

# The Developmental Origins of Patriarchal Attitudes: A Longitudinal Study of Social Learning and Gender Role Socialization

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## Abstract:

This paper examines the prospects through a different lens to showcase the patriarchal domination, drawing on the scientific approach developed by author Angela Saini in her work, *The Patriarchs*, which focuses on how science interacts with society, particularly its impact on marginalized groups. It talks about the origins of patriarchal discrimination, which was not part of our human evolution that originated in the apes or chimpanzees, or bonobos. Still, humans have created this discrimination that has made a way to interpret gender inequity, a power that has a long history, maintained, which is hard to change, rooted in the society made by humans. It takes us to different periods and the works of the author that discuss gender socialization. She finds out the reasons behind the domination. In addition to physical and financial harm, gendered inequality also causes psychological and emotional harm. However, this practice of dividing individuals to exert control over us has had the consequence of making us think that we are incapable of doing so. The author attempted to connect the dots from a scientific standpoint, yet the issues posed to comprehend the causes of gendered inequality persist. By changing every connection from the intricate history of the emergence of patriarchy and male dominance that extended throughout the world from the past to the present and beyond, the author attempts to uncover the causes of gendered oppression.

**Keywords:** Patriarchs, Gender Inequity, Science, Marginalization, Psychology

## Introduction:

Angela Saini, a British Science journalist, broadcaster, and author of four books. She published her first book, *Geek Nation: How Indian Science is Taking Over the World*, in 2011. Her second book, *Inferior: How Science Got Women Wrong and the New Research That's Rewriting the Story*, in 2017. Her third book, *Superior: The Return of Race Science*, in May 2019, and her fourth one, titled *The Patriarchs: The Origins of Inequality*, was published in 2023. It was selected as a finalist for that year's George Orwell Prize for Political Writing. Her writing and reporting focus on how science interacts with society, particularly on its impact on marginalized groups, and she has been recognized for her work by a diverse range of organizations and institutions.

Saini examines the root causes of gender inequality, arguing that it stems from a societal construct that cannot be easily changed. Despite scientific attempts, she connects the arguments, the author faces challenges in understanding the underlying causes. By examining the history of patriarchy and male dominance, Saini aims to uncover the root causes of gendered oppression.

At the start of the text, she discusses images of goddesses, such as Kali, who is known as the slayer of demons and a symbol of death and time, with her eyes wide and tongue protruding, her vivid blue complexion leaps from the page, and her wavy black hair falls past her waist, surrounded by a skirt of disembodied arms. Her neck is draped with severed heads, like flowers. She wields a sword in one hand, a demon's head in the other; a dish to catch his dripping blood as an offering in the third; and a blessing gesture in the fourth.

We are widely aware that Ancient Indian goddesses and gods are frequently transgressive, as if called from other realms. However, throughout the era of empire, British rulers and Christian missionaries in India

were so afraid of Kali, in particular, that nationalist rebels adopted her as a symbol of resistance to colonialism. Some portrayals show her wearing corpses as earrings, with entire bodies linked between her lobes. After seeing this painting, one Englishwoman remarked in a tract released by the Bible Churchmen's Missionary Society in 1928, 'Yet this violent female deity is dubbed the gentle mother!' (Saini 01)

As a celestial mother, Kali defies a contemporary notion of women and authority, which is her paradox. It still amazes the author that she was even conceptualized, regardless of whether she represents or subverts mankind. Women's rights advocates from New Delhi to New York have embraced her in the twenty-first century, calling her the 'feminist icon we need today.' We can still see our capacity to upend the social order in her. We are able to picture the oppressed people's unquenchable wrath. We might even question whether the heads hanging from her neck are those of the patriarchs of history.

This is the influence the past has on us. Why, in the twenty-first century, should we look to an old historical figure to confirm our ability to make a difference in the world? What does Kali provide for us that we are unable to discover inside ourselves? Seeing a more contemporary Kali in the past, capable of hanging around her neck and decapitating numerous others in her life, would provide the same sense of security that will be replicated both now and in the future, which is the questions that lead us to explore throughout the article.

The desire for historical precedent also tells us something else. It expresses how hopeless our lives may be at times. The term '*Patriarchy*', which we now use to characterize women's oppression, has become devastatingly monolithic, including all ways in which women and girls are abused and treated unfairly, from domestic violence and rape to the gender pay gap and moral double standards. Gender oppression begins to resemble a grand conspiracy reaching back in time. Something awful must have occurred in our lost past to lead us to where we are today.

For a time in the middle of the nineteenth century, and then again in the latter half of the twentieth century, academics sought to understand what patriarchy was and how it came to be. Was it the general dominance of all men over all women, or something more specific? Was it about sex or work? Was it based on capitalism, or did it exist independently of it? Did it have any history, or was it a universal pattern dictated by our natures? These were the questions that disturbed many of us, including the author, so she began researching all areas to determine the genuine presence or exercised version of patriarchy.

