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**Liberal feminism and psychoanalysis: society VS. family.**

Feminism’s position in the current gender studies highlights the artificially constructed debate between «liberal feminism» and «feminist psycho-analysis». In a way this debate has served to divide liberal (modernist) feminism from radical (postmodern) feminism.

Liberal feminism is a rationalistic project of emancipation, classically formulated by M. Wollstonecraft’s «Vindication of the Rights of Woman» in 1792. Wollstonecraft and her followers claimed that the rights of men could be extended to women without causing large-scale disruption of the existing social institutions. Feminism since Wollstonecraft has faced the dilemma that is still unresolved: either coexist with men on the liberal route to egalitarism or come out against men on a radical separatist route. It is necessary to stress that liberal feminism is a mighty intellectual traditions and a lot of positive gender reforms have been possible thanks to it. «The body», the psychoanalist approach to gender is usually taken as irrelevant to liberalism in particular and philosophy, in general. In reaction to this idea feminists have begun to explore embodiment as a relevant site of difference between the sexes along with Lacan feminist thought (Kristeva, Ruddich, Chodorow). Gender research has included an orientation of ethical thinking towards an ethics grounded in maternal thinking (Ruddich), and directed towards an ethics of care (Jilligan). One of the principal elements of this orientation is the emphasis on our caring connection with others and against the liberal ideal of the rationalistic Carbesian thinker. The important issue in this agenda is the idea that the networks that constitute our relations both in the public and in the private spheres constitute our identities, and taking seriously our responsibility to others (maternal responsibility is of paramount significance here) thus also contributes to the very notions of our identities. C. Jilligan claims that men and women have different understanding of justice. According to L. Kohlberg’s scale of moral development women do not as a rule achieve the sixth stage of the connection with the universal abstract principles of
justice. Jilligan proves that women have the development sense of justice; she adds that Kohlberg’s definition of the stages of moral development is biased toward the «conventions of logic». Jilligan’s work alongside with the research of Ruddich, Noddings and others, contested the ground of debates over biological and psychological essentialism, the exclusionary politics of feminist theory included. The psychoanalytical approaches have been criticised mainly for their neglect of the important interrelation of race, class, sexuality and gender. Now the demand is evident both for the liberal feminism and feminist psychoanalysis: we need to balance feminist demands for equality with a recognition of differences not only between the sexes but also among women who are differently raced and classed.

Key words: liberalism, psychoanalysis, gender, epistemology, maternity, dominance, gender conflict, justice.