

Ibn Rushd's work and Influences

Abu al-Walid Muhammad Ibn-Rushd, also known as Averroes in the West, was born in 1126 A.D (died in 1198) in Cordova.

His ideas influenced the transformation of thought in medieval Europe. He is considered the last of the great Muslim thinkers who integrated Islamic traditions and Greek thought. His beliefs and writings were to have an effect on the minds of many intellectuals in the Middle Ages who lived beyond the borders of al-Andalus.¹ He critically used the classical commentators Themistius and Alexander of Aphrodisias and philosophers such as al-Farabi, Ibn-Sinna, and Ibn-Bajjah.

Although Ibn Rushd's early work dealt with medicine, legal and theological writings, much of his focus was on philosophy. Undoubtedly his most important writings in this area combine religious-philosophical polemical treatises, composed in the years 1179 and 1180: *Fasl al- Maqâl fima bayna al-Hikma wa al-Sharia min al-Ittisal*²; and *Tahafut at-tahafut* in defense of philosophy and a direct response to al- Ghazālī's *Tahafut al Falasifa*.

One cannot but notice Ibn Rushd's eagerness in his writings to start from the perspective of the soundness of *Sharia*, but at the same time showing how misleading interpretations can be. He also asks the student of philosophy for the same consideration normally accorded by the student of Islamic jurisprudence. According to Ibn Rushd "both need time and assistance to

1 Habeeb Salloum, Averroes- The Great Muslim Philosopher who planted the seeds of the European renaissance. 1998. [Http://www.arabworldbooks.com/articles19.html](http://www.arabworldbooks.com/articles19.html).

2 Known in English as Decisive Treatise and Determination of the Relationship between the Divine Law and Philosophy, with its Appendix: al-Manahij al-adilla.

arrive at a comprehension of their art. And as long as there is such a harmony between philosophy and religion, there should be no tension between practitioners of either”.³ “To establish the true, inner meaning of religious beliefs and convictions is the aim of philosophy in its quest for truth. This inner meaning must not be divulged to the masses, which must accept the plain, external meaning of Scripture as contained in stories, similes, and metaphors.”⁴

His attempt to harmonize between religion and philosophy also led to Ibn Rushd’s defense of philosophy’s position vis-a-vis his predecessor al-Ghazālī’s attack against Ibn-Sinna and al-Farabi, in particular.

In the *Commentary on Plato’s Republic*, Ibn Rushd emphasizes virtue; theoretical, deliberative or cognitive, and moral.⁵ The importance of theoretical virtue becomes more and more evident until it ultimately becomes obvious that no one can lay claim to any of the other virtues, unless reason rules in his soul. In order to have this order of virtues established and the citizens to be raised in order to develop them, political rules must be in the hands of a philosopher.⁶

5.2 Plato and Aristotle in Ibn Rushd’s Thought:

Scholars describe Ibn Rushd as a faithful commentator on the works of Aristotle and Plato. According to Charles Butterworth, Ibn Rushd regarded Aristotle as embodying the highest development of human intellect, but by no means a tedious one. He strives to explain the thought of these two Greek Philosophers while often indicating where he agrees or disagrees with them and sometimes passing over in silence on important argument, or presenting an argument as belonging to Plato or Aristotle, but which in fact is not theirs.

3 Butterworth, E. Charles. *Ethics in Medieval Islamic Philosophy*, p.235.

4 Fraenkel, Carlos. *Philosophical Religions from Plato to Spinoza*. 1. Cambridge Press, (2012), pp.37-81.

5 Butterworth, E. Charles. *Ethics in Medieval Islamic Philosophy*, p.236.

6 Thahabi, Hasan Majeed Obeidi and Kathem, Fatima. *Ibn-Rushd Talkhees Assiyasa Li Aflaton* (muhawaret al Jumhuriya), first edition, Beirut: Dar Attaliah, (1998).

“This means above all that the thoughtful reader must be prepared to read the commentary along with the text commented upon, even though Ibn-Rushd does not seek to treat either author in a cavalier fashion”.⁷ E.I. J. Rosenthal also describes Ibn Rushd in commentaries on Aristotle’s treatises on the natural sciences, as “someone who showed considerable power of observation.”⁸

Ibn Rushd’s recognition of Plato’s idea of the transformation and deterioration of the ideal perfect State into the four imperfect States is of great importance.⁹ Mu’awiyah I,¹⁰ who according to Ibn Rushd perverted the ideal State of the first four Caliphs¹¹ into a dynastic power State, is viewed by Ibn Rushd in the Platonic sense as having turned the ideal State into a Timocracy.¹² Similarly, the *Almoravid* and *Almohad* states are shown to have deteriorated from a state that resembled the original perfect *Sharia’* state into Timocracy, Oligarchy, Democracy, and Tyranny.¹³ The study of *The Republic* and the

7 Butterworth, E. Charles. *Ethics in Medieval Islamic Philosophy*. The Journal of Religious Ethics, n.d. , Cambridge University Press, (2001), p.234.

