

[Arabic](#)

[German](#)

**Call for Nomination: The Ibn Rushd Fund for Freedom of Thought will  
Award its Prize for 2008 to  
an Arab author of a study analyzing the failure of Arab enlightenment**

The modern enlightenment movements that have begun in the 19th century on the initiative of a few reformers in Arab societies looked for dialogue with the West and refused isolation and unquestioning conservation of tradition. Nevertheless, the gap between Arab and Western countries is deeper than it ever has been.

The reasons for the breakdown of these early movements for enlightenment are diverse and complex.

- Why do other developing countries manage to progress in science and productivity?
- Why do Arab countries consume more than we produce?
- Are the reasons purely economical or merely historical?
- Are the corrupt autocracies solely responsible for the retrograde developments?
- Has the Islamic Society lost its courage for reform?
- Is it fear for losing cultural identity in a globalized world?
- Is it the pervasiveness of ignorance amongst a large section of society?
- Is it the tribal mentality and collectivistic social structure?

How do Arab countries compare to modern countries who guarantee freedom and equality to their citizens and value the individual as the core of state and society?

Why do the countries that have produced great thinkers and scientists like Averroes, Avicenna and Ibn Khaldun fail to catch up with modernity?

The Ibn Rushd Fund for Freedom of Thought will award its prize 2008 to an Arab author, whose work explores the reasons for the failure of Arab enlightenment and sheds light on the causes for the breakdown of past movements to surmount the challenges of modernity and overcome the current crisis.

The prize of 2500 Euro is symbolical (costs for flight and lodging for 2-3 days in Berlin is paid extra). The prize is financed by member's fees and donations.

Anyone who is interested may nominate a man or a woman whom he or she thinks is worthy of the prize. Please send your proposal per letter or e-mail before the 31 of May 2008 to the address below stating the reasons for your choice in a short text. Please also attach a short biography of the candidate.

These proposals will be passed on to the members of an independent jury who will select the winner from among the proposals.

Last opportunity for nomination is June 8<sup>th</sup>, 2008.