The author explained it through a multibillion-dollar Hollywood film, '*Planet of the Apes*,' whether human or ape, males are almost always at the center of the action. Although chimpanzees aren't that far from humans on the evolutionary tree, if they are brought closer, we may begin to get the impression that they could eventually overpower us. As a species that is rapidly gaining worldwide supremacy, we may identify with them. (Saini 12)

The author aims to make a connection between the lives of chimpanzees, which are a part of our evolutionary history as humans. Male apes and humans both exhibit domineering behaviours. Is there any connection that many people overlook when using this understanding? She talks about the individuals she encountered who are better able to comprehend the species' culture.

The author takes a reference from Amy Parish, who has researched bonobo apes while working as a primatologist at the University of Southern California. Discussing her work with bonobos, whom she first encountered five years ago at the zoo, has only served to confirm the scientific agreement that 'female domination is the norm for this species.' Male bonobos have been reported to be pursued and attacked by these females. And this is significant for the human tale since bonobos are one of our two closest genetic relatives in the animal kingdom, being at least as close to us in terms of evolution as chimpanzees.

Another expert on primates, Frans de Waal, a psychology professor at Emory University, supports this claim by stating that 'No bonobo colony has ever been found to be led by a male, either in captivity or in the

wild.' Not only do bonobos exhibit female leadership, but so do spot hyenas, lions, killer whales, lemurs, and elephants.' (Saini 13)

Amy continues further, 'After the bonobo references, there is so much to learn from the species in understanding how dominance works.' According to additional species analysis, at least for bonobos, size is irrelevant; generally speaking, females are marginally smaller than males, much like chimpanzee females are. Bonobo females are unique in that they develop strong social ties with one another, even if they are not related, and they use genital rubbing to strengthen these links and reduce tension. Because of these close-knit social networks, power is created, and male dominance of the group is prevented. (Saini 15)

The idea that 'men are naturally dominant over females and that males make better leaders than females' is one that we have previously explored. However, this is ineffective, de Waal continues. Male dominance, according to Goldberg, is the perception that 'both men's and women's emotions admit that a woman's will is somehow inferior to a man's will.' (Saini 15)

The author discusses male leadership and influence in politics, citing Steven Goldberg's 1973 book *The Inevitability of Patriarchy*. Men have held leadership positions in powerful nations like the US, China, and the USSR. Goldberg argues that there is a stubborn endurance to male authority, with most politicians in positions of authority, even in nations with female leaders, being men. Thatcher, for example, appointed only one woman to her Cabinet during her eleven years in power. (Saini 16)

Goldberg argues that cultural pressure can only halt male dominance, and it's necessary to fight against our tendencies for sexual equality. She believes female authority is a recent development that interferes with an age-old, universal order. She believes that patriarchy has always existed in society, but there is still evidence of it. Saini disagrees with the idea that male aggression and power are natural, stating that our species is not inherently like that.

Kerala's female literacy rates have been comparable to those of men, despite the historical context where women held power and daughters were valued more highly than sons. Kerala's record on gender equality can be traced back to the ancient Nairs, a caste-bound group that once controlled parts of the state and organized along matrilineal lines, suggesting some truth to the legends about women's power and inversion of gender norms. (Saini 20)

In addition to Kerala, there are other places in Asia, sections of North and South America, and a broad matrilineal belt that runs across the center of Africa. According to a 2020 study by economist Sara Lowes of the University of California, San Diego, which surveyed over 600 residents of Kananga, Democratic Republic of Congo, an urban area along Africa's matrilineal belt, it says, 'matrilineal women report greater autonomy in decision-making, are less supportive of domestic violence, and crucially, experience less domestic violence.' (Saini 21)

According to research, almost 70% of societies worldwide are patrilocal, meaning that people typically live with their dads. In 2009, biologists and anthropologists published papers in the *Proceedings of the Royal Society*, demonstrating that matrilineal groups in the Pacific still shared a 'theme' of matrilineality and matrilocality by combining genetic evidence with cultural information and family trees. (Saini 21)

James Henry Lawrence, a young British writer, created a romance in the 18th century that was eventually titled *The Empire of the Nairs*. As a scholar of women's studies at JNU and the director of the Kerala Council for Historical Research, G. Arunima, explains that, 'outsiders often assumed that patriliney was the standard and viewed Nairs as an anomaly.' Matrilineal cultures were perceived by some as 'uncivilized' and 'unnatural.' Western scholars respond to them with a mixture of surprise and confusion. Anthropologists have recently described matriliney as a paradox, a state of being that is inherently defective. (Salini 23)

Ironically, the opinions of curious and scandalized outsiders were a major factor in Kerala's 19th-century change. Both the British colonialists who colonized the region and the missionaries who aimed to

convert the local populace to Christianity put pressure on matrilineal Keralities to adhere to gender norms that suited their Victorian sensibilities. According to Indian historian, Uma Chakravarti said that, 'They felt compelled to assert the moral superiority of the rulers in many subtle and not so subtle ways to gain a psychological advantage over their subjects' colonial ideology'. (Salini 23)

A judge in a court case in 1855 in Calicut, which is now Kozhikode, one of Kerala's major cities and was then directly administered by the British, stated in a hearing that, 'It would be a violent inference that the authority lies in women'. Similarly, in 1810, Rani Gowri Lakshmi, the queen of Travancore, gave birth to a son and was pushed to grant him the crown. The Queen would instead be given the weakened caretaker title of 'regent' until he was old enough to rule. Elizabeth's status was minimized by the British government, but locals couldn't help but see her as the rightful monarch. She was armed with unchecked authority. This persisted after her death, when her sister assumed leadership. The queen was even called 'Maharajah,' the term usually given to an Indian monarch, according to official papers claimed by Manu Pillai in her study.

The author refers to a community where millions of Khasis live in the grassy hills of Meghalaya, northeast India, and they have a proverb that goes, 'Long Jaid na ka Kynthei.' It signifies that 'the woman gave birth to all people.' Despite being matrilineal, the Khasis' tribal society is still matrilineal today, in contrast to the Nairs of Kerala. Having grown up in the Khasi highlands, Tiplut Nongbri, a retired professor of sociology at JNU, stated that men do not have rights over property or children because the latter are part of the mother's tribe. (Saini 25)

When Welsh Christian missionaries arrived in the Khasi Hills in the 19th century, they pushed out religious rites that united clans and eroded some of the foundations of the native kinship traditions. The bonds that formed the foundation of the matrilineal family between brothers and sisters were eroded as a result. Recent globalization has made it possible for Khasi males to perceive patriarchal alternatives to their community in the rest of India. To the advantage of both sons and daughters, some have begun advocating for changes to inheritance laws. (Saini 26)

It led to later misfortune, as witnessed in the media, stating, 'Meet the men's libbers of Meghalaya' was one headline in the Times of India, capturing the tumultuous fight for gender equality that has captured the attention of international news outlets. According to other journalists, Khasi males feel isolated and undervalued, treated like baby-rearing animals. BCC News claims that this is 'where women rule, and men are suffragettes.'

In the other reference that tells Minangkabau people in West Sumatra, Indonesia, have traditionally had women and their children living in their homes, with males joining their wives after marriage. According to Evelyn Blackwood, an anthropologist at Purdue University in Indiana, colonialists frequently believed that senior Minangkabau males must have been the chiefs and leaders throughout the 19th century when this area was ruled by the Dutch. They chose men to assist them in implementing their regulations. Eventually, the Dutch government issued regulations stating that only men were permitted to register land or act as the legal representatives of their ancestors in court. (Saini 27)

In the 1920s and 1930s, laws in Travancore and Cochin increasingly challenged the Nair people's traditional family structure, formalizing the new patrilineal system until it was illegal to live any other way. However, decades after India gained its freedom from British domination, the Taravad would suffer its most devastating blow in 1976. In that year, the Kerala legislature completely outlawed matriliney. (Saini 29)

If we define 'matriarchy' as the reverse of 'patriarchy,' then Western anthropologists have long maintained that there are no true matriarchies. However, if patriarchy starts with the father dominating his family and ends with the king controlling his subjects, as Robert Filmer argued centuries ago in his book *Patriarcha*, it is difficult to claim that matrilineal and matrilineal cultures are inherently patriarchal. This power is more commonly dispersed than the absolute power that Filmer described, even if the brother or uncle has a lot of influence. What distinguishes male and female differences in authority, power, and influence? (Saini 31).

In his 1973 book, *The Inevitability of Patriarchy*, sociologist Steven Goldberg argued that observed behaviour likely has a biological basis. Biologists have applied this method to study species, but it's crucial to understand why women struggle for greater rights and privileges. Goldberg's concept of emotions influencing actions raises questions about why people feel resentment at oppression and gendered expectations, and why there are multiple ways of living despite only one natural one. This understanding is essential for understanding the complex issues surrounding gendered expectations and subordination.

According to sociologist Christine Delphy, Saini views women's subjugation as a system. 'Even if an institution's history is recent, its existence today cannot be explained by its mere existence in the past.' Embracing patriarchy as part of our identity can lead to a loss of understanding of its complexity and contingent reality. Limiting the argument to biological differences can lead to a disregard for its function and reimagining. Persuading people that there are no other options is the most destructive aspect of oppression, as demonstrated by traditional myths of caste, class, and race. This inequality is an exception to any hypothesis of male dominance.

Cynthia Eller, a religious researcher at Claremont Graduate University in California, says,

My problem is that you can't pretend this is history and then make your plans on how the world should change based on this flawed history. She goes on to say that the women who are preserving the notion of a female-centered, goddess-worshipping prehistory have their motivations. For individuals who have adopted this myth for political purposes because they wish to change the world in some way, it is more difficult for them to let go of the idea that it is historic, even while some are content to acknowledge that it may not be based on reality. You are removing the crucial element if you remove the historicity portion for them. They become less confident that women could hold positions of authority in the future if there were no matriarchal prehistory. (Salini 83)