8 Rosenthal E.I.J., *Ibn-Rushd*, (1995) <http://www.muslimphilosophy.com/ir/art/ir-eb.htm>.

9 Leaning heavily on the treatment of Plato’s political philosophy by al- Farabi, Averroes looks at *The Republic* with the eyes of Aristotle, whose *Nicomachean Ethics* constitutes for Averroes the first, theoretical part of political science. He is, therefore, only interested in Plato’s theoretical Statements. He explains Plato, whose *Laws* and *Politikos* he also knows and uses, with the help, and in the light, of Aristotle’s *Analytica posteriora*, *De anima*, *Physica*, and *Nicomachean Ethics*. See: <http://www.muslimphilosophy.com/ir/art/ir-eb.htm>.

10 Mu’awiyah I, Mu’awiyah ibn Abi Sufian, (born c. 602, Mecca, d. 680, Damascus). Founder of the Umayyad dynasty of caliphs. He fought against the fourth caliph, ‘Alī (Muhammad’s son-in-law), seized Egypt, and assumed the caliphate after ‘Alī’s assassination. See: <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/395758/Muawiyah-I>.

11 The first four Caliphs: Abu Bakr, 'Umar, Othman and Ali. All four were among the earliest and closest Companions of the Prophet.

12 Plato discusses five types of regimes. They are Aristocracy, Timocracy, Oligarchy, Democracy, and Tyranny.

13 Ibn-Rushd here combines Islamic notions with Platonic concepts. In the same vein he likens the false philosophers of his time, and especially the Mutakallimun, to Plato’s sophists. In declaring them a real danger to the purity of Islam and to the security of the State, he appeals to the ruling power to forbid dialectical theologians to explain their beliefs and convictions to the masses, thus confusing them and causing heresy, schism, and unbelief. See: Introduction by Thahabi, Obaid to Talkhees Assiyasa, commentary on Plato’s *Republic*, p.17.

Nichomachean Ethics enabled the *Falasifa* to see more clearly the political character and content of the *Sharia* in the context of the classical Muslim theory of the religious and political unity of Islam.¹⁴

Ibn Rushd sees much common ground between the *Sharia* and Plato's general laws (interpreted with the help of Aristotle), notwithstanding his conviction that the *Sharia* is superior to the *Nomos*.¹⁵ He accepts al-Farabi's¹⁶ equation of Plato's philosopher-king with the Islamic Imam, or leader and lawgiver, but leaves it open whether the ideal ruler must also be a prophet.

Ibn Rushd completely ignores Aristotle's negative concepts of women. Although Ibn Rushd was an Aristotelian, it is unlikely that Aristotle's negative position on women.

It may also be, Ibn Rushd, in his efforts to legitimize Aristotle in the minds of his readers (to "Islamize him"), ignores the latter's attitudes toward women, finding it easier to refer to Plato on this subject.¹⁷ In so doing, however, he also shows himself to be more similar to Plato, which made his own findings so unusual for the Muslim world of his time.

Interestingly, Ibn Rushd's "own philosophy developed into an intriguing combination of Aristotelian and Platonic theories. Basically, Ibn Rushd argued for a sex-polarity orientation for the masses that followed religion, and a sex-unity orientation for the elite who followed philosophy."^{18 19}

14 <http://www.muslimphilosophy.com/ir/art/ir-eb.htm>.

15 *Nomos*, (Greek: "law," or "custom":) plural *Nomoi*, in law, the concept of law in ancient Greek philosophy.

16 Al Farabi expresses his deepest thought in his commentaries on Plato. "The philosophy of Plato" presents Plato's philosophy whereas the Summary presents his art of *kalam*. The exercise of *kalam* presupposes then the acceptance of the revelation of the law by the Prophet. It is a kind of *kalam* specific to the defenders of philosophy and not to the defenders of religion. See: *Leo Strauss's Defense on the Philosophic Life. Reading What is Political Philosophy*. Edited by Rafael Major. University of Chicago Press, (2013).

