

PROFEMINIST MEN: DISGUISED ALLIES OF FEMINISM IN THE ACADEMIA?

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ABSTRACT

PROFEMINIST MEN: DISGUISED ALLIES OF FEMINISM IN THE ACADEMIA?

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The number of men within the academia who analyze patriarchy, masculinities and gender inequality seem to be increasing in Turkey especially for the last couple of years. This can be considered as an evidence for the influence of feminism over men. Although more men today are interested in those fields of feminism to criticize men's hegemony, it is rather important to know that how much extent they are open to change their relation with patriarchy in order to confront it. This study attempts to provide a critical evaluation of men who are academically interested in struggling against patriarchy. For this aim, in-depth interviews were made with thirteen men in the academia in order to comprehend their standpoint and thoughts about men's engagement with feminism. It is seen that most men in the research group are willing to cooperate with feminists to confront patriarchy. However, it is also found out that it is arduous for men to change their relation with patriarchy because

patriarchy provides men with institutionalized privileges. In this respect, this study argues that male contribution to feminism would be beneficial as much as problematic. Moreover, instead of answering it directly as 'yes' or 'no', this study suggests to respond the main question that whether men would be true allies of feminism by following the change in men in terms of their attitudes towards patriarchy.

Keywords: Men, Feminism, Patriarchy, Men's Change, Profeminism, Studies on Men and Masculinities.

ÖZ

PROFEMINIST ERKEKLER: FEMİNİZMİN AKADEMİDEKİ GİZLİ MÜTTEFİKLERