

## THE RELATIONSHIP OF PATRIARCHY AND CAPITALISM: THE ‘WIN-WIN’ SCENARIO RECONSIDERED\*

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### ABSTRACT

What are the impacts of capitalism on women’s oppression? Does capitalist development diminish gender inequality in developing countries? Do women’s autonomy, health and well-being rise together with an increase in women’s employment? Leading names of feminist economics argue that successful capitalist development and diminishing gender inequality within society can go hand in hand. They assume that the main reason why the win-win scenario has failed thus far is the laissez faire economy, so they emphasise the proactive role of state and international institutions with respect to manage the direction of social transformation through economy.

In this paper, I will scrutinise the arguments that defend the possibility of the win-win scenario. Such an attempt is important in terms of analysing the relationship between patriarchy and capitalism, especially under the current global conjuncture where a feminist response to the 2007-08 crisis is required. I argue that in emphasising the win-win scenario, these studies oversimplify the relationship between patriarchy and capitalism. They assume that capitalism drives changes in patriarchy in a way which reduces either rising or falling gender inequality to a simple effect of different kinds of capitalist development. This paper is structured in three sections: In the first section I will review the literature that champions the possibility of the win-win scenario. In the second section I will provide a critical assessment of their conceptual framework and examine the political consequences of those problems. In the last section, I will stress the key features of an alternative conceptual framework.

**Keywords:** Capitalist Development, Post-Washington Consensus, Gender Inequality, Patriarchy, Feminism, Historical Materialism

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## **PATRIYARKA VE KAPİTALİZM İLİŞKİSİ: “KAZAN-KAZAN” SENARYOSU YENİDEN DÜŞÜNÜLÜRKEN**

### **ÖZET**

Kapitalizm, kadının toplumdaki ezilmişliğini nasıl etkiler? Kapitalist kalkınma toplumsal cinsiyet temelindeki eşitsizliği azaltır mı? Kadın istihdamının artması, kadınların bağımsızlığını, sağlığını ve daha iyi şartlar altında yaşamalarını da beraberinde getirir mi? Feminist ekonomistlerin önde gelen isimleri, sürdürülebilir kapitalist kalkınma ile toplumsal cinsiyet temelindeki eşitsizliğin azalmasını birbirine koşut iki olgu olarak ‘kazan-kazan’ senaryosu adı altında tanımlar. Onlara göre şimdiye dek kazan-kazan senaryosunun hayata geçirilemeyişinin nedeni aslen neoliberal prensipler temelinde işleyen ekonomidir. Devlet ve uluslararası kuruluşlar, doğru politikalar çerçevesinde aktif bir rol üstlendiği takdirde ekonomi aracılığı ile toplumsal dönüşüme müdahil olunabilir ve patriyarka zayıflatılabilir.

Bu çalışmanın amacı kazan-kazan senaryosunun mümkün olduğunu savunan tezleri eleştirel bir bakış açısıyla yeniden ele almaktır. Özellikle 2007-08 krizi sonrası döneme ilişkin olarak feminist bir yaklaşıma ihtiyaç duyulduğu günümüz koşullarında, kazan-kazan senaryosunu yeniden değerlendirmek bu açıdan önemli bir gereksinimdir. Kazan-kazan senaryosunun mümkün olduğunu savunan tezlerin kapitalizm ile patriyarka arasındaki karşılıklı ilişkiyi, kapitalizmin patriyarkayı belirlediği tek yönlü bir ilişkiye indirgeyerek basitleştirdiklerini savunuyorum. Söz konusu tezler, farklı kapitalist kalkınma stratejilerine bağlı olarak, kapitalizmin toplumsal cinsiyet temelindeki eşitsizliği arttırdığı ya da azalttığını savunmakta, böylelikle devlet ve uluslararası kuruluşların aktif müdahalesini kazan-kazan hedefine ulaşmada ön koşul olarak görmekte. Bu çalışma kapsamında öncelikle söz konusu tezlerin kısa bir özetini sunacağım. Ardından ortaklaştıkları kavramsal çerçeveye ait teorik problemleri açıklayıp, teorik problemlerin yol açtığı politik sorunlara değineceğim. Son olarak tarihsel maddecilik temelinde yeniden inşa edilmesi gerektiğine inandığım yeni bir kavramsal çerçevenin köşe taşlarına değineceğim.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Kapitalist Kalkınma, Washington Sonrası Mutabakat, Toplumsal Cinsiyet Eşitsizliği, Patriyarka, Feminizm, Tarihsel Maddecilik

### **1. Introduction**

What are the impacts of capitalism on women’s oppression? Does capitalist development diminish gender inequality in developing countries? Do women’s autonomy, health and well-being rise together with an increase in women’s employment? What are the impacts of export-led growth on women’s employment? What is the policy framework which can promote

gender equity? This is a subset of questions that feminist economists<sup>1</sup> ask.