17 Prudence, SR. Allen. *Plato, Aristotle, and the concept of woman in early Jewish Philosophy*, Florilegium, Canada, (1987), pp. 91-92.

18 *Ibid.* pp. 98-99.

19 In his comparison of the status of women in his time to what he aspires in the ideal state—i.e., having a status that is not different than that of a man, he describes a woman as a plant whose fruits only are used. He rejects the idea that a woman is only good for sewing and giving birth. In fact, he

In his comparison of the status of women in his time to what he aspires in the ideal state—i.e., having a status that is not different than that of a man, he describes woman as a plant whose fruits only are used. He rejects the idea that a woman is only good for sewing and giving birth. In fact, he actually asserts that a woman can govern, and run a state, in addition to conducting war. He went on to give her access to wisdom and anything that could be related to the achievement of justice in society. He even went so far as to criticize his generation's view about women as being oppressive and unjust.

5.3 Women in Ibn Rushd's Writings and View

By reviewing *Bidayat al-Mujtahid*, one cannot but notice that Ibn Rushd's legal judgments, analyses, and fatwas were in keeping with the views of the *jumhur al Ulama'* (Islamic scholars). However, there is an obvious attitude of moderation in his *fatwas* that pertain to women. He would state all the possible different opinions, but would sometimes put reason in his final words.

However, in the introduction to his *Commentary on Plato's Republic*, it seems as if Ibn Rushd found his way to express his political views, even though he continued to stress his dis-interest in politics, and his greater interest in philosophy. Plato's *Republic* was Ibn Rushd's way to agree or complain about issues that existed in the current Islamic state. If Plato expressed an idea he approved of, he would promote it; or denounce an idea of which he disapproved. And at some point he would integrate a topic personally. For example, while, in his previous writings, Ibn Rushd, literally explained and gave *fatwas* that concerned strict Islamic guidelines in accordance with the *Quran* and regular *Ijtihad* rules within the *Jumhur*, in his *Commentary on*

actually asserts that a woman can govern, and run a state, in addition to conducting war. He went on to give her access to wisdom and anything that could be related to the achievement of justice in society. He even went so far as to criticize his generation's view about women as being oppressive and unjust. Another note is Ibn Rushd access to the text. It has been debated that Ibn Rushd might not have worked on the original text of Plato, but rather Galen's commentary on the Republic. As well as the issue of Ibn Rushd's writings themselves that have been lost and translated to Hebrew long before being accessed in Arabic. The reason behind what history called the catastrophe of Ibn-Rushd, that led to his exile and burning of his books, remains under speculation. However it is not impossible to realize that his ideas caused anonymous enemies to him. But there is also this direct doubt that it was this specific book, the commentary that led to his downfall from the khalifa's protection. In what the commentary included to what appeared like direct criticism to the current State.

Plato's Republic, he finds liberty in exposing non-Islamic views using Plato as a cover for his own ideas.

Through a brief look into the *Bidayat al-Mujtahid* and the *Commentary*, we learn how often he finds a welcome opportunity to reflect on different matters, such as household issues, economics, social relations and governance, which he had already put forward in his *Bidayat al-Mujtahid*; and he deliberately explains *Plato's Republic* in the same method.

This observation could go well together with Catarina Belo's remarks on Ibn Rushd's *Commentary* when she states: "Averroes' (Ibn Rushd's) most comprehensive remarks on women are to be found not in an exegetical work on Aristotle but in his *Commentary* on *Plato's Republic*, and also in his *Bidayat al- Mujtahid*. The former is a philosophical commentary and the latter is a manual of Islamic law."²⁰

It might be noticed that the first time Ibn Rushd mentions women in the *Commentary*²¹ is on page 94 in the *First Treatise*, when he has finished with all the descriptions and in-depth analyses of man's virtues reaching the perfect state of soul. Here, he mentions women in a definitely negative way. He says:

Plato said: It is inappropriate for virtuous men to assimilate the deeds of women who shriek while giving birth, and with those women who yearn to have sex with their husbands, or those who are in continuous disputes with their spouses, or those women who are constantly given to weeping and crying, because we want to have people (men) among them who become governors. Those should also not be allowed to converse with servants or slaves, or companion drunken men.²²

20 Belo, Catarina. *Some Considerations on Averroes' Views Concerning Women and Their Role in Society*, (2002), pg.2.

21 The *Commentary* refers to Ibn-Rushd's *Commentary* on *Plato's Republic*, in the Arabic translation for Thahabi.

22 Thahabi, Hasan Majeed Obeidi and Kathem, Fatima. *Ibn-Rushd Talkhees Assiyasa Li Aflaton (muhawaret al Jumhuriya)*, p.94.

