī Taqrīr Mā Bayna Al-Sharīʿah Wa Al-Ḥikmah Min Al-Ittiṣāl, p. 111.

26 Ibn Rushd, Faṣl Al-Maqāl Fī Taqrīr Mā Bayna Al-Sharīʿah Wa Al-Ḥikmah Min Al-Ittiṣāl, p. 111.

27 Ibn Rushd, Faṣl Al-Maqāl Fī Taqrīr Mā Bayna Al-Sharīʿah Wa Al-Ḥikmah Min Al-Ittiṣāl, p. 112.

28 Ibn Rushd, Faṣl Al-Maqāl Fī Taqrīr Mā Bayna Al-Sharīʿah Wa Al-Ḥikmah Min Al-Ittiṣāl, p. 116.

29 Ibn Rushd, Faṣl Al-Maqāl Fī Taqrīr Mā Bayna Al-Sharīʿah Wa Al-Ḥikmah Min

The second principle concerns the linguistic character of revelation. Ibn Rushd explains that Qur'anic discourse often conveys metaphysical realities not directly but through symbolic representation (*tamthīl*). Consequently, the interpreter must distinguish not only between the symbol and the reality it signifies but also understand why a particular symbol has been employed to represent that reality. Interpretation therefore requires more than recognising the existence of figurative language; it demands an epistemological understanding of the relationship between representation and meaning. *Ta›wīl* should thus not be understood as an arbitrary movement from literal to figurative meaning but as a disciplined epistemological procedure governed simultaneously by demonstrative reasoning (*burhān*) and the semantic conventions of the Arabic language.[30]

Building upon these principles, Ibn Rushd further develops a comprehensive classification of scriptural discourse from three complementary perspectives. First, he classifies revelation according to its outward linguistic expression (*al-dāll*), distinguishing between texts whose literal meaning must remain unchanged, texts whose symbolic character requires demonstrative *ta›wīl*, and texts whose status remains uncertain and therefore becomes the object of legitimate *ijtihād*. Second, he classifies revelation according to its intended meaning (*al-madlūl*), analysing the varying relationships between symbolic expressions and the realities they signify. Some symbolic expressions require highly sophisticated demonstrative reasoning to uncover both their meaning and symbolic function, whereas others may be understood through relatively accessible forms of reasoning. Finally, Ibn Rushd analyses scriptural discourse according to the logical relationship between premises and conclusions, thereby determining which elements of religious discourse admit interpretation and which must remain upon their apparent meaning. These complementary classifications demonstrate that *ta›wīl* is governed simultaneously by epistemology, semantics, and logic rather than by theological preference alone.[31]

On this basis, Ibn Rushd develops a sophisticated criterion governing the legitimacy of *ta›wīl*. Where both the symbolic nature of a text and the relationship between symbol and meaning are readily understood through commonly accessible knowledge, allegorical interpretation may legitimately be disclosed to the wider community. By contrast, where the relationship between the symbolic expression and its intended meaning depends upon complex demonstrative reasoning or specialised philosophical knowledge, interpretation should remain restricted to those firmly grounded in knowledge (*al-rāsikhūn fī al-ilm*). The distinction therefore concerns not different truths

Al-Ittiṣāl, p. 117.

30 Ibn Rushd, Faṣl Al-Maqāl Fī Taqrīr Mā Bayna Al-Sharīʿah Wa Al-Ḥikmah Min Al-Ittiṣāl, p. 117.

31 Ibn Rushd, Al-Kashf 'an Manāhij Al-Adillah Fī 'Aqā'Id Al-Millah, pp. 205–6.

but different epistemic capacities for understanding the same revelation.

Abid Al-Jabiri aptly characterises this hermeneutical operation by arguing that *ta›wīl* essentially consists in connecting conclusions with their premises, and premises with their conclusions, within the discourse of revelation itself. Rather than imposing external philosophical meanings upon scripture, *ta›wīl* seeks the intended meaning underlying metaphorical expressions (*majāz*) and sensory representations (*tamthīl*) in a manner that preserves the internal coherence of revelation while bringing its meaning into conformity with demonstrative rational proof (*al-burhān al-›aqlī*). This interpretation reinforces the view advanced in the present study that *ta›wīl* is not an autonomous interpretive technique but the methodological consequence of an underlying epistemic structure.[32]

Taken together, these principles reveal that Ibn Rushd's theory of interpretation is organised according to a coherent epistemic hierarchy. Consensus establishes only limited interpretive stability; demonstrative reasoning determines when interpretation becomes necessary; linguistic convention regulates the movement from literal to figurative meaning; the structure of knowledge explains the diversity of interpretive methods; and the classification of scriptural discourse determines the scope of legitimate *ta›wīl*. Rather than constituting the foundation of hermeneutics itself, *ta›wīl* emerges as the methodological consequence of this broader epistemic architecture through which Ibn Rushd explains how revealed meaning is acquired, justified, and communicated.

Contemporary Readings of Ibn Rushd's Theory of Qur'anic Interpretation

The preceding analysis has demonstrated that Ibn Rushd's theory of *ta'wīl* cannot be separated from the broader epistemic structure that governs Qur'anic interpretation. His discussions of demonstrative reasoning, linguistic convention, conceptualisation, assent, and interpretive competence collectively reveal a systematic theory of interpretation rather than an isolated doctrine of allegorical exegesis. Contemporary scholarship has significantly advanced the understanding of this hermeneutical project. Nevertheless, existing studies have generally approached Ibn Rushd through distinct analytical perspectives, each illuminating an important dimension of his thought while leaving the overall epistemic architecture insufficiently reconstructed.