Leading names of feminist economics identify four scenarios with respect to the impact of capitalist development on women's oppression (Elson et al., 2000): 1) A *win-win scenario* (high growth and low gender inequality), 2) A *lose-lose scenario* (low growth and high gender inequality), 3) A *lose-win scenario* (low growth and low gender inequality) and 4) A *win-lose scenario* (high growth and high gender inequality). For them, the *win-win scenario* refers a case where growth is sustainable and gender inequality is lower in paid and unpaid work, in employment and unemployment rates, in working conditions, in gender wage gap, in earnings, in control over assets, in use of technology, in educational attainment and other measurements about well-being (life expectation rates, female mortality ratio, nutrition). Elson, Grown and Çağatay (2007b) argue that the main strategy of competitiveness in *low road development* is women's cheap labour. However, they say, such an approach has disadvantages in terms of competing against lower cost local and international producers. *High road development* path that requires productivity increase through technological development and skilled labour is a necessary step for a long term growth. Therefore for them diminishing gender inequality is a necessary condition for the transition from low road development to high road development. Seguino (2011, 2007, Berik et al., 2009) justifies the win-win scenario with neo-Keynesian policies. She assumes that a policy framework which increases productivity by skill and capital intensive goods, which promotes strategic industries that can afford to pay high wages to their workers and which targets full employment through demand-side management policies can achieve the win-win scenario. To summarise, feminist economists whose studies I will review in this study, argue that successful capitalist development and diminishing gender inequality within society *can* go hand in hand. They assume that the main reason why the win-win scenario has failed thus far is the *laissez faire* economy, so they emphasise the proactive role of local governments and international institutions with respect to manage the direction of social transformation through economy.

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<sup>1</sup> In their recent study Elson, Bakker and Young distinguish feminist political economists (for example, Bakker, Gill) from feminist economists (for example, Çağatay, Elson, Grown). I will rely on the same distinction for this study and use the terminology of *feminist economists* for the literature that I will review. YOUNG, B., BAKKER, I. & ELSON, D. 2011b. *Questioning financial governance from a feminist perspective*, London, Routledge.

In this paper, I will scrutinise the arguments that defend the *possibility* of the win-win scenario<sup>2</sup>. Such an attempt is important in terms of analysing the relationship between patriarchy and capitalism, especially under the current global conjuncture where a feminist response to the 2007-08 crisis is required. I argue that in emphasising the win-win scenario, these studies oversimplify the relationship between patriarchy and capitalism. They assume that capitalism drives changes in patriarchy in a way which reduces either rising or falling gender inequality to a simple effect of different kinds of capitalist development. They emphasise the role of local and international institutions in shaping these possible outcomes. The political consequences of such a problem weaken these scholars' capacity to suggest a proper strategy to the feminist praxis in both developed and developing countries.

This paper is structured in three main sections: In the following section I will review the literature that champions the possibility of the win-win scenario. I will start with a brief summary of their critique of the *laissez faire* economy and then continue with their description of the win-win scenario. Following this I will explain how they justify the win-win scenario and study the strategy they suggest to achieve it. In the third section I will provide a critical assessment of their conceptual framework and examine the political consequences of those problems. In the last section, I will suggest key features of an alternative conceptual framework.

## 2. Exploring the 'win-win' scenario

There is a certain level of acceptance about the failure of the *laissez faire* economy alongside Post Washington Consensus and World Bank's 1997 report, *The State in a Changing World* (Serra and Stiglitz, 2008, Krugman and Obstfeld, 2006, Rodrik, 2007). Free-market orthodoxy of Washington

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<sup>2</sup> This paper has certain limitations. First of all it is not possible to place all feminist economists under a single umbrella, since there are differences between their approaches. However in this paper, I will concentrate on studies that assert the possibility of the win-win scenario. The second difficulty pertains to the concepts used by those studies such as growth, productivity increase, skilled-unskilled labour and developed-developing countries. My aim is to summarise a theory in the language of theorists and then give a critical account of it in a distinctive voice. After that I expect the difference between my position and the theory that I discuss to get clearer. Thus in this paper, I leave aside the issue of whether those concepts are misleading or not.