Here too, however, Ibn Rushd is quoting Plato rather than personally mentioning women or female behavior negatively. In other words, his elaboration on this judgment stops with Plato. This might also be Ibn Rushd's way of dealing with a discussion or an issue. He may have felt that he had to ease his reader into the argument by stating what seemed to be a negative description, before actually getting into the subject of women.

The next time he mentions women, however, (section 14, page 96) he connects them with music. In this case, he connects women and music according to his own observation and not Plato's by stating: "Concerning 'rhythm', it is appropriate to choose that which is selected from women and other people, and use that rhythm to enhance the courage of the soul. And even if those rhythms are more defined in Plato's time, it is however, important that we search for it in our time."²³

The above two paragraphs don't seem to indicate what Ibn Rushd would be presenting about women in later chapters. It is significant to realize that his notes should not be considered positive. If anything, they seem to be almost inadvertent.

On page 123 (Ch.26) of the *Commentary*, however, Ibn Rushd finally makes the intervention. Moving from the types of virtues in the city to the status of guardians, and questioning if guardians should have a community of women and get children from them, Ibn Rushd deliberately introduces his very own thoughts, saying:

If we want to preserve the quality of those guardians through begetting children that resemble them; that cannot happen if they beget them with any woman. On the contrary, they should only marry those women who are like them in quality, and have been raised in the same surrounding. This does not just apply for guardians but to all people in the state.²⁴

Ibn Rushd continues to take an opportunity to discuss quality of women. Here he efficiently makes a woman's quality equivalent with that of a man, albeit; putting it in

²³ Ibid. p.96.

²⁴ Ibid. p.123.

a question by asking: “Are women’s own qualities identical with men’s in each category in the state, particularly as guardians...or are they different?”²⁵ He then offers two suggestions: “If women share the same quality/nature of men, it means that women from all classes are equal to men in every rule and command, which doesn’t exclude us from finding among women warriors, governors, and philosophers.”²⁶ If, however, they don’t, Ibn Rushd suggests, “Then women’s role in the state should be restricted to begetting and raising children, because men are not qualified to do that.”²⁷

In this chapter, he goes on to state his own considerations that stem from a comparison between the respective natures of men and women. As to equality, he states that;

They (women) are equal with men in quality and differ only in levels; if this means that man is more efficient than woman in most of his actions, however, it is not impossible that women perform some activities with higher efficiency, such as practical music. This is why it is said that melodies are complete if men have composed them and women have performed them.²⁸

Repeating that qualities for both men and women are from the same nature and type, Ibn Rushd restates the capability of both in leading the state to an equivalent accomplishment. It is clear that women in such a state can perform the same work that men do, with some exceptions. For this reason, he adds, that one should call such actions as the best of actions.

By confirming that women and men can share the same occupation, taking into consideration that women are weaker in some, they are however, more capable in certain arts than men such as in sewing, embroidery and others; Ibn Rushd concludes Plato’s previous statement in his own assertions.

25 Ibid.

26 Ibid. p.124.

27 Ibid..

28 Ibid. p.124.

In addition, Ibn Rushd poses the question whether women can perform all three major roles in society like men, i.e. –following Plato’s tri-partition of society into these three roles- become artisans, warriors/guardians, and rulers.²⁹

Mohammad Abed al-Jabiri, in his introduction to the Arabic version of the translation of Ibn Rushd’s *Commentary on Plato’s Republic*, observed that when Ibn Rushd asked whether it was an obligation that women participate with men in jobs of securing the state--being guardians and soldiers with them—or whether it was better to restrict their mission to bringing children and keeping households, he was expressing his own thoughts, interfering in the text that he was summarizing, and not just commenting on it. Al-Jabiri summarizes Ibn Rushd’s position in four points. One is related to what is basic, wherein there is an assurance in the unity of nature between men and women. The second goes into what is practical, where he confirms that men and women are equal in practicing philosophy, leadership and war, even though there are differences in the way some activities are performed. The third advocates the exclusion of women by some laws from being a leader. And the fourth is related to the situation of women in Arab society and in al-Andalus, in particular. Al-Jabiri concludes: “It is true that the position of Ibn Rushd revealed itself.” In his opinion, Ibn Rushd independently decided to discuss and ignore some of Plato’s views on women in his *Republic*, focusing instead on the situation of women in his time, caused by poverty and the exclusion of women from the labor market.³⁰

