In the 1990s, when I spent some time researching in Egypt, I had the opportunity to attend a symposium at the Masjid al-Nūr (Mosque of Light), one of the largest mosques in Cairo. The exclusive topic of this symposium was Ibn Rushd, the renowned twelfth-century Muslim philosopher, jurist, physician, and astronomer from al-Andalus (or Islamic Spain), who was known in medieval Europe by the Latinized form of his name, Averroes. The papers at this meeting were given by scholars from different Egyptian universities and displayed a great variety of approaches to assessing Ibn Rushd as an intellectual and author. In fact, several of these papers were rather critical of Ibn Rushd’s work, emphasizing disapproval through frequent reference to his rationalist philosophy and, as certain of these presenters saw it, his “departure” from Islam, for he had shown too much interest in Aristotelian philosophical thought. On numerous occasions, statements were made to the effect that the works of Ibn Rushd marked the end of classical Islamic philosophy (which had paid its dues to Islamic religious thought) and the beginning of medieval European philosophy. One discussant even ventured that today it was almost a precarious enterprise for Muslims to engage in the study of Ibn Rushd’s work because his rationalist philosophy posed the risk of leading good Muslims astray from the...
right path of traditional Islamic faith. Interestingly, Mahmoud Zakzouk, Professor of Islamic Philosophy at the Faculty of Religion at Al-Azhar University and Egypt's Minister of Islamic Endowments and Religious Affairs at that time, stated in his concluding address to the conference that Ibn Rushd was a complex but, nonetheless, truly Muslim intellectual and was actually a *jawhara lil-falsafa al-islāmiyya* (jewel of Islamic philosophy). He added that, since Ibn Rushd wrote in Arabic, educated Arabs of our era could and should read the books of this medieval Muslim philosopher.

Shortly thereafter during a meeting with a colleague at the Roman Catholic Saint Joseph University in Beirut, the controversial question of the reception of Ibn Rushd's ideas among certain scholars in the Arab world and in Europe came up again in the context of his influence on Islamic and Western thought in general, and on Thomas Aquinas's philosophical theology in particular. These discussions on Ibn Rushd and Thomas Aquinas sparked my curiosity as to the role these medieval intellectuals may have played in the history of ideas and especially the field of pedagogy in both the Islamic world and the West, and as to whether they are still relevant today in our increasingly culturally diverse Western societies.

Ibn Rushd's and Thomas Aquinas's pedagogical ideas and the connection between these two scholars in this regard constitute a highly interesting focus of study. There are two reasons for this perception: on the one hand, knowledge acquisition and education have been generally recognized as key factors for the growth of societies in both medieval and modern times; on the other hand, the historical foundations of Islamic education in particular—and its impact on modern societies—have so far attracted much less attention than they deserve. This study makes an effort towards changing this situation.

The first part of my investigation focuses on the pedagogical implications of Ibn Rushd's discussions of (a) intellectual and practical reasoning, logic, and imagination as a basis of learning; (b) the approaches, strategies, and objectives of teaching and learning; and (c) the role that the intellect, scriptural and demonstrative truths, and happiness as the final objective of instruction play in this regard. In particular, I will draw on Ibn Rushd's *The Decisive Treatise Determining the Nature of the Connection Between the Divinely Revealed Law and Philosophy*, as well as on select passages from his *Exposition of the Methods of Proof Concerning the Beliefs of the Community*, his *Incoherence of [al-Ghazālī's] “Incoherence of the Philosophers”*, and his *Long Commentary on [Aristotle's major treatise] “De Anima (On the Soul)”*.

The second part compares Ibn Rushd's concepts of learning with some of Thomas Aquinas's key ideas on education. The main sources for this enterprise are Thomas's *Disputed Questions on Truth* and *Summa Theologica*. These