The myth is further problematic since it has been entangled with a certain set of gender-related beliefs. According to Eller, the emphasis of a lot of Western literature about goddess worship is on women as nurturers who are closer to nature, and on males as the ones who destroy nature, which means they ruin women. Men and women are never presented as diverse people who might share characteristics; instead, they are portrayed as opposites or even as complementary. Kali, the Hindu goddess who is portrayed killing demons and putting their heads around her neck, is one of the bloodthirsty, violent deities that have little place in Western goddess-worshipping tradition. Instead, the qualities that women possess and the aggressive natures that men possess are what give female-led communities their strength. (Salini 84)

Judith Butler, an American gender theorist, argues that simplistic explanations of women often overlook the complexity of gender differences, favouring a matriarchal prehistory. This approach creates a limited understanding of what it means to be a woman, which is uncomfortable when people don't fit these molds. Butler also emphasizes the importance of considering societal and cultural influences when defining 'feminine' and 'masculine' traits, as it's unlikely that members of different societies held gender-related views similar to those of the 19th century.

Eller argues that feminist movements often emphasize 'female specialness' as a way to recover self-confidence and pride in historically undervalued societies. However, this specialness can be a straitjacket, separating women from masculine characteristics and defining 'femininity' in restrictive ways. The ideal of the 'Mother Goddess' is selfless, nurturing, and responsible for procreation and care, which does not apply to all women and causes hardship. (Salini 85)

Archaeologist Diane Bolger of the University of Edinburgh has stated that we should reconsider our assumption that male and female roles were established independently in prehistoric cultures. 'When gender roles are investigated rather than assumed, the result is very likely to contradict simple, binary models.' In contrast to contemporary societies, it is less evident that their social structures were gendered. (Saini 93)

According to Turkish activist Fidan Ataselim, one of the founders of the women's rights group, said, 'We Will Stop Femicide Platform, all their privileges and means of domination are gone as more women work, divorce their husbands, and challenge gender stereotypes.' (Saini 100)

In the fourth century BCE, the philosopher Aristotle accepted the inherent truth that some individuals were born free and others as slaves. He also stated that, in terms of gender, 'the relation of male to female is by nature a relation of superior to inferior and ruler to ruled.' A woman's main significance to the state was to bear children in order to protect and maintain the populace. However, men were also required to adhere to certain norms when interacting with women outside of their homes. There were expectations of bravery and self-control that had to be met.

On the scale of sexism, Aristotle was somewhat modest. One can practically see the frothing at the mouth of the sexist distrust of women that permeates other Greek writings. The poet Hesiod, who lived circa 700 BCE, said in *Theogony* that the race of women originated from the tale of Pandora, the first person created by the Greek gods. 'The deadly race and tribes of womankind...with a nature to do evil.' He frequently returned to the issue of detesting women. (Saini 127)

To talk about the Ancient Greek literature that tells us how the ideal respectable lady was quiet, obedient, and hidden away. In 1762, the philosopher Jean- Jacques Rousseau described ancient Greek women, hidden from public life and devoted to their households, as the wisest, most beautiful, and most charming in history. He wrote, 'This is the mode of life prescribed for women alike by nature and reason.'

Rousseau argued that using ancient history to understand gender relations may seem primitive, as it may show mankind at its most primitive level. However, the socio-economic disparities in ancient Athens were not based on biology, but rather on attrition and deliberate effort. Elite males were created through layering laws, edicts, and social norms, sometimes using violence or fear of violence. Hesiod's rage at women demonstrates the effort required to persuade people that women might be less valuable than men. This highlights the complexity of understanding gender relations in ancient societies. (Saini 131)

In Greek, this was the condition that women faced, who were kept hidden, and how they used tactics to oppress them to keep control over them. The author discussed the condition of women who worked as slaves, labourers in countries like India and Africa. It has long been required of poorer women, enslaved women, and children to work outside, and this practice still exists today.

In the past ten years, the author has conducted a reporting excursion to India and Kenya, where she interviewed women farmers and manual laborers who occasionally had infants strapped to their backs in slings. According to United Nations data, women currently comprise nearly half of the agricultural workers and nearly half of small-scale livestock managers worldwide in low-income nations. The concept is supported by the evidence. Angela Davis, an American academic and activist, wrote on slavery in the United States: 'As far as the slaveholders were concerned, women might as well have been genderless because they were seen as profitable labor units, just like men.' People with babies and pregnant women were nevertheless expected to work. She explains that women and men were social equals during enslavement. Scheidel continues by saying that teams of mules and oxen performed strenuous agricultural labor, including ploughing and carrying wood. (Saini 134)

Some scholars suggest that women's standing in agriculture may not have been influenced by agriculture itself, but rather by a specific culture and plough-based agriculture. In egalitarian groups, more hand-cultivated hoes are common, and plough farming is common in male-dominated areas due to the use of domesticated animals and higher upper-body strength. However, physical strength varies throughout a person's life, and women may have performed outdoor labor in some plough communities. Overall, the use of ploughs in agriculture may have influenced women's roles in society.

The rise of agriculture and property ownership, therefore, cannot be directly linked to gender inequality. If these causes caused shifts in the distribution of power among prehistoric people, they had to be subtle because there is no discernible evidence of them in the archaeological record. The establishment of

the earliest states is where we can actually begin to see a change in gender relations and the first signs of general male control. Gender becomes a prominent organizing factor when vast populations are classed in ways that purposefully ignore their everyday reality and make them live in ways they might not have otherwise chosen. (Saini 135)

The late feminist and historian Gerda Lerner, who wrote the 1986 book *The Creation of Patriarchy*, spent eight years studying how women's standing declined during Mesopotamia's lengthy history. He concluded that this is the moment and location where the institutionalization and legal codification of female subordination inside the family occurs. First, Lerner said, there were individuals in charge of the temples' administration and documentation. Parallel 'military elites' joined these 'temple elites,' rising to the position of chieftains and ultimately pushing priests to the outside of politics. These chieftains rose to become monarchs. The most powerful of these monarchs established kingdoms and nation-states over their territories. Each step "went in the direction of strengthening male dominance in public life," according to her. (Saini 137)

Human diversity is evident in our societies: individuals can have a wide range of characteristics and interests, come in a variety of sizes, and exhibit gender in a variety of ways. However, we want historical and archaeological records to perform a miracle for us, revealing universes where everyone adhered to rigidly established social norms and never strayed from them. (Saini 139)

When the Assyriologist Julia Assante questioned the translation of the Mesopotamian term *harimtu* (the plural is *harimtu*) in 1998, she demonstrated how simple it was for contemporary scholars to construct these caricatures. Scholars believed that *harimtu* meant a prostitute who was connected to the holy shrines starting in the 19th century. They asserted that all ancient women were classified into one of two groups based on their sexual availability to men. Either she was a devoted, faithful wife or daughter, or she was a prostitute who was not associated with any one man. Therefore, these *harimtu* were inherently classified as belonging to the second group. However, Assante found no proof that any *harimtu* really sold sex in Mesopotamian texts. Perhaps she didn't believe they were prostitutes.

According to Stephanie Budin, who documented the history of myths like these in her book *The Myth of Sacred Prostitution in Antiquity*, Assante's logic and supporting data are entirely sound. However, she notes that other historians have been adamantly opposed to changing the definition of *harimtu*. 'It involves an incredible amount of sexism.' (Saini 140)

Psychoanalyst Naomi Snidar and American psychologist Carol Gilligan have argued that gender is the root cause of patriarchy. Stereotyping is practiced through categorization. It eliminates distinctions by classifying people according to their limited commonalities or potential uses. Even when it is arbitrary, grouping people in this way encourages us to see contrasts between them. And that's why it's such a potent psychological instrument. It doesn't take long for divisions to acquire societal importance. According to Gilligan and Snider, the hierarchical binary directives state that 'a man must not be a woman or like a woman to be a man, and vice versa.' (Saini 143)

According to a 2020 study conducted in the Indian state of Uttar Pradesh, young rural women's mobility is frequently severely restricted by staying with their mothers-in-law, sometimes to the point where they are unable to travel alone to see friends or family. In marriage, they experience greater social isolation. Daughters-in-law who have been harassed or mistreated become controlling mothers-in-law, perpetuating the cycle over many generations. Previously repressed by patriarchal powers, women have now become their tools. (Saini 159)

In the worst situations, a woman will be left with no other options. It's possible that her family almost abandoned her throughout her early years. 'They say that you have to deal with it and that you can't return because of honor and shame,' Choudhary says. If a woman were to separate from her spouse or seek a divorce, her family's reputation might suffer. After that, it could be more difficult for siblings to get married. 'Knowing that things will only get worse for her and her siblings, families don't have much of an option.' (Saini 160)

Gerda Lerner, a historian, argued that women were the first slaves in human history, originally held by men for sex and childbearing. However, there is no solid evidence to support this claim. Women have not always been treated equally globally, as seen in matrilineal and more egalitarian nations. Philosophers and theorists have compared the legal and social standing of patriarchal wives to slavery. Friedrich Engels characterized women's subordination as a 'dehumanizing kind of bondage or servitude,' while Simone de Beauvoir argued that women have always been men's dependents. In the early 19th century, Indian social reformer Ram Mohan Roy stated that women were 'employed to do the work of a slave in the house.' (Saini 161)

In 2017, however, the United Nations International Labour Organization published figures that acknowledged forced marriage as a type of slavery for the first time. According to the most recent statistics, at least 15 million of the more than 40 million people who are victims of contemporary slavery globally are married into forced marriages. This indicates that, against their choice, someone is married roughly every two seconds somewhere in the world. (Saini 162)

According to Orlando Patterson, women who are trafficked into prostitution nowadays are 'most similar to the experience of traditional slaves in their commodification and sale, repeated physical and sexual assault, and isolation.' As with the historical kidnapping of captives, there is a racial component to the international traffic in women. Women are trafficked into India from Nepal and into Western Europe from Eastern Europe and Africa. These women might lose their passports, be given new names, and be isolated from friends and relatives. One by one, their identities are changed. (Saini 170)

According to Patterson, once they are seasoned and broken, they voluntarily serve for their masters for almost nothing in return. Pimps' first-hand reports highlight the excitement and sense of power they get from destroying the women they maintain, damaging them to the point of erasure, and prospering off of their dependence. Anthropologists were told by one pimp that his abuse was driven by a 'strong hatred' for his victims. According to Patterson, the trafficking of women is as cruel as anything he has witnessed in historical accounts of slavery. He writes, 'A woman is used up.' Her 'entire personhood,' not only her 'physical form'.