One influential line of scholarship interprets Ibn Rushd through the relationship between revelation and demonstrative philosophy. Taylor argues that the principle *al-ḥaqq lā yuḍādd al-ḥaqq* establishes the epistemological compatibility of revelation and reason, with burhān representing the highest

32 Muhammad Abid Al-Jabiri, Nahnu Wa Al-Turāts: Qirā'āt Mu'āshirah Fī Turats Al-Falsafī, 2nd edn (Beirut: Markaz Dirasat Wihdat Arabiyah, 2007), p. 245.

mode of certainty and determining when the apparent (*ẓāhir*) meaning of revelation requires *ta›wīl*. Philosophers therefore possess distinctive epistemic competence not because they stand above revelation, but because demonstrative reasoning provides the most reliable means of apprehending the truth revelation communicates.[33] Taylor further distinguishes Ibn Rushd from al-Ghazālī by showing that legitimate *ta›wīl* is grounded in demonstrative knowledge rather than extra-rational or mystical authority.[34] Adamson similarly situates this position within Ibn Rushd's reconstruction of Aristotelian epistemology in an Islamic intellectual framework.[35] Taken together, these readings establish burhān as the criterion through which revealed truth and rational inquiry converge.

A second line of scholarship focuses on *ta›wīl*. Okumuş argues that Ibn Rushd inherited its formal structure and the differentiation of human cognitive capacities from al-Ghazālī while fundamentally transforming their epistemological basis. Whereas al-Ghazālī ultimately associated higher interpretive authority with the ārifūn, Ibn Rushd relocated it to philosophers as ahl *al-burhān*, thereby grounding legitimate interpretation in demonstrative certainty rather than mystical experience.[36] Wohlman similarly maintains that their principal disagreement concerns not the permissibility of allegorical interpretation but the epistemic conditions governing its application.[37] These studies clarify Ibn Rushd's transformation of *ta›wīl*. However, they tend to retain *ta›wīl* itself as the primary centre of his hermeneutics rather than situating it within the broader architecture of demonstration, language, and authority.

Another important philosophical reading is proposed by Gracia, whose analysis shifts attention from the legitimacy of *ta'wīl* to the problem of definitive interpretation.[38] Rather than asking how scripture should be interpreted, Gracia asks whether any interpretation of sacred law can ever become final and universally normative. He concludes that Ibn Rushd rejects both interpretive absolutism and radical interpretive scepticism by distinguishing between different categories of scriptural texts and different levels of intellectual competence among interpreters. Gracia's interpretation significantly broadens contemporary discussions of Ibn Rushd by situating *ta'wīl* within the wider philosophical problem of hermeneutics. Nevertheless, his study

33 Taylor, 'Averroes: God and the Noble Lie', pp. 49–50.

34 Richard C. Taylor, 'Review of The Medieval Controversy between Philosophy and Orthodoxy. Ijmā and Tawīl in the Conflict between Al-Ghazālī and Ibn Rushd', ed. by Iysa A Bello and Hans Daiber, International Journal of Middle East Studies, 22.2 (1990), 250–51 (p. 251) <http://www.jstor.org/stable/163753>.

35 Adamson, p. 802.

36 Okumuş, p. 302.

37 Wohlman, p. 102.

38 Gracia, pp. 39–41.

primarily addresses interpretive definitiveness rather than reconstructing the internal epistemological structure connecting demonstrative reasoning, language, *ta'wīl*, and epistemic authority. The present study therefore builds upon Gracia's insight while extending it into a systematic epistemic model of Qur'anic interpretation.

Another important body of scholarship approaches Ibn Rushd through the philosophy of language. Abu-Zeid argues that Ibn Rushd's epistemology proceeds from empirical reality toward metaphysical understanding, assigning language a decisive role in mediating religious knowledge.[39] Likewise, Campanini interprets Ibn Rushd's hermeneutics as fundamentally linguistic, in which *ta›wīl* is understood not as the search for hidden or esoteric meanings but as a semantic operation grounded in the structure of language itself. According to Campanini, language functions as the mirror of being (*wujūd*). Consequently, interpreting determines the understanding of reality.[40] The task of the interpreter is therefore to disclose the meaning of revelation by analysing its linguistic structures and semantic layers rather than by appealing to mystical intuition or symbolic speculation. In this sense, *ta›wīl* becomes an exercise in semantic analysis through which linguistic expressions reveal the realities to which they refer Leaman further maintains that Qur'anic language communicates truth according to the intellectual capacities of different audiences, thereby explaining the coexistence of literal and figurative expressions within revelation.[41] Complementing these analyses, Sidiropoulou interprets Ibn Rushd's hermeneutics through a semiotic perspective, arguing that Qur'anic language functions simultaneously as sign and meaning, enabling linguistic expressions to represent realities extending beyond their literal form.

