

## Historical Perspectives of patriarchy

Some important historically traced theoretical explanations show various historical perspectives of patriarchy:

**Traditionalists** every where accept patriarchy as biologically determined, which have regarded women subordination as universal, God given, or natural. Women are subordinated to men because they were so created and consequently assigned different roles and tasks. All known societies subscribe to such a “division of labor” which has been based on a primary biological difference between the sexes: because their biological functions are distinct, they must “naturally” have different social roles and tasks. And because these differences are natural, no one can be blamed for sexual inequality or male dominance. According to traditionalist arguments, because women produce children, their chief goal in life is to become mothers, and their chief task, child bearing and child rearing. The corollary to this argument that men ,having great physical strength, become hunters and providers—and by extension warriors –while women ,because they produce children and are engaged in nurturing and mothering, require protection by men. This biological deterministic explanation comes down from the Stone Age to present times and it believes that man is born superior. The biological inferiority of women makes her inferior also in her capacities, her ability to reason and therefore her ability to make decisions. Because man is superior and woman inferior, he is born to rule and she, born to be ruled.

**Engel's** believed that women subordination began with the development of private property .He say's both the division of classes and the subordination of women developed historically. There was a time when there were no class gender differences. He speaks of three phases of society—savagery, barbarism and civilization.

In *savagery* human beings lived almost like animals, gathered food and hunted. Ancestry was through the mother, there were no marriage and no notion of private property. Gathering and hunting continued during the phase of *barbarism* and gradually agriculture and animal husbandry were developed .Men started moving further to far of places for

hunt, while women stayed home both to mind the children and to look after the homestead. The sexual division of labor gradually developed, but women had power, and also had a control over the gens (clans or communities with a common origin). When men started domesticating animals, they also understood the principle of impregnation. They developed weapons for bigger hunts and inter group fights. Slavery developed. Gens started acquiring animals and slaves, especially female slaves. This led to more division among the sexes. Men acquired power over others and started accumulating wealth in the form of animals and slaves. All this led to the formation of private property. Men wanted to retain power and property, and pass it on to their own children. To ensure this inheritance, mother- right was overthrown. In order to establish the right of the father, women had to be domesticated and confined and their sexuality regulated and controlled. This was the period when patriarchy and monogamy for women were established. Because surplus was now produced in areas controlled by men, women became economically dependent. Modern *Civilization* according to Engel's was based on restricting women to the sphere of the home in order to produce heirs (sons) to inherit property. The development of the state, the monogamous family changed into the patriarchal family in which the wife's household labor became a private service the wife became a head servant, excluded from all participation in social production. The overthrow of the mother right was the world historical defeat of the female sex. The man took the command in the home also; the women was degraded and reduced to servitude; she became the slave of his lust and a mere instrument for the production of children. |

**Radical** (*pertaining to the root or going to the root*) views that in any society there is a patriarchy that primarily oppresses women. Radical feminism emphasizes more on the patriarchal roots that generates inequality between men and women, or, more specifically, social dominance of women by men. Radical feminism views patriarchy as dividing rights, privileges and power primarily by gender, and as a result oppressing women and privileging men. Radical feminism opposes patriarchy, not men. To equate radical feminism to man-hating is to assume that patriarchy and men are inseparable, philosophically and politically.

They believe that the original and basic contradiction is between the sexes and not between economic classes. Radical feminist analyzes gender differences in term of the biological and psychological differences between men and women. According to them women are oppressed because of their reproduction. The basis of women oppression does lie in women's reproductive capacity which is basically controlled by men. According to them the concept of patriarchy refers to the rule of women by men, based upon men's ownership and control of women's reproductive capacity.

**Socialist** view focuses upon both the public and private spheres of a woman's life and argues that liberation can only be achieved by working to end both the economic and cultural sources of women's oppression. Socialist feminism is a dualist theory that broadens Marxist feminism's argument for the role of capitalism in the oppression of women and radical feminism's theory of the role of gender and the patriarchy. In short, socialist feminist instead of emphasizing the importance of sex like the liberal feminists or giving importance to economic class like marxist feminist, they believe that opp~~r~~ression of women is the result of capitalism as well as patriarchy.