According to Orlando Patterson, slavery is a state of 'natal alienation,' wherein all familial relationships are purposefully broken and replaced by the relationship between the oppressor and the oppressed, or the master and the slave. 'Being human, a slave longed to belong to her parents, her family, and through them to her ancestors; she wanted her children to belong to her, and she wanted those ties to be safe and solid,' he says. 'But every connection was tenuous.'

In the 1980s, Deniz Kandiyoti, a development studies professor at SOAS University of London, coined the term 'patriarchal bargain' to describe how women plan within patriarchal organizations controlled by older, more powerful men. Kandiyoti emphasized the importance of understanding that these organizations may exist within them, even while humans are confined. The trade-offs required by patriarchy aim to maximize an individual's gains and minimize expenses. When a young bride marries into a patrilocal household, the deal is made for the rest of her life, with the control older women gain over younger women balancing their servitude to men.

We are looking for those connections. Without them, we are at a loss. Psychoanalyst Naomi Snider and psychologist Carol Gilligan have both suggested that patriarchal institutions have pushed males into thinking they are the only ones possessing a self. Women are made to feel selfless. At the most extreme, men and women stopped caring about one another. They argue that patriarchy endures 'because it renders the loss of relationship irreparable.'

This is what makes the concept of freedom, and also of women's liberation, as nuanced as it is. To be free, truly free with no ties to anyone at all, can be risky. It can leave a person open to other kinds of abuse or exploitation. Patterson explains that 'the real antithesis to slavery in societies where the personalistic idiom of power was dominant was what may be called countervailing power'. What we need are other powerful networks that we can escape into, ones that are able to absorb and protect us. More than an abstract freedom, people need systems that can lift them up. (Saini 181)

When 75-year-old Clara Zetkin, a member of the German Communist Party, gave her address, there was still a glimmer of optimism that things might go differently and that people might be persuaded to adopt a different outlook for Germany's future. The German communists had only one excellent man, and that was a woman named Clara Zetkin, according to a famous quote from Russian revolutionary and Soviet leader Vladimir Lenin.

In contrast to most communists of her time, she did not identify as a feminist. The notion that bourgeois women and female proletariats were bound together by a universal sisterhood, on the contrary, made her chuckle. Problems varied among women. The affluent and powerful were unable to comprehend the lives of common working people, especially when women at the top of society profited directly from the cheap labor of industrial workers and female maids. She therefore deliberately separated herself from what she perceived to be the capitalist elites' 'bourgeois feminism.' Instead, Zetkin concentrated on people at the bottom of society's hierarchy. (Saini 183-4)

The racial tyranny and social exploitation that did not differentiate between the sexes essentially bound Black women and working-class women to their males. Davis argued in *Women, Race & Class*, published in 1981. Women had historically supported strong males to suppress the rights of other women. The bigotry that pervaded the American suffrage movement was one instance. It had to be emancipation for all. 'It wants liberation at all,' Davis stated. (Saini 184)

The issue facing Zetkin and other female socialists in the early 1900s was that the leaders of the Communist Party were typically males, and they often spoke with other men in mind. There were women among the revolutionaries as well. Women were officially prohibited from joining political parties in the majority of Germany until 1908. The Communist Party was also not beyond fostering a cult of masculinity based on ideals of the muscular, masculine working man. Leading the fight, Zetkin attempted to remind her fellow fighters of their duty to the liberation of women. She participated in the 1910 Copenhagen big meeting that proposed the idea of **International Women's Day**, which is still observed today. (Saini 184)

The fundamental principles that Clara Zetkin advocated over a century ago were for women to have the right to vote, participate in politics, attend college, be legally equal in marriage, be free from sexual discrimination, and, most importantly, not be taken advantage of by anyone. In a way, she was intersectional in her pre-world struggle for transformation.

The history of feminism in this part of Europe wasn't the same as it was in Britain, where the author grew up. I realized that I'm one of the few individuals who undertake the pilgrimage when Saini went to Zetkin's former residence in Birkenwerder, Brandenburg, which is now maintained as a memorial, North of Berlin. In the garden along the deserted street is a bronze statue of her. Zetkin continues to be marginalized in the history of women. Not even on International Women's Day is she honored. Nevertheless, the archives do offer something noteworthy to those who have attempted to research state socialism in the 20th century, notwithstanding how cruel that time period was. In the Soviet Union, gender relations did shift. Even if they haven't always been widely acknowledged, such values produced some benefits for women among the remnants of those previous administrations. (Saini 188)