In his book *Intellectuals in Arab Civilization* al-Jabiri, also draws our attention to the special position of Ibn Rushd in regard to equality between the sexes, but with some reservation:

One of the issues that drew the attention of contemporary researchers and thought to Ibn-Rushd was his call for equality (fairness) to a woman, as well as his not excluding her from becoming a philosopher or a governor. It is adequate to say that

29 Jawin, p. 15 .

30 Al-Jabiri, M., *Intellectuals in the Arab Civilization*, Introduction, pp. 61-62.

Ibn Rushd was clarifying Plato's thought on the subject. And although he accepted Plato's thought willingly, it was with the cautionary position of Islamic law.³¹

In regards to women participation in wars, however, Ibn Rushd makes a smooth entry, as if it was an established fact, assuring in his clarification of Plato that it was an accepted practice among other nations, anyway.

In the contexts wisdom and philosophy, Ibn Rushd similarly affirms that some women are raised with a great deal of wisdom and intellectual abilities, and for this reason it is not impossible to find wise women. Here, he introduces a different legislation than the Islamic one to make a comparison, naming other legislations (such as Mousawi³², in regard to Judaism) that also do allow Imama for women.

Still, Ibn Rushd explicitly objects to the prohibition of women from *Imama* claiming that some women flourish with noble intelligence and brainpower, which makes it not unfeasible to attain amongst them sensible and presidential women, albeit many men think that this is infrequent and despite the prohibitions that make women ineligible for the Imamate. On the other hand, Ibn-Rushd does point out that some laws entitle women to such positions as long as they are deemed appropriate; they also consider that a woman can be a philosopher, as well as a ruler, and hence can be the *Imam*.³³

If one investigates why Ibn Rushd made a comparison between Judaism as a religion that refuses *Imama* for women and Plato who allows it in his Republic, and didn't mention Islam, it is obviously because taking *Imama* in its religious sense as a function associated with the rituals performed by Muslims specifically, he realized that Muslim Scholars would reject the possibility of a woman Imam, and that *hadith* prohibits it. In his *Commentary*, he admits:

31 Al- Jabiri, M., *Intellectuals in the Arab Civilization*, Center for Arab Unity study, First Edition, Beirut, (1995), p. 141.

32 The word is originating from Mousa.

33 Thahabi, Hasan Majeed Obeidi and Kathem, Fatima. Ibn-Rushd Talkhees Assiyasa Li Aflaton (muhawaret al Jumhuriya), p.125.

The scholars didn't agree on the *Imamate* of women, and mostly agree that it is not permitted for a woman to lead a man. However, in regard to her leading women in prayer, some (the *Maliki*) prohibited it whereas others (the *Shafi'i*) allowed it, as did Tabari. Still, the consensus among the *jumhur* is that a woman is to be prohibited from leading men, claiming that if it were allowed, it would have been referred to previously.³⁴

Ibn Rushd's statement is clear. He admits that from a legal point of view a woman does not have a right to the *Imamate*, as do men. He was of course not referring to the religious ritual *Imama*, but relating to the political meaning. He wanted to say to his readers, that philosophically, women are fit to rule and to produce wisdom, and they do not lack the means even if the religions don't see it as applicable. Ironically, while Ibn Rushd, does not give a woman the right to be an *Imam* at prayer in a mosque, he philosophically acknowledges her right to assume the task of becoming a ruler in the state.

It is significant to understand that irrespective of his evading the deliberation on *Quranic* texts in respect to women, nonetheless Ibn Rushd critically views the perception of women as inferior. Thus, he does not retreat from admitting to the likelihood of women in taking the rule of governance in the state. Ibn Rushd usually used his own interpretation and insights in different issues with the laws. Here, however, he justifies the position of philosophy on this subject, rather than make his own interpretation.

