

Ibn Bājja [addendum] Encyclopedia Article

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One of the unusual aspects of Ibn Bājja's political philosophy is the doctrine that in imperfect societies the philosopher has the status of weeds or *nawabit*. In a society governed by reason, the representatives of reason—the philosophers—find an important place. They are important people in the state because the state requires them to help it pursue the most rational course. But where the state is not governed by reason and instead by some less perfect rationale, philosophers will find themselves out of favor; they will be regarded as useless—like weeds—and possibly even dangerous to the state itself. The only happiness that philosophers will be able to establish for themselves is a private happiness because they will not be able to use publicly their knowledge of how the state ought to be run. Ibn Bājja's remarks on this topic are poignant, bringing out nicely the alienation experienced by intellectuals in a culture where their views are disregarded.

See Also

Islamic Philosophy.

Bibliography

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