Western Europe and North America have historically supported capitalism, democracy, and individualism, despite some social inequality. They have allowed everyone to achieve their goals, with the state sometimes intervening to meet basic needs like education and unemployment insurance. However, women who desired equality with men faced gradual transformation. Communists aimed for the complete dissolution of the state, where property would be collectively owned, inequalities and hierarchies would be eliminated, and everyone would use their skills for the common good. They hoped that the family would fade, with equal, independent individuals, respecting one another and loving as they please. A wilder society would be better for raising children. (Saini 189)

During World War II, women were recruited worldwide to fill traditionally male-dominated occupations, but in the Soviet Union, they also enlisted in the military at unprecedented rates. According to historian Pamela Toler, the Soviet Union used women troops the more than 800,000 of them fought alongside the Red Army during the conflict, with thousands of them serving on the front lines as tank crews, snipers, and machine gunners, among other positions. Over 100,000 women received bravery decorations. (Saini 191)

Are Soviet women generally interested in working outside the home? A Harvard interviewer asked a follow-up. According to one that is referred, 'women typically prefer the home situation, but in the Soviet Union, conditions are such that women start to work at an early age. It does grant them a certain amount of autonomy. They must work, for instance, if they get divorced. It offers women independence. After she arrives at work, a woman feels liberated. They continued by saying that it is dishonorable to be a housewife alone. That's a characteristic of the small bourgeoisie.

In a different interview, a physician was asked about the gender ratio in Soviet Russia during his medical school years. He retorted, 'When I studied, there were more men than women, but later there were more women than men, and there were even special legal percentages on this score,' suggesting that quotas had been in place to promote gender parity. In the Soviet Union, there were prominent female professors and even surgeons. (Saini 193)

Central and eastern Europe has some of the lowest percentages of women in science, engineering, and technology globally, according to a 2019 study by Nature. Universities in these regions ranked among the best in the world for gender balance, with Lublin Medical University and Gdansk University ranking first and fourth in Poland, respectively. Harvard University and the University of Cambridge ranked 289th and 537th, respectively.

In former socialist regimes, the cultural heritage of normalizing women as engineers and scientists endures. I don't think it's odd if a female says she wants to be an engineer. 'I don't think people think that's odd,' says FODOR, whose own mother had studied engineering in the 1950s, when women were encouraged to attend technical colleges in Hungary. (Saini 198)

In her 1963 book, *The Feminine Mystique*, American feminist Betty Friedan explores the growing dissatisfaction of housewives who are trapped in romanticized domesticity. Friedan reveals that this issue has been unspoken for years, and women struggle to find fulfilment in their lives. Some women resort to alcohol or tranquilizers to cope with their unhappiness, highlighting a disconnect between the image of the United States and the mood of its citizens. The book highlights the struggles faced by suburban wives in balancing their roles and responsibilities. (Saini 201)

In one dissident underground feminist magazine, a Russian writer declared: **'WE WANT TO BE MOTHERS, WIVES, HOUSEWIVES- WOMEN AT LAST!'**

The East and West faced pressure to adopt a specific definition of womanhood, with neither government allowing for individual preferences. Both sides maintained preconceived notions of masculinity,

while femininity became a battlefield. Conservative viewpoints held that children and housework were still women's responsibility, and positions of authority were rarely granted to women. Men in authority were wary of women organizing for their rights outside the communist cause.

Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, an exiled Muslim cleric, became the focal point of the opposition to Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi's dictatorial authority in Iran. He promised a future for the state that was more authentically cultural and religiously based and free from foreign exploitation. Khomeini founded a theocracy after his return from exile. Laws that were deemed to go against Muslim principles were implemented in the nascent Islamic Republic.

An early casualty was the rights of women. Religious leaders pushed for a return to traditional gender roles, which included requiring male guardians to give their consent before women could travel abroad, separating schools by gender, outlawing abortion, and lowering the legal marriage age for girls from eighteen to nine and then to thirteen, which allowed for child brides. Men who were openly gay risked harsh penalties, even death. (Saini 214)

The controversial decision to prohibit women from wearing veils in public was made by the father of the Shah in 1936. Following the revolution, wearing a veil was required. Some Iranian activists, like Sediqeh Dowlatabadi, who had founded the first girls' school in the traditional city of Isfahan in 1918 and memorably took off her veil in public after returning from a women's rights conference in Paris in 1926, were defaced in an attempt to go back to the past.

Several of the most vocal feminists in Iran still don't feel secure enough to call Iran home. These include Masih Alinejad, a working-class journalist and the granddaughter of sharecroppers, who was briefly detained and questioned as a teenager for her involvement in creating political leaflets. She later gained notoriety for questioning Iran's political leaders, often in front of them, while working as a reporter in Tehran. She currently runs a global campaign against mandatory veiling from her home in New York. (Saini 216-17)

'I didn't have any plan to launch a movement against compulsory hijab from the beginning,' Alinejad tells the author when she was interviewed.