Truly concerned about women's misery, Ibn Rushd wrote that women were so reduced in servitude that all their capacity for higher pursuits had been destroyed. He was distressed by their fate, stating that they only live like plants, looking after their men. This obligated him to write:

Our society allows no scope for the development of women's talents. They seem to be destined exclusively to childbirth and the

³⁴ Ibn-Rushd. *Bidayat al Mujatahid wa Nihayat al-Muqtased*, Part 1, Dar al Kalam, First Edition, Beirut, (1988), pp.148-149.

care of children, and this State of servility has destroyed their capacity for larger matters. It is thus that we see no women endowed with moral virtues; they live their lives like vegetables, devoting themselves to their husbands. From this stems the misery that pervades our cities, for women outnumber men by more than double and cannot procure the necessities of life by their own labors.³⁵

In what seems to be an audacious account Ibn-Rushd proclaims that:

Women in this state are twice in numbers as men, and they are kept from working except, rarely, in an appropriate labor, and this restricted "rarity," such as sewing or embroidery, is barely sufficient to help them survive.³⁶

At this juncture, it is central to note that Ibn Rushd rejected Aristotle's position on women participation in public life and limiting women's functions to household duties, notwithstanding Aristotle's occasional instances of elevating women's role. Ibn Rushd opts not to employ any of Aristotle's views of women and instead uses their concurrent condition as an illustration for his comparison. Ibn Rushd believed that a prosperous society is a society that includes both men and women in the work force, as much as a miserable society excludes women. He makes it a natural conclusion that the exclusion of half of the society (women) from actively participating in workforce effects the economical situation of that society negatively.

Afterward he confirms that:

Females must join males in wars and combat. And it is apt that as we select, to choose women with qualities that are comparable with males. And this can merely be attained if females learn, concurrently with males, music and sports. Likewise, Plato has

35 Thahabi, Hasan Majeed Obeidi and Kathem, Fatima. *Ibn-Rushd Talkhees Assiyasa Li Aflaton* (muhawaret al Jumhuriya), p.126.

36 Ibid.

revealed that consequently there is nothing to dread from them (females) even if they practice sports naked (uncovered) with men, as long as they are endowed with virtue.³⁷

And then he resumes the assertion to clarify that all women should take their suitable status among the state precisely like men, and they should grip equivalent positions to men. The *Commentary on Plato's Republic* reveals according to Rosenthal, a side of Ibn Rushd that is not to be found in his other commentaries. Ibn Rushd carried on a long tradition of attempted syntheses between religious law and Greek philosophy; he went beyond his predecessors in spite of a large-scale dependence upon them. He made Plato's political philosophy, modified by Aristotle, his own and considered it valid for the Islamic state as well. Consequently, he applied Platonic ideas to the contemporary Almoravid and Almohad States in a sustained critique in using Platonic terms, convinced that if the philosopher cannot rule, he must try to influence policy in the direction of the ideal state. For Plato's ideal state is the best, after the ideal state of Islam based on and centered in the *Sharia's* as the ideal constitution. Thus, he regrets the position of women in Islam compared with their civic equality in *Plato's Republic*. That women are used only for childbearing and the rearing of offspring is detrimental to the economy and responsible for the poverty of the state. This was a most unorthodox position.³⁸

I would support Catarina Belo's introductory remarks:

One would expect Ibn Rushd to follow the approach that pervades the majority of the philosophical writings on women. More particularly, one would assume his espousal of Aristotle's conceptions, for Averroes, Aristotle's low regard for woman as compared to man is well known. Moreover, his philosophy privileges the category of action over the category of passion, and

37 Thahabi, Hasan Majeed Obeidi and Kathem, Fatima. *Ibn-Rushd Talkhees Assiyasa Li Aflaton* (muhawaret al Jumhuriya), p.126.

38 Rosenthal, E. *Averroes' Commentary on Plato's Republic*. Vol.21/22Published by Brill. [Http://www.jstor.org/stable/1579942](http://www.jstor.org/stable/1579942). Accessed : 27-1-2014. (1968/1969), pp.436-439.

actuality is always considered worthier than potentiality.³⁹

Of course it could not be that his progressive views about women caused him trouble, but how much could it be of a coincidence that this type of thinking is somehow connected to the views on women? It could be a mere state of virtuous attitude. A person, who is decent enough to be a free thinker, cannot be trapped inside ideas that help deteriorate the status of those who form half the making of a society.

Somewhere, in between, Ibn Rushd's enlightened ideas led to his progressive thoughts towards women, which made him revolutionary. But at the same time, his bold opinion about the current state is connected to his progressive views towards women.

Even though, as stressed before, his views on women wouldn't have been the reason for his crisis. It is important to note that women's predicaments were, and are in place and takes a lot of courage and persistence, in many ways, to fight for them.

³⁹Belo, Caterina. *Some Considerations on Averroes' Views Concerning Women and Their Role in Society*, (2002), p.2.