Consensus years is challenged by the requirement of intervention to resolve market failures (Young et al., 2011b, Bergeron, 2006). In spite of that, the impact of social and cultural forces such as poverty, gender inequality, and social exclusion is considered without sacrificing the core ideas of capitalism. From the 1990s onwards, international institutions considerably shifted their approach towards a more gender aware analysis. The Beijing conference in 1995, United Nations' 1999 human development report, the Post Washington consensus and the World Bank's 2001 report, *Engendering Development: Through Gender Equality in Rights, Resources and Voice*, are some examples of such a shift.

Feminist economists have always had a critical approach towards the *laissez faire* economy like many other heterodox economists. The gendered consequences of structural adjustment programs which promoted export-led growth, currency devaluation, minimisation of the state's role in the economy, privatisation of public services, and public budget cuts have been examined in the context of both developed and developing countries<sup>3</sup>. Most of those studies highlighted the contradictory impacts of export-led growth on women's employment, autonomy, health and well-being. They demonstrated that the labour force flexibility regulations are associated with greater employment opportunities for women but in lower-wage, lower-skill jobs with little job security. They also showed that women workers mostly work in informal sector during export-led growth. Since the 1980s, textiles, garment, leather, carpet making and electronic sectors have mainly relied on the cheaper labour of home-based workers. Those studies demonstrated that home-based working is not relevant for women only in developing countries; it is also common for women in developed countries (Carr et al., 2000). As a summary they conclude that gender inequality bolsters profits and stimulates export, however; there is at the same time an opportunity for women's autonomy to be increased alongside their employment. In relation to that, Folbre (2008, 2000, 1994) argues that an increasing numbers of women are disentangled from domestic labour under capitalism. She signifies four dynamics to explain such tendency: Firstly, she argues that

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<sup>3</sup> For example (Berik, 2007, Berik, 2000, Seguino, 2000a, Seguino, 2000b, Çağatay and Özler, 1995, Erturk and Çağatay, 1995, Milberg, 2007, Kongar, 2007, Beneria, 2007a, Beneria, 2000, Fussell, 2000)

married women spend more time for paid activities alongside increase in women's employment. Secondly, paid child care is available in the market since the ratio of employment in personal care services is increasing (like paid child care, nursing home, talk therapy, phone sex and other services). Thirdly, she claims that technology shortens the time spent on housework and care work. Finally for her, women's improved capacity to plan birth is an opportunity for women in terms of their bargaining power within the family. Together with the intellectual debate started with the Post Washington consensus, a new consensus that "integrates micro-based neoclassical theories with macro-based Keynesian theories has developed" (Maier, 2011: 13). Thus, the arguments of those studies that justify the win-win scenario are aligned more with such consensus. Their critique about the relationship between gender inequality and capitalist development is stayed limited to the export-led growth, and they focus on a policy framework which could diminish gender inequality and also support long term growth. Until here, I explored the historical context of the win-win scenario, now I will turn to the scenario itself.

How do feminist economists *define* the win-win scenario? High growth but not only for a short-term, sustainable long-term growth is defined as a *win* scenario for the economy. Diminishing gender inequality is defined as a *win* scenario for women, which requires a lower gender inequality in the following categories: Changing patterns and conditions of paid and unpaid work, hours of paid and unpaid work, employment and unemployment rates, gender wage gap, earnings, control over assets, technical change, change in consumption patterns of men and women, use of technology by men and women, changes in the public provisioning for services, educational attainment and other measurements about well-being (Elson et al., 2007b, Seguino, 2000b, Van Staveren, 2007). To summarise the win-win scenario refers to the long-term high growth rate and lower gender inequality.