Together with Campanini, Sidiropoulou further argues that Ibn Rushd's hermeneutics is fundamentally characterised by its linguistic and semiotic orientation, in contrast to the predominantly spiritual and esoteric hermeneutics associated with the Shi'i tradition.[42] Within this framework, philosophical discourse possesses greater logical coherence and demonstrative force than theological or juridical discourse. Consequently, whenever two propositions appear to conflict, the weaker formulation, typically expressed in theological or juridical language, requires *ta'wīl* so that its meaning may be reconciled with the stronger demonstrative formulation established through philosophical reasoning. Collectively, these studies illuminate the linguistic sophistication of Ibn Rushd's interpretive theory and show that semantic mediation constitutes an indispensable component of Qur'anic interpretation.

39 Abu-Zeid, p. 34.

40 Campanini, 'Qur'an and Science: A Hermeneutical Approach / القرآن والعلم: منهج يريس فت□', p. 58.

41 Leaman, p. 170.

42 Sidiropoulou and Campanini, p. 6.

Questions concerning interpretive authority have likewise attracted considerable scholarly attention. Quinn interprets Ibn Rushd's distinction between rhetorical, dialectical, and demonstrative communities as a strategy for preserving both philosophical inquiry and the religious life of the wider Muslim community.[43] According to Quinn, this distinction serves a fundamentally protective function rather than an elitist one. Ibn Rushd separates demonstrative philosophy from public religious discourse because philosophical inquiry is inherently complex and often characterised by uncertainty. In contrast, religious discourse must preserve the faith and moral stability of the broader community. The restriction of demonstrative interpretation is therefore intended to prevent speculative philosophical arguments from undermining the intellectual confidence and religious commitment of ordinary believers.[44]

Bello similarly argues that this distinction reflects differences in epistemic competence rather than social hierarchy. Carrasquillo and Mabrook further emphasise the ethical and political responsibilities accompanying interpretive authority, suggesting that the exercise of *ta'wīl* inevitably carries implications for the intellectual and moral order of society.[45] Conversely, George F. Hourani and Ebrahimi Dinani question whether Ibn Rushd's reliance upon demonstrative reasoning ultimately produces an exclusive epistemic community by restricting legitimate interpretation to the *ahl al-burhān*. These discussions highlight the continuing philosophical significance of Ibn Rushd's conception of authority while also revealing persistent disagreements concerning its scope and implications.[46]

More recent scholarship has examined the practical application of Ibn Rushd's interpretive principles within specific theological debates. Hasan demonstrates that Ibn Rushd employs *ta'wīl* in interpreting anthropomorphic descriptions of God by rejecting both rigid literalism and unrestricted allegorical interpretation.[47] Similarly, Long, Mahmood, and Ismail show that Ibn Rushd's treatment of predestination and human freedom seeks to preserve the coherence of revelation through demonstrative interpretation while acknowledging different levels of intellectual competence among believers.[48] These studies illustrate how Ibn Rushd's epistemological principles operate within concrete theological contexts, confirming that his hermeneutics extends beyond abstract philosophical reflection.

Contemporary scholarship has substantially enriched the understanding of Ibn Rushd's hermeneutics. Each line of inquiry illuminates an import-

43 Quinn, p. 788.
44 Quinn, p. 788.
45 Carrasquillo, p. 7; Mabrook, pp. 94–95.
46 Alizadeh, pp. 37–38.
47 Hasan, p. 142.
48 Long, Mahmood, and Ismail, p. 11.

ant dimension of his interpretive theory: demonstrative reasoning, *ta'wīl*, philosophy of language, interpretive authority, or theological application. Nevertheless, these studies have generally examined these dimensions independently, thereby producing thematic rather than structural interpretations of Ibn Rushd's philosophical project. Demonstrative reasoning is often analysed without its linguistic mediation; language is discussed independently of the cognitive distinction between *taṣawwur* and *taṣdīq*; *ta'wīl* is frequently treated as the centre of hermeneutics rather than its methodological consequence; and interpretive authority is commonly examined without reference to the epistemological structure from which it derives.

The reconstruction developed in this article proposes a different reading. Rather than treating these concepts as autonomous themes, it argues that they constitute logically interconnected components of a single epistemic architecture governing the legitimacy of Qur'anic interpretation. *Burhān* establishes epistemic justification; language defines semantic possibility; *ta'wīl* operationalises interpretation within those epistemic and linguistic constraints; and interpretive authority emerges from demonstrative competence and methodological responsibility. On the reconstruction proposed here, the distinctive character of Ibn Rushd's theory of Qur'anic interpretation lies not in any one of these concepts individually, but in the epistemological relationships through which demonstrative reasoning, language, *ta'wīl*, and interpretive authority function together. This reconstruction provides the foundation for the following discussion of epistemic authority and its role within Ibn Rushd's interpretive framework.

Table1. Ibn Rushd and al-Ghazālī on Ta'wīl and Interpretive Authority

Dimension	al-Ghazālī	Ibn Rushd	Main Epistemological Difference
Concept of *taʾ wīl*	Allows movement from literal to figurative meaning under specific interpretive conditions.	Retains the movement from literal (*ḥaqīqah*) to figurative (*majāz*) meaning within Arabic linguistic conventions.	Ibn Rushd preserves the formal structure of *taʾ wīl* but reconstructs its epistemological basis.

