

Ibn Rushd's Not-So-Crazy Theory of Understanding

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Ibn Rushd's thinks that the intellect we use of is not a part of us. Although this is widely treated as a crazy view, I will try to show that it is not crazy at all, inasmuch as it is motivated by a set of plausible philosophical assumptions. Since not all of those assumptions have remained plausible, after 800 years, I will not try to make the case that this *is* how the human mind works. But I mean to argue that the mind could work like this, inasmuch as the idea of the Rushdian Mind is not incoherent. What's more, looking to the future, I will suggest that it is quite possible, even likely, that our minds increasingly will work like this, as artificial intelligence advances. So even if Ibn Rushd's theory was wrong when he died in 1198, and even if it remains wrong today, it may well be the theory of understanding of the future.