Feminist studies *justify* the necessity of the win-win scenario based on two approaches: *Economy based approach* and *Human rights based approach*. The economy based approach can be further divided into two categories. First one acknowledges that gender inequality stimulates low cost production for short term growth and that type of growth may exacerbate gender inequality (Beneria, 2000, Seguino, 2000a, Seguino, 2000b). However the

increase in productivity through technological development and skilled labour is a necessary condition to keep the competitive advantage against lower cost local and international producers (Elson et al., 2007b). Therefore diminishing gender inequality is a *necessary* condition for long-term growth. Second category of the economy based approach is a neo-Keynesian account considered by Seguino (2011, 2009, 2007). She focuses on the demand side of the economy and proposes a framework that avoids devaluation, increases the productivity of labour, provides decent wages and targets full employment. In that respect she concludes that governments should spend on education and job creation. The second approach which justifies the necessity of the win-win scenario promotes human rights rather than being concerned solely about growth rates. They suggests that gender issues should not be analysed as an instrumental for growth (Berik et al., 2009) (Elson et al. (2000). Rather, human rights based approach which promotes women's economic and social rights and also emphasises women's obligations as citizens should be accepted. Elson suggests the *UN Global Compact*<sup>4</sup> as an example of a third way politics that sees "no fundamental contradictions between the hope of human rights and the exigencies of competitive capital accumulation" (Elson, 2004: 46).

How to *achieve* the win-win scenario? Feminist economists emphasise the proactive role of the state and the international institutions as an alternative approach to the free market orthodoxy<sup>5</sup>. They suggest that states allocate more resource for education, health, women's ownership and control over the assets (especially over land) and women's access to credit, marketing structures and technology. Beneria (2007b) highlights the limitations of the state and explains the importance of gendered targets and indicators to be defined at an international level. To summarise they stress the role of both the state and the international institutions in terms of promoting the globalisation of markets and responding to initiatives and interests of

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<sup>4</sup> The United Nations Global Compact is a strategic policy initiative for businesses that are committed to aligning their operations and strategies with ten universally accepted principles in the areas of human rights, labour, environment and anti-corruption. For detailed information: <http://www.unglobalcompact.org>

<sup>5</sup> For example (Elson, 2011, Young et al., 2011a, Elson et al., 2007a, Elson, 2004, Seguino, 2011, Berik et al., 2009, Seguino and Grown, 2007, Beneria, 2007a, Beneria, 2007b, Beneria and Bisnath, 2004, Beneria, 2000, Beneria, 1999).

different social groups. Following this logic, they conclude that feminists should engage with the state and international institutions and engender their policies, especially their macro-economic policies. In the following subsection, I will engage with the key arguments of the win-win scenario and provide a critical assessment.

### 3. Critical assessment

Studies that advocate for the possibility of win-win scenario have made considerable achievements at both theoretical and practical levels. First of all they contribute to the critique of *laissez faire* economy from a feminist perspective. In doing so, as Elson, Grown and Çağatay (1995) state, those studies provide an aggregate measure of the value of domestic production in the national income. Their studies do not only contribute to the effort of making women's unpaid labour visible, they also signify inequality between paid production of goods and services and unpaid production of the labour supply, households and communities (Elson et al., 2007a). Secondly, feminist economists offer a detailed analysis of gender inequality in the labour market. They provide rich evidence about women's segregated position in both initial stages and also mature stages of export-led growth. Thirdly, within the intellectual atmosphere of 1990s, where the only alternative to 'modernism' appeared to be 'postmodern' denial of politics and history altogether, feminist economists emphasise the role of politics with respect to change society. Feminism as a praxis need to be improved with a critical approach especially under the current conditions of 2007-08 crisis. As Elson (2011) and Walby (2011) mention, the crisis also provides an opportunity to challenge gender inequality within society. In that context an engagement with the win-win scenario is an important attempt to enhance the feminist response to the crisis at both theoretical and practical terms.

In recent years, there have been few attempts to criticise the 'alignment' of feminist politics with 'neoliberalism'. For example Eisenstein criticises feminism for not being able to challenge the main premises of the Washington Consensus or, more broadly, "the workings of international capitalism" (2009: 167). However feminist studies should be assessed by their ability to target patriarchy not capitalism. As Delphy and Leonard have stated, as feminists, we must consider "the possibility of women to be liberated within capitalist mode of production and also patriarchy to survive after the

diminish of capitalist mode of production” (1992: 47). Thus, in this section, I will provide a critical assessment of theories that promote the win-win scenario with respect to their potential and limitation to target patriarchy, not capitalism. In the first subsection, I will elaborate on the problems of the conceptual framework shared by these studies. In the second subsection, I will examine the political consequences of such problems.