Basis of legitimate interpretation	Interpretive legitimacy is linked to differentiated levels of knowledge and, in Okumuş's reading, gives an important role to the *ʾārifūn*.	Legitimate *taʾwīl* is governed primarily by demonstrative reasoning (*burhān*).	The basis of legitimacy shifts from privileged spiritual/gnostic knowledge toward demonstrative certainty.
Epistemic authority	Higher interpretation is associated with those possessing advanced religious or spiritual knowledge.	Interpretive authority belongs principally to the *ahl al-burhān*, those competent in demonstrative reasoning.	Authority is redefined in terms of demonstrative competence.
Human cognitive diversity	Recognises differences in intellectual capacities and corresponding levels of religious understanding.	Distinguishes rhetorical (*khaṭābī*), dialectical (*jadalī*), and demonstrative (*burhānī*) modes of assent.	Ibn Rushd incorporates cognitive differentiation into a more explicit epistemic hierarchy.
Restriction and communication of *taʾwīl*	Interpretation is differentiated according to the intellectual or spiritual capacities of audiences.	Demonstrative *taʾwīl* should not be disclosed indiscriminately to those lacking the required epistemic competence.	Ibn Rushd links interpretive restriction to demonstrative competence and ethical responsibility in communicating knowledge.

The comparison indicates that Ibn Rushd's departure from al-Ghazālī lies less in the formal possibility of *ta›wīl* than in its epistemological justification. While both recognise differentiated levels of scriptural understanding and human cognitive capacity, Ibn Rushd relocates interpretive legitimacy to demonstrative reasoning (*burhān*) and accordingly redefines the qualified interpreter in terms of demonstrative competence. Thus, his originality consists not simply in developing a theory of allegorical interpretation, but in reorganising inherited hermeneutical principles within a demonstrative epistemology.

Epistemic Authority and the Ethics of Interpretation

The epistemic structure reconstructed in the preceding sections inevitably raises another question: who possesses the authority to perform *ta'wīl*? Having established that allegorical interpretation is governed by demonstrative reasoning rather than subjective preference, Ibn Rushd argues that inter-

pretive legitimacy depends not only upon the correctness of method but also upon the epistemic competence of the interpreter.[49] Consequently, the problem of authority is not external to the interpretive framework but constitutes its ethical culmination. Authority emerges from the disciplined application of epistemic principles rather than from institutional or theological privilege.

Ibn Rushd consistently maintains that *ta'wīl* cannot be exercised indiscriminately. Because interpretation requires demonstrative certainty, linguistic mastery, and knowledge of the purposes of revelation, it may only be undertaken by those firmly grounded in knowledge (*al-rāsikhūn fī al-ilm*).[50] This restriction does not imply that revelation is inaccessible to the wider Muslim community. Rather, it reflects the epistemological distinction between different levels of intellectual competence. Just as demonstrative reasoning represents the highest degree of certainty, demonstrative interpretation requires an equivalent level of intellectual preparation.

This principle is closely related to Ibn Rushd's distinction between different modes of assent. Because human beings attain knowledge through rhetorical, dialectical, or demonstrative reasoning, revelation addresses different audiences according to their epistemic capacities. Those who rely primarily upon rhetorical persuasion may adequately understand the apparent meaning of scripture without requiring allegorical interpretation. Demonstrative interpretation becomes necessary only for those intellectual problems whose resolution depends upon demonstrative proof. Consequently, the distinction between ordinary believers (*al-jumhūr*) and the *ahl al-burhān* reflects differences in epistemic competence rather than differences in religious dignity.[51]

The ethical dimension of interpretation becomes even more explicit in Ibn Rushd's discussion of the disclosure of *ta'wīl*. He argues that demonstrative interpretations should not be presented indiscriminately to those incapable of understanding the epistemological basis upon which they rest. To reveal complex demonstrative interpretations to audiences lacking the necessary intellectual preparation risks producing confusion rather than knowledge. Interpretation therefore carries an ethical responsibility concerning both the production and communication of knowledge. The interpreter must consider not only whether an interpretation is demonstrably justified but also whether its disclosure serves the educational purpose of revelation.

ومن قبل التأويلات، والظن بأنها مما يجب أن يصرح بها في الشرع للجميع، نشأت فرق

49 Ibn Rushd, Faṣl Al-Maqāl Fī Taqrīr Mā Bayna Al-Sharīʿah Wa Al-Ḥikmah Min Al-Ittiṣāl, p. 101.

50 Ibn Rushd, Faṣl Al-Maqāl Fī Taqrīr Mā Bayna Al-Sharīʿah Wa Al-Ḥikmah Min Al-Ittiṣāl, p. 119.

51 Ibn Rushd, Faṣl Al-Maqāl Fī Taqrīr Mā Bayna Al-Sharīʿah Wa Al-Ḥikmah Min Al-Ittiṣāl, p. 118.

.الإسلام حتى كفر بعضهم بعضاً، وبدع بعضهم بعضاً، وبخاصة الفاسدة منها

> *Because of interpretations—and the belief that they should be publicly declared in religious teaching for everyone—Islamic sects arose, until they declared one another unbelievers and innovators, especially on account of the unsound interpretations.*[52]

This ethical responsibility is inseparable from the objectives of divine revelation (*maqāṣid al-sharīah*).[53] Ibn Rushd repeatedly associates correct *ta'wīl* with the ultimate purpose of the Lawgiver, namely the teaching of truth and the guidance of human beings toward right understanding and right action. Allegorical interpretation therefore functions as an instrument for realising the objectives of revelation rather than as an autonomous intellectual exercise. When interpretation seeks demonstrative truth, it remains consistent with the intention of the Lawgiver. Conversely, interpretation motivated by sectarian preference, personal desire, or speculative theology departs from the purposes of revelation and consequently loses its epistemic legitimacy.

