Ibn Rushd al-Jadd is one of the most important and influential Mālikī jurists of all times. Together with Abū l-Walid al-Bāji, Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr, Abū Bakr Ibn al-ʿArabī, and his own grandson, Ibn Rushd al-Ḥafid, he represents the peak of Mālikism in the Islamic West. Ibn Rushd's period of training coincided with the fall of the petty kingdoms (ṭawāʿif) into which al-Andalus split after the collapse of the Umayyad caliphate of Cordova. However, the decisive period of his career as qāḍī, muftī and teacher took place during the rule of the North African Berber dynasty of the Almoravids (last quarter of the 11th, first half of the 12th century CE), under whom al-Andalus was reunified. Their rulers adopted the title of amīr al-muslimīn and sought political and religious legitimacy by paying allegiance to the Abbasid caliph, by supporting the Mālikī school of law and by waging jihād against the Christians of the North of the Iberian Peninsula.

Ibn Rushd cannot be credited with having introduced the science of the fundamentals of the law (uṣūl al-fiqh) in al-Andalus,1 a merit that belongs to jurists of the generation of his teachers (e.g. al-Bāji). Ibn Rushd's contribution lies in his having carried out a systematic re-examination of early Mālikī jurisprudence contained in the Mudawwana of Saḥnūn and the ‘Utbiyya of the Cordovan Muḥammad al-‘Utbī. His aim was to adapt the structure and contents of the aforementioned compilations to methodological criteria corresponding to those established in the discipline of uṣūl al-fiqh. The result of this process was a re-elaboration of early Mālikī jurisprudence which, in the case of the ‘Utbiyya, led to its falling into disuse. Ibn Rushd's intelligence and deep knowledge of Islamic law earned him the esteem of the Almoravid rulers, which enabled him to exert

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1 In al-Andalus the study of uṣul al-fiqh was closely connected with the study of kalām. See D. Urvoy, Pensers d'al-Andalus, 165.
considerable influence on the most relevant political and religious issues of his time. Sources mention the titles of seventeen of his works, all of them dedicated to Islamic law, with the exception of an ‘aqīda (tenets of belief). His most important books are the Muqaddamāt, a commentary on the Mudawwana of Saḥnūn, the al-Bayān wa-l-taḥṣīl, a commentary on the ‘Utbīyya of Muḥammad al-‘Utbī, and the Fatāwā, in which, for the first time in al-Andalus, the legal methodology established by experts in uṣūl al-fiqh was applied to the art of providing legal advice on specific problems (iftā’).

**Sources for his Biography**

This essay draws mainly on biographical literature and historical chronicles, Ibn Rushd’s own writings and the collection of legal responsa of Aḥmad al-Wansharisi (d. 914/1508), al-Miʿyār al-muʿrib.

The most trustworthy sources for Ibn Rushd’s biography, given the closeness of their authors to our jurist and the credibility accorded to them by later generations of scholars, are the “Catalogue of teachers” (al-Ghunya) of his disciple Qāḍī ʿIyāḍ (d. 543/1149) and the Kitāb al-ṣila of Ibn Bashkuwāl (d. 578/1183). Although later biographers like Ibn Farḥūn (d. 799/1397) or al-Maqqarī (d. 1041/1632) mostly repeat the information provided by Qāḍī ʿIyāḍ and by Ibn Bashkuwāl, the details they add are significant because, apart from completing the picture of Ibn Rushd, they reflect the image of him bequeathed to posterity. On the other hand, the entry on Ibn Rushd al-Jadd provided by al-Bunnāhī (d. by the end of the 8th/14th century) in his history of Andalusī qāḍīs (al-Marqaba al-ʿulyā) is exceptional not for its novelty but for bringing together information supplied by different historical and biographical sources.

Al-Bunnāhī draws on Qāḍī ʿIyāḍ and Ibn Bashkuwāl. From the Muʿjam and Takmila of Ibn al-Abbār (595–658/1199–1260) he transmits some anecdotes preserved in the biography of Ibn al-Wazzān, a disciple of Ibn Rushd who oversaw the compilation of his Fatāwā, in which Ibn Rushd’s good mood and sense of humor are emphasized. For his treatment of Ibn Rushd’s political activities, al-Bunnāhī resorts to the anonymous chronicle of the Almoravid and Almohad periods (5th/11th–7th/13th centuries) entitled al-Ḥulal al-mawshiyya.

Accounts of historical events in which Ibn Rushd was involved can be found in al-Kāmil fī l-taʾrīkh of Ibn al-Athīr (555–630/1160–1233) and in a series of chronicles of the 8th/14th century, e.g. al-Rawd bi-l-qīrṭās