### **3.1. Problems of the conceptual framework**

I argue that there are some problems belonging to the conceptual framework shared by the feminist studies promoting the win-win scenario. Those problems weaken their capacity to examine the changing structure of women's oppression under the mutual interaction between patriarchy and capitalism. First of all, those studies make no distinction between what is relatively permanent and what is passing fluctuation about women's oppression within historical context. Women have always participated in labour force under a segregated status since the pre-capitalist societies. However, studies that argue for the possibility of the win-win scenario do not pay enough attention to the continuities and the discontinuities between export-led growth and previous growth strategies such as the post-war Keynesian import-substitution. As a result, they demonstrate the existing problems of the export-led growth with respect to gender inequality in the labour force and suggest neo-Keynesian account. Their theoretical framework does not go beyond the historical relativity. Thus, they do not provide a detailed account of the character of gender inequality in labour force. I will name this problem as a *lack of historicism* in their studies.

The second problem is related to the indicators that are used to *measure* the different aspects of women's oppression. I argue that to a certain extent, those indicators function in a way which reduces women's oppression to its pure numerical representation. Time budget studies that measure hours spent for unpaid work, employment and unemployment rates, measurement of gender wage gap, educational attainment and other measurements are important in demonstrating the *unequal* status of men and women within society. However pure numerical representation of women's oppression masks the main character of oppression –which is associated with men's exploitation of women's labour. In her recent study, Elson (2011) attempts to carry her theory beyond the limitations of numerical representation by

differentiating the categories of *gender numbers* and *gender norms*. For her, gender numbers refer to the numbers of men and women carrying out different activities as measured by sex-disaggregated statistics. She adopts the concept of gender norms, to define social norms that “constrain the choices of men and women and their associated social sanctions, encouraging forms of behaviour that conform to the norms, and discouraging behaviour that does not” (2011: 40). Despite her attempt of developing a coherent relationship between quantity (gender numbers) and quality (gender norms), the character of women’s oppression is still vague in her studies. Gramsci (1971) and Lukács (1971, 1974) provided a detailed account of the dialectical nexus between the quantity and quality. According to that *quantity continuously becomes quality*, and once the dialectical nexus among them is broken, the phenomena is reduced purely to its quantitative essence; its expression becomes pure numbers and numerical relations. Lukács named such a problem as *quantity becomes everything*. I will adopt the critique of Lukács to define such a problem.

Finally, I argue that the misleading impact of *economism* on those studies weakens their capacity to analyse the mutual interactions between capitalism and patriarchy. In this respect those studies have easily slipped into thinking of separated economic and social relations. Unlike mainstream economists, feminist economists underline the importance of *interactions* among the spheres of the economy and the social. However, no matter how they may be analysing those interactions, their analysis begin with the assumption of two spheres as enclosed, separate circles. Wood (1981) claims that the analysis of Marx creates no discontinuities between the economic and the social spheres, despite the fact that most Marxists treat the economic base and ideological superstructures as more or less enclosed and separated spheres. As a result of such a problem, economic sphere last instance *determines* the rest. In the studies that argue for the win-win scenario, the economy (capitalism) is an active engine of transformation but the ideology (patriarchy) is a passive one. They assume that capitalism drives in patriarchy in a way which reduces either rising or falling gender inequality. Thus, they emphasise the role of the state and international institutions in shaping these possible outcomes.

The impact of *economism* in their studies becomes more visible in their definition of patriarchy. For example, in her recent studies, Elson uses two different but interrelated terminologies to refer women’s oppression. Her

definition of *gender order* refers to “the system of social power that sustains particular patterns of gender relations” (Elson and Warnecke, 2011: 111). As I discussed before, her definition of *gender norms* refers “the social practices and ideas that shape the behaviour of people and institutions” (2011: 37). In both of definitions, patriarchy is detached from the material production of life where exploitation occurs. As a result, patriarchy is reduced to people’s and institutions’ behaviours, and those behaviours –social practices- are detached from the men’s exploitation of women’s labour. The reason why Elson develops such a limited definition of patriarchy is not her to neglect the importance of patriarchy. It is more likely related to the impact of *economism* which does not allow her theory to emphasise the unity of the material and the social relations.