This relationship between *ta'wīl* and *maqāṣid al-sharīah* introduces an important ethical criterion into Ibn Rushd's theory of interpretation.[54] Demonstrative reasoning alone does not exhaust the conditions of legitimate interpretation. Interpretation must also remain directed toward the objectives of revelation and contribute to the preservation of truth rather than the multiplication of doctrinal conflict. Epistemological validity and ethical responsibility therefore become mutually dependent dimensions of Qur'anic interpretation.

Gracia likewise observes that Ibn Rushd's restriction of demonstrative interpretation does not establish an exclusive monopoly of truth but reflects the epistemological diversity of human intellectual capacities. [55] Since scriptural texts differ in their semantic structure and readers differ in their cognitive abilities, interpretive authority necessarily varies according to demonstrative competence rather than institutional status.

Contemporary scholarship has interpreted this theory of authority from different perspectives. Quinn argues that Ibn Rushd's distinction between rhetorical, dialectical, and demonstrative communities functions primarily as an epistemological strategy for protecting both philosophical inquiry and religious life. Bello similarly maintains that the distinction concerns differ-

52 Ibn Rushd, Faṣl Al-Maqāl Fī Taqrīr Mā Bayna Al-Sharīʿah Wa Al-Ḥikmah Min Al-Ittiṣāl, pp. 121–22.

53 Ahmad Raisuni, 'Al-Manhā Al-Maqāshidī Fī Fiqh Ibn Rushd', in Al-Athā Al-Fikrī Li Ibn Rushd: Halaqah Dirāsiyah, ed. by Fathi Malkawi and Azmi Taha, 1st edn (Oman: International Institute of Islamic Thought, 1999), pp. 25–47 (p. 28).

54 Taha, p. 167.

55 Gracia, p. 141.

ences in cognitive competence rather than social hierarchy. Carrasquillo and Mabrook further emphasise that interpretive authority in Ibn Rushd carries ethical and political responsibilities because the interpretation of revelation inevitably shapes the intellectual and moral order of society.

Nevertheless, several scholars have questioned whether Ibn Rushd's restriction of *ta'wīl* to the *ahl al-burhān* ultimately produces an exclusive epistemic community. Hourani argues that Ibn Rushd's strong reliance upon Aristotelian demonstration risks narrowing the range of legitimate interpretations, while Dinani suggests that reason should possess a greater degree of autonomy independent of theological authorisation.[56] Likewise, Alizadeh questions whether assigning demonstrative interpretation primarily to philosophers unintentionally transforms epistemic competence into intellectual privilege.

The reconstruction proposed in this article offers a different interpretation of these debates. When considered independently, Ibn Rushd's distinction between the *ahl al-burhān* and the wider community may indeed appear to establish philosophical elitism. However, when situated within the epistemic structure reconstructed in the preceding sections, authority assumes a fundamentally different function. Demonstrative reasoning first establishes epistemic justification; linguistic convention defines the semantic limits of interpretation; *ta'wīl* operationalises the transition from literal to figurative meaning; and only after these conditions have been fulfilled does the question of interpretive authority arise. Authority therefore derives from the successful application of epistemological principles rather than preceding them.

Seen from this perspective, the *ahl al-burhān* should not be understood as a privileged philosophical class but as an epistemic community whose legitimacy rests upon demonstrative competence, linguistic mastery, methodological discipline, and ethical responsibility. Interpretive authority is therefore neither institutional nor hereditary; it is earned through intellectual qualification and exercised in accordance with the objectives of revelation. The ethical responsibility of interpretation thus completes Ibn Rushd's epistemology by ensuring that demonstrative knowledge serves not only theoretical truth but also the pedagogical and moral purposes of divine revelation.

This analysis completes the reconstruction of the epistemic conditions underlying Ibn Rushd's theory of Qur'anic interpretation. Beginning with the linguistic definition of *ta'wīl*, continuing through the epistemic structure of interpretation, and culminating in the ethical responsibility of the interpreter, Ibn Rushd presents a remarkably coherent theory of Qur'anic interpretation. The remaining task is to synthesise these interconnected dimensions into a unified analytical framework. The following section therefore reconstructs these relationships as an epistemic model of Qur'anic interpretation, demon-

56 Alizadeh, p. 38.

strating how *burhān*, language, *ta'wīl*, and epistemic authority function together within a single epistemological architecture.

Toward an Epistemic Model of Qur'anic Interpretation

The preceding analyses demonstrate that Ibn Rushd's theory of Qur'anic interpretation cannot be adequately understood through isolated discussions of *ta'wīl*, *burhān*, language, or interpretive authority. Each of these dimensions performs a distinct epistemological function, yet none operates independently. Rather, the present analysis reconstructs an internally coherent framework in which these dimensions function as logically related conditions of interpretive legitimacy. The study therefore argues that Ibn Rushd's theory of Qur'anic interpretation can be understood analytically through the systematic relationship among these dimensions rather than through *tawīl* alone.

The reconstruction developed in this article begins with *burhān*. Demonstrative reasoning constitutes the epistemic foundation of interpretation because it establishes the criterion by which apparent conflicts between revelation and demonstrative truth are recognised. Interpretation is therefore never initiated by subjective preference or theological speculation. It becomes necessary only when demonstrative certainty indicates that the apparent literal meaning cannot adequately represent the intended truth of revelation.