A photo of a woman in London in 2014 sparked a chain reaction among Iranian women who supported the mandatory hijab. In 2018, 29 women were detained for opposing the hijab. In 2019, the Iranian judiciary declared that anyone caught posting video footage of women taking off their veils could be imprisoned for up to ten years. Three activists, Yasaman Aryani, Mojgan Keshavarz, and her mother Monireh Arabshahi, were imprisoned in 2020 for giving flowers to women Metro riders in Tehran. This led to the largest rebellion against the regime to date, with Mahsa Amini's death in September 2022 sparking irate rallies throughout Iran. A teenager named Nika Shah Karami was among the hundreds killed or injured in a matter of weeks. (Saini 217)

According to reports, a man in August 2021 gravely injured two women after running them over with his car because he believed they were not properly covered. Every day, morality police beat up women in the streets. Without this little bit of clothing, you won't be here. For this reason, it was sufficient for women alone. They have had enough. They have had enough of religion controlling their bodies under a tyranny. Alinejad immediately recognized similarities with Iran after viewing the film adaptation of Margaret Atwood's dystopian novel, *The Handmaid's Tale*, which is about a patriarchal religious state. In the West, this is a work of fiction, but to me, it is reality. This is just everyday life. (Saini 218-9)

Previously, during the 20th century, Iran's attempts to advance women's rights had been progressively accelerating. According to Janet Afary, a historian of contemporary Iran and professor of religious studies at

the University of California, Santa Barbara, about fifty schools for females had opened in Tehran by 1910. The veil, polygamy, and simple divorces were being criticized by radical publications and women's magazines twenty years later. Women organized to raise funds for the education of girls. According to her, 870 girls' schools had over 50,000 students enrolled in 1933. A third of college students were female by 1978. Women made up about half of Iran's medical students and teachers at the same period. (Saini 219)

Political analyst Partha Chatterjee highlights the fear that women might abandon their regional customs during anti-British protests in India and Iran after the 1979 revolution. Women were believed to represent the nation's resistance to foreign influence, jeopardizing the nationalist quest for freedom. This led to a new, acceptable subjugation of women. Sri Lankan feminist researcher Kumari Jayawardena argues that women still had to be both modern and traditional, acting as custodians of family customs, indigenous religion, and national culture.

(Saini 229)

Rafia Zakaria, a journalist and lawyer, criticizes the claims of international sisterhood in her book *Against White Feminism*. She argues that Western feminists would have supported US military actions in Afghanistan under the pretext of female freedom and gender equality if they were aware of women's demands. Zakaria argues that Afghan women, like everyone else at the time, aimed to be free from patriarchal domination, and that the bombings that shattered families and livelihoods were a necessary means to achieve this goal. She also notes that Afghan women were inextricably connected to Afghan men, which was not acknowledged. (Saini 233-4)

In the seventeenth century, 'Islam promised equality and dignity for all, for men and women, for masters and servants,' which encouraged thousands of women to flee the elite tribe of Mecca and enter Medina, the city of the Prophet. In *The Veil and the Male Elite*, Mernissi wrote 'When I finished writing this book, I realized that if some contemporary Muslim men find women's rights problematic, it isn't because of the Koran, the Prophet, or Islamic tradition; rather, it's because such rights clash with the interests of a male elite.' (Saini 235)

Mernissi demonstrated how religion had, like so many other facets of life, been coerced into working for the patriarchs over time. Similarly to legendary assertions on the natures of men and women, religiously sanctioned male dominance possessed its power. To portray women as inferior, religious men invoked the authority of the divine, whereas philosophers and scientists invoked the authority of biology.

The author's study on human rights highlights the importance of defending freedom and dignity, particularly for strangers. They argue that we all feel the suffering of others, even if we cannot stand to be treated unfairly. We are driven to assist and share love with those outside our social circles. This deep-seated yearning for love and acceptance is considered the most remarkable aspect of human nature, according to a science writer who spends most of her time reflecting on it. The author argues that addressing the harm caused by patriarchal dominance requires fostering common humanity, which allows for love despite division and control. They question whether oppression is inherent in our identity, and if humans are violent and self-centred, it's questionable if we can still deeply care for one another.

## Conclusion:

Salini argues that patriarchy gains authority through separation, causing physical, financial, and psychological harm. Gendered inequality leads to fear and hatred towards those who don't fit into rigid gender stereotypes. This separation leads to the belief that we are incapable of loving and trusting others, even in our closest relationships. The practice of dividing individuals to exert control has made us believe we are incapable of doing so, resulting in the erosion of our sense of self and relationships. Paternal systems are not a singular phenomenon, but rather a complex interplay of regional power structures and pre-existing

inequalities. These systems are influenced by slavery, state institutions, empires, capitalism, and religions, and continue to be woven into our social fabric. The struggle for equality is a war of attrition, and gender-based oppression cannot be distinguished from other forms of oppression. Despite efforts to create political structures that prioritize individual needs over state needs and protect us from external influences, there will still be people attempting to exert power in novel ways even after laws are as equitable as possible, gender stereotypes have been abandoned, and our languages and cultures reflect these ideals. Despite the progress made in creating a more equitable world, the struggle for equality remains a significant challenge. It is crucial to unpick these strands and create a truly equitable world that prioritizes individual needs over state needs.

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