To summarise, I argue that studies that argue for the win-win scenario reduce patriarchy to behavioural norms by breaking the link between the material production and the social practise. Once this unity is broken, economy becomes sphere of purely mechanical relations. Thus, the mediating categories of capitalism are fixed into eternity with the perception of economy as a *Hidden God* (Gramsci, 1971). As a result, those scholars easily slipped into thinking of capitalism drives changes in patriarchy in a way which reduces either rising or falling gender inequality to a simple effect of different kinds of capitalist development. Such a problem does not encourage their studies to investigate the mutual interaction between patriarchy and capitalism, and to examine the various forms of patriarchy within contemporary industrialised societies. In the following subsection, I will sketch out the political consequences of such theoretical problems.

### **3.2. Political consequences of the theoretical problems**

I argue that in emphasising the win-win scenario, those studies propose a strategy which is not only achievable, but which also could disappoint women who live in developed and developing countries. As noted earlier, Elson (2011, 2007a, 2006, 2000, 1995), Seguino (2011, 2009, 2007) and others define gender equity as a necessary condition to long-term growth. In reality, they are right to stress the role of productivity increase through technological changes. However I argue that productivity increase under the current conditions of patriarchy and capitalism is not neutral, it is a gendered process. In this subsection I will question the fetishistic catego-

ries of capitalism such as productivity increase, technological development and skilled/unskilled labour in terms of their role in reproducing gender inequality. Then I will argue for the potential and limitations of the state with regard to diminishing gender inequality.

First of all, the inherent logic of capitalism is the maximisation of profit and such a process is an impetus to increase the productivity of labour. Within capitalism, the increase in the productivity of labour depends on an increase in the ratio of unpaid labour to paid labour. Technological development is –has always been- an important strategy to increase the productivity of labour. The capitalistic use of technology provides the bourgeoisie with a motivation for *lengthening of the working-day* (to increase the absolute surplus value) and/or for *increasing the intensity of labour* (to increase the relative surplus value) (Marx, 1976). Depending on the conditions -such as the level of demand in both local and global market, class struggle, tolerance to violation of laws- bourgeoisie might prefer either to keep the same number of workers –or to increase the number of workers- and produce higher profit, or to reduce the number of workers but still achieve same level of profit. As a result it is not *necessary* for technological development to create well-paid skilled jobs. To the contrary workers more likely to lose their jobs, labour might be disqualified, and accordingly wages might decrease. Such conditions always increase the competition among working class. Studies have demonstrated that men workers have a tendency to strengthen their patriarchal advantages -such as their access to technical skills, not being responsible for unpaid activities at home and higher mobility (Walby, 1986, Cockburn, 1991, Cockburn, 1985). In doing so, they are able to gain *short term* benefits in terms of their wages and job security (Mies et al., 1988). The studies of Berik (2007, 2000) where she examines gender inequality in the roadmap of export-oriented growth strategy in Taiwan between 1981 and 1996, seem to support this argument: When the labour intensive production left its place to technology intensive production, women workers have lost their jobs and new technological jobs were occupied by men workers.

The second problem is about the conception of *skilled/unskilled labour*. Qualification of labour is a relative concept and it is usually defined by two dynamics: 1) Tendency of profit maximisation, 2) Tendency of men workers to strengthen their patriarchal advantages against women workers. I argue

that regardless of the work they do, both of the above tendencies push women workers' labour to be defined as *unskilled labour*. In their early study, Elson and Pearson (1981) successfully questioned skilled/unskilled division of labour from a feminist perspective. They explained why women workers do not have better working conditions although the work they do requires high-skills. First of all, they refused the theory of women to have nimble fingers as a natural physical feature and defended that women learn those *nimble fingers* skills since their childhood. They stressed that the training process of their skills is invisible and their social recognition is low. Secondly, they argue that women are sustainable for tedious, monotonous work due to the patriarchal power relations in family. Thirdly, women workers' labour has to be defined as unskilled because they are paid less than men workers. To summarise, I argue that the productivity increase through technological development is not –has never been- gender neutral process. Since the early days of the industrial revolution patriarchy has always been one of the important dynamics that shapes the design, the implementation and the uses of technology in production. Furthermore the definition of skilled/unskilled labour is strongly linked with the patriarchal and capitalist relations available in the labour force. Thus, I argue that productivity increase through technological development and skilled labour within the current conditions of patriarchy and capitalism cannot automatically diminish gender inequality. A detailed investigation which considers the mutually shaping relationship between patriarchy and capitalism is required to answer this question.