Once demonstrative necessity has been established, interpretation proceeds through language. Ibn Rushd's definition of *ta'wīl* explicitly requires that every movement from literal (*ḥaqīqah*) to figurative (*majāz*) meaning remain within the recognised conventions of Arabic expression. Language therefore functions as the mediating structure that translates demonstrative certainty into hermeneutically legitimate interpretation. It prevents demonstrative reasoning from becoming arbitrary while simultaneously preserving the semantic integrity of revelation.

Within this linguistic framework, *ta'wīl* appears not as the foundation of hermeneutics but as its methodological operation. Allegorical interpretation represents the regulated movement from literal to figurative meaning whenever demonstrative reasoning and linguistic evidence jointly require such a transition. Consequently, *ta'wīl* possesses no independent epistemic authority. Its legitimacy derives entirely from its conformity to demonstrative proof, linguistic convention, and the objectives of revelation.

As Abid Al-Jabiri observes, *tawīl* is fundamentally the intellectual operation of relating conclusions to their premises and premises to their conclusions within the discourse of revelation itself. Its purpose is to uncover the intended meaning concealed beneath metaphorical expressions while preserving the coherence of scriptural discourse through demonstrative reasoning. Read in this way, *tawīl* functions not as an independent source of

meaning but as the methodological mechanism through which the epistemic architecture of interpretation becomes operational.[57]

The final dimension concerns epistemic authority. Since correct interpretation presupposes demonstrative competence, linguistic mastery, and methodological discipline, authority cannot originate from institutional status or theological affiliation alone. Instead, legitimate authority belongs to those who satisfy the epistemological conditions governing interpretation. The *ahl al-burhān* therefore represent not a privileged intellectual class but an epistemic community whose authority derives from demonstrative competence exercised responsibly in accordance with the purposes of revelation.

Taken together, these four dimensions form what this article identifies as an Epistemic Model of Qur'anic Interpretation. The model should not be understood as a chronological sequence or a strictly linear hierarchy, but as a set of logically interrelated conditions of interpretive legitimacy. *Burhān* supplies epistemic justification, language constrains semantic possibility, *tawīl* operates within these demonstrative and linguistic conditions, and epistemic authority concerns the competence and responsibility required to apply them legitimately.

Table 2. Epistemic Model of Qur'anic Interpretation

Epistemic Dimension	Primary Function	Epistemic Outcome
Burhān	Establishes demonstrative certainty	Epistemic justification
Language	Mediates semantic meaning according to Arabic convention	Linguistic validity
Ta'wīl	Regulates the movement from literal to figurative meaning	Interpretive legitimacy
Epistemic Authority	Ensures demonstrative competence and methodological responsibility	Legitimate interpretation

The logical relationship among these dimensions may be represented schematically as follows:

This model constitutes the principal theoretical contribution of the present study. Unlike previous scholarship, which has generally examined *burhān*, philosophy of language, *ta'wīl*, and interpretive authority as relatively independent themes, the present reconstruction theorises their internal logical relationship as successive epistemic conditions within a single interpretive architecture. The contribution, therefore, lies not in introducing new concepts into Ibn Rushd studies, but in explaining how concepts already

57 Al-Jabiri, p. 245.

present throughout his writings function together as a coherent epistemological system.

The proposed model also clarifies an important misunderstanding in contemporary discussions of Ibn Rushd. Previous scholarship has often portrayed *ta'wīl* as the defining centre of his hermeneutics. The present reconstruction suggests a different conclusion. *Ta'wīl* is not the epistemic foundation of interpretation but one stage within a broader architecture governed by demonstrative reasoning, linguistic discipline, and epistemic responsibility. What ultimately guarantees the legitimacy of interpretation is therefore not allegorical interpretation itself, but the coherence of the entire epistemic structure within which *ta'wīl* operates.

More broadly, this reconstruction contributes to contemporary Qur'anic hermeneutics by distinguishing methodological objectivity from interpretive uniformity. Ibn Rushd does not seek to eliminate interpretive plurality by imposing a single authoritative meaning upon every Qur'anic text. Instead, he establishes objective epistemological standards through which multiple interpretations may be evaluated. Demonstrative reasoning, linguistic coherence, methodological discipline, and epistemic competence thus function as shared criteria that preserve the possibility of interpretive diversity without collapsing into epistemological relativism.

The present reconstruction also extends Gracia's philosophical interpretation of Ibn Rushd. Whereas Gracia frames the central hermeneutical question in terms of the possibility of definitive interpretation, the model proposed here shifts the discussion toward the epistemological conditions through which interpretation acquires legitimacy. The primary contribution therefore lies not in determining whether one final interpretation exists, but in explaining how demonstrative reasoning, linguistic convention, disciplined *ta'wīl*, and epistemic authority together establish the epistemic coherence of Qur'anic interpretation.

The epistemic model of Qur'anic interpretation proposed in this article should be understood as an analytical reconstruction rather than a historical claim concerning Ibn Rushd's own terminology. The model synthesises the conceptual architecture implicit in *Faṣl al-Maqāl* and *Al-Kashf an Manāhij al-Adillah*, while integrating insights from contemporary scholarship into a unified theoretical framework. By reconstructing these logical relationships, the present study offers a new perspective for understanding Ibn Rushd's hermeneutics. It provides a conceptual foundation for future research in Qur'anic interpretation, Islamic philosophy, and the epistemology of religious knowledge.