Can the state and/or international institutions *interfere with* the inherent logic of profit maximisation in favour of gender equity? I argue that the limitations of the state with respect to diminishing gender inequality are not considered well enough in the win-win scenario. State is suggested to provide incentives and support productivity increase through technology by those scholars. However state cannot tell which people should be hired for what type of work; because not only the means of production, but also the process of production is *privately owned* by bourgeoisie. As a result there are good reasons to be sceptical of state with respect to diminishing gender inequality through technology and skilled labour. Feminist studies that argue for the win-win scenario stress some other state-related demands that can diminish gender inequality (Elson, 2011, Elson et al., 2007a, Elson et al., 2000, Seguino, 2011, Berik et al., 2009, Seguino and Grown, 2007):

Firstly they suggest the state to provide benefits to women and establish *public provisioning of services* including care work, health and education. Secondly, they argue for the state to *hire women as workers in public sector jobs* –especially in health, education, child care and other social services. Both of the above demands are important actions with respect to diminishing gender inequality, and as such, I acknowledge that the feminist struggle should be mobilised around those demands and should be engaged with the state. However I claim that as feminists, we must also be aware of the challenges waiting for us. Such awareness can encourage feminist struggle to define alternative strategies of engaging with the state.

Each and every state needs income in order to respond to above demands of feminists. In her recent study, Seguino (2011) attempts to propose a series of resources to increase states' income under crisis conditions. First, she suggests developed countries support developing countries' income by shifting the budget allocated for *climate change*. Second income resource, she proposes, is the *currency transaction tax*<sup>6</sup>. Finally she suggests the state raises *income taxes on wealthy households*. Seguino's suggestions –especially currency transaction tax and raised income taxes on wealthy households- face with the barriers of capitalist growth. In his study, Chibber (2007) explains why states have to cater to capitalists, whether it is social democrat or not. For him, all type of states depends on a regular income which is *taxation*. No matter whether a state is in favour of working class or not, it depends on tax income. In reality taxes come from income and income comes either from net profit belonging to the capitalist or wage belonging to the worker. Therefore taxes depend on the success of growth. Each and every type of state has to consider the success of growth. If anything that state does increases the cost of production, capitalists will not make investment anymore and the economic growth and the employment ratio will go down. As a result, state always promotes capitalist growth and the capacity of state to diminish gender inequality is limited with the inherent logic of capitalism. Therefore, the main motive that might push the state to spend for gender equity will be gender equity to stimulate growth.

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<sup>6</sup> A currency transaction tax is a tax placed on the use of currency for various types of transactions. This term has been most commonly associated with the financial sector, as opposed to consumption taxes paid by consumers.

Are the limitations of the state determined only by capitalism with respect to diminishing gender inequality? I suggest that state is patriarchal as well as capitalist. The form of state within patriarchy leaves the control of women's labour to men by defending family. The laws, regulations and policies with respect to the labour force, marriage, media, religion, education, sexuality and violence maintain the family which is the locus of the men's control over women. In doing so, state supports gender inequality in the labour force and more broadly in the society.

Needless to say, I agree with engaging with the state for social rights for women such as employment, benefits, public provisioning of services such as care, health and education. However, the limitations of the state with respect to diminishing gender inequality should be examined through the mutual relationship between patriarchy and capitalism. Such an approach might support feminism to improve alternative methods of struggle that can be more effective than *gender mainstreaming*.

Each day, capitalist development disappoints more women in both developed and developing countries in terms of their employment conditions, in terms of their career opportunities, in terms of their obligations at home, in terms of violence against women and in terms of other aspects of gender inequality. Under such conditions defending 'good' capitalism against 'bad' capitalism in relation to patriarchy, needs to be assessed carefully. As Wood explains in the below quotation, there is no such a thing as 'good' capitalism:

*"... the nature and scale of production, to the extent that they answer to the specific imperatives of capital, will be determined not by human needs, social responsibility of the requirements of the state, but by its direct contribution to the production and reproduction of individual capitals. This also means not only that production is likely to take socially wasteful or ecologically destructive forms, and that a huge and efficient productive capacity can coexist with massive poverty, unemployment, urban squalor, inadequate housing, education and health care... in world economy, with an international division of labour and international capital armed with the instruments of debt, imperatives emanating from the advanced capitalist economies operate well beyond the boundaries of the opulent capitalist North. Third World poverty and crisis do not belong to a separate reality, a different historical process "* (Wood, 1991: 164- 165)

In emphasising the win-win scenario under such socially destructive con-

ditions of capitalist development, I argue that feminist praxis is faced with two threats. The first one is feminism to lose its reliability among women in both developed and developing countries. 2007-08 crisis worsened the conditions of women more than any other oppressed group –not only in developing countries, but also in developed countries- and neo-Keynesian policies seem not to be a proper feminist response to such conditions. A feminist response should answer the questions of women in the U.K. who have to pay 72% of the cuts announced after 2007-08 crisis (The Fawcett Society, 2010). A feminist response should explain why women are trapped between the paid and unpaid work in both U.K. and Turkey. The second threat faced by the feminist praxis is to be isolated within the closed circle of culture and sexuality rather than addressing the unity of the material and the social relations with respect to patriarchy. I argue that an enhanced conceptual framework is required to strengthen feminist praxis against such threats. In the following section, I will stress the key features of such conceptual framework.

#### 4. Conclusion

I agree with Gardiner (2000) who claims that an alternative analytical framework which takes account of distinctions and linkages between households and markets is necessary for feminist studies. I argue that historical materialism is still a proper methodological, epistemological and ontological ground upon which an alternative conceptual framework can be established. However a deliberate study is required to avoid a *mechanistic* and *anti-dialectical* interpretation of materialism which has been widely accepted since 1920s. I claim that some of the theoretical problems intrinsic to those studies, which argue for the possibility of the win-win scenario, are also shared by most of Marxist studies. In this respect I do not find Folbre's position significantly different than Braverman (1975, 1976), who claimed that women will be disassociated from housework since all the products and services including *emotional patterns of the life*, will be provided by the market. Furthermore Elson's approach has many similarities to that of Engels (1972). In *Origin of the family, private property and the state*, women's participation to the labour force was perceived to be undermining patriarchy in the working class family. To summarise, I claim that the re-birth of dialectical thought will be an important attempt to improve feminist praxis.

Within the constraints of this paper I will only summarise the cornerstones of an alternative conceptual framework. Nonetheless first of all, the material production of life should not be separated from the social relations. Marx treats the economy itself as a set of social relations. In contrast to the materialism of the political economists, the essence of the materialism of Marx is to socialise and historicise the material base. Wood (1981) stresses that Marx's purpose is to stress the definition of the material by the social, to define the material process of production as a social process. Therefore the *unity of the material and the social* should be investigated again from a feminist perspective which accords it's due to patriarchy.

Secondly, as I argued before, most of those scholars reduce patriarchy to the social practice and ideas that shape the behaviour of people and institutions. In doing so, they divorce women's oppression from men's exploitation of women's labour. Thus, a feminist study shall avoid the impact of economism and it shall limit the definition of patriarchy neither to social power, nor to behavioural codes. An alternative conceptual framework shall provide a detailed account of the dialectical nexus between the social power and the exploitation. Consequently it shall also avoid developing a definition for capitalism limited to the mechanical conception of material production.

Elson (2007a) states that the impact of development on women cannot simply be reduced to the question of whether it is good or bad for women. I argue that changes in patriarchy cannot be reduced simply to the question of whether it is diminishing or strengthening through capitalism either. There is a mutual interaction between patriarchy and capitalism; and there is a necessity for feminist studies to examine the changing character of patriarchy. Walby (2011, 2009, 1997, 1990) examines the new forms of patriarchy under the name of *gender transformations* and enhances her theory with the formulation of neoliberal and social-democratic forms of *gender regimes* in contemporary societies. However Acar Savran (2012) avoids defining a transformation for patriarchy alongside capitalism, instead she argues that in the period we are passing through the *variety of forms of patriarchal relations between men and women* increases. As a result, to be able to define a feminist response to the current global conjuncture, feminist praxis needs to be improved with respect to its capacity to address changes

in patriarchy. As Hartmann suggests, let “us continue to debate and political activity that advances it, learn from our inevitable mistakes and keep on struggling” (Hartmann, 1981: 373).

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