Conclusion

This study has argued that Ibn Rushd's theory of Qur'anic interpretation

cannot be adequately understood by focusing exclusively on *tawīl*. Through a conceptual reconstruction of *Faṣl al-Maqāl* and *Al-Kashf an Manāhij al-Adillah*, the article demonstrates that the legitimacy of interpretation rests upon an integrated epistemic structure comprising demonstrative reasoning (*burhān*), linguistic mediation, disciplined *tawīl*, and epistemic authority. Three conclusions follow. First, legitimate interpretation is grounded in demonstrative reasoning rather than theological preference or speculative opinion. Second, the movement from literal (*ḥaqīqah*) to figurative (*majāz*) meaning remains constrained by established Arabic linguistic conventions. Third, interpretive authority derives from demonstrative competence, methodological discipline, and ethical responsibility rather than institutional status, making the authority of the *ahl al-burhān* fundamentally epistemological.

Building on these findings, the article proposes an epistemic model of Qur'anic interpretation in which *burhān*, language, *tawīl*, and epistemic authority function as logically interdependent conditions of interpretive legitimacy. Its contribution lies not in introducing new concepts but in reconstructing the conceptual architecture that connects ideas dispersed throughout Ibn Rushd's writings. This model also extends Gracia's philosophical reading: whereas Gracia frames the central hermeneutical problem in terms of the possibility of definitive interpretation, the present study shifts attention to the epistemological conditions through which interpretation becomes legitimate. Ibn Rushd's enduring contribution therefore lies less in providing a single definitive interpretation than in articulating criteria by which interpretations may be epistemically evaluated.

This study remains limited to a philosophical reconstruction based primarily on Ibn Rushd's writings and selected contemporary scholarship; it does not trace the broader historical reception of his hermeneutics or systematically compare his framework with other Muslim thinkers. Future research may therefore compare Ibn Rushd with al-Ghazālī, Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī, Ibn Taymiyyah, and Mullā Ṣadrā; place his thought in dialogue with modern philosophical hermeneutics, including Gadamer, Ricoeur, and Betti; and examine the relevance of the proposed model to contemporary questions of religious authority, Islamic legal reasoning, constitutional interpretation, and interreligious dialogue. Ultimately, Ibn Rushd's significance lies in articulating an epistemological architecture through which Qur'anic interpretation may remain rational, linguistically grounded, methodologically disciplined, and ethically responsible.

References

Abu-Zeid, Nasr Hamid / The Discourse of Ibn Rushd Between Knowledge and Constraint', *Alif: Journal of Comparative Poetics*, 16, 1996, 6–35

<https://doi.org/10.2307/521841>

Adamson, Peter, 'Averroes: A Rationalist in Islam (Review)', *Bulletin of the History of Medicine*, 76.4 (2002), 807–8 <https://doi.org/https://dx.doi.org/10.1353/bhm.2002.0157.>

Al-Jabiri, Muhammad Abid, *Nahnu Wa Al-Turāts: Qirā'āt Mu'āshirah Fī Turats Al-Falsafī*, 2nd edn (Beirut: Markaz Dirasat Wihdat Arabiyah, 2007)

Alizadeh, R, 'Reviewing and Criticizing Averroes's Viewpoint on Granting the People of Reasoning (Ahl Al-Burhān) the Right to Interpret the Quran Esoterically', *Religious Inquiries*, 13.1 (2024), 23–40 <https://doi.org/10.22034/ri.2024.360400.1643>

Belo, Catarina, 'Averroes (d. 1198), The Decisive Treatise', ed. by Khaled El-Rouayheb and Sabine Schmidtke, *The Oxford Handbook of Islamic Philosophy* (Oxford University Press, 2016), pp. 278–95 <https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199917389.013.37>

Campanini, Massimo, 'Qur'an and Science: A Hermeneutical Approach , *Journal of Qur'anic Studies*, 7.1 (2005), 48–63 <http://www.jstor.org/stable/25728164>

———, 'The Mu'tazila in Islamic History and Thought', *Religion Compass*, 6.1 (2012), 41–50 <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1749-8171.2011.00273.x>

Carrasquillo, Francisco J. Romero, 'Philosophy and the Metaphorical Interpretation of Religious Texts in Averroes, Maimonides, and Aquinas', *The Muslim World*, 109.4 (2019), 627–47 <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1111/muwo.12314>

El-Ehwany, Ahmed Fouad, 'Ibn Rushd', in *A History of Muslim Philosophy*, ed. by Mian Muhamad Sharif (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1963), pp. 540–63

El-Khodeiry, Zeinab Mahmoud, *Ātsar Ibn Rushd Fī Falsafah Al-Ushūr Al-Wusthā* (Cairo: Dar Al-Tsaqafah li Al-Nashr wa Al-Tauzi', 1983)

Gracia, Jorge J E, 'Interpretation and the Law: Averroes's Contribution to the Hermeneutics of Sacred Texts', *History of Philosophy Quarterly*, 14.1 (1997), 139–53 <http://www.jstor.org/stable/27744734>

Green, H E, 'Use of Theoretical and Conceptual Frameworks in Qualitative Research', *Nurse Researcher*, 21.6 (2014), 34–38 <https://doi.org/10.7748/nr.21.6.34.e1252>

Hasan, Ali, 'Al-Ghazali and Ibn Rushd (Averroes) on Creation and the Di-

vine Attributes BT - Models of God and Alternative Ultimate Realities', in *Models of God and Alternative Ultimate Realities*, ed. by Jeanine Diller and Asa Kasher (Dordrecht: Springer Netherlands, 2013), pp. 141–56 <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-94-007-5219-1_13>

Ibn Rushd, Abu Walid, *Al-Kashf 'an Manāhij Al-Adillah Fī 'Aqā'Id Al-Millah*, ed. by Muhamad Abid Al-Jabiri, 1st edn (Beirut: Markaz Dirasat Wihdat Arabiyah, 1998)

———, *Fa☡l Al-Maqāl Fī Taqrīr Mā Bayna Al-Sharī☡ah Wa Al-☡ikmah Min Al-Itti☡āl*, ed. by Muhamad Abid Al-Jabiri, 1st edn (Beirut: Markaz Dirasat Wihdat Arabiyah, 1998)

Leaman, Oliver, *A Brief Introduction to Islamic Philosophy*, 1st edn (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1999)

Long, A S, A R Mahmood, and M H Ismail, 'Free Will in Averroes' Compatibilism', *International Journal of Islamic Thought*, 27 (2025), 1–13 <https://doi.org/10.24035/ijit.27.2025.313>

Mabrook, Ali, / The Evasive Defeat of Rationalism: From Ibn Rushd to Ibn Khaldūn', *Alif: Journal of Comparative Poetics*, 16, 1996, 89–115 <https://doi.org/10.2307/521845>

Okumuş, M, 'The Influence of Al-Ghazzali on the Hermeneutics of Ibn Rushd', *Islam - Zeitschrift Fur Geschichte Und Kultur Des Islamischen Orients*, 86.2 (2011), 286–311 <https://doi.org/10.1515/ISLAM.2011.023>

Quinn, Timothy Sean, 'Descartes's Revised Averroism', *The Review of Metaphysics*, 67.4 (2014), 769–89 <http://www.jstor.org/stable/24636441>

Raisuni, Ahmad, 'Al-Manhā Al-Maqāshidī Fī Fiqh Ibn Rushd', in *Al-Athā Al-Fikrī Li Ibn Rushd: Halaqah Dirāsiyah*, ed. by Fathi Malkawi and Azmi Taha, 1st edn (Oman: International Institute of Islamic Thought, 1999), pp. 25–47

Sidiropoulou, Chryssi, 'Qur'anic Interpretation and the Problem of Literalism: Ibn Rushd and the Enlightenment Project in the Islamic World', *Religions*, 6.3 (2015), 1082–1106 <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel6031082>

Sidiropoulou, Chryssi, and Massimo Campanini, 'Reviewed Work(s): Averroes, the Decisive Treatise: The Connection Between Islamic Religious Law and Philosophy by Massimo Campanini', *Philosophy East and West*, 68.3 (2025), 1–14 <https://www.jstor.org/stable/26529875>

Snyder, Hannah, 'Literature Review as a Research Methodology: An Overview and Guidelines', *Journal of Business Research*, 104 (2019), 333–39

<https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2019.07.039>

Taha, Azmi, 'Masyru' Al-Tajdīd Al-Fikrī 'inda Ibn Rushd', in *Al-Athā Al-Fikrī Li Ibn Rushd: Halaqah Dirāsiyah*, ed. by Fathi Malkawi and Azmi Taha, 1st edn (Oman: International Institute of Islamic Thought, 1999), pp. 167–203

Taylor, Richard C., 'Averroes: God and the Noble Lie', in *Laudemus Viros Gloriosos: Essay of Armand Maurer, CSB*, ed. by Richard Edward Houser (University of Notre Dame Press; Notre Dame, Ind., 2007), pp. 38–59

———, 'Averroes on the Sharī'ah of the Philosophers', in *The Judeo-Christian-Islamic Heritage: Philosophical & Theological Perspectives*, ed. by Richard C. Taylor and Irfan A. Omar (Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 2012), pp. 283–304 <https://epublications.marquette.edu/phil_fac/261>

———, 'Review of The Medieval Controversy between Philosophy and Orthodoxy. Ijmā and Tawīl in the Conflict between Al-Ghazālī and Ibn Rushd', ed. by Iysa A Bello and Hans Daiber, *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, 22.2 (1990), 250–51 <http://www.jstor.org/stable/163753>

Wahba, Mourad, 'Mufāraqah Ibn Rushd', in *Ibn Rushd Mufakkir-an 'Arabiyy-an Wa Rāid-an Lil Al-Ittijāh Al-'Aqlī*, ed. by Athif Al-Iraqi (Cairo: Majlis Al-A'la li Al-Tsaqafah, 1993), pp. 29–38

———, *Mulāk Al-Haqīqah Al-Muthlaqah* (Cairo: Maktabah Usrah, 1999)

Wohlman, A, *Al-Ghazali, Averroës and the Interpretation of the Qur'an: Common Sense and Philosophy in Islam, Al-Ghazali, Averroës and the Interpretation of the Qur'an: Common Sense and Philosophy in Islam*, 1st edn (London: Routledge, 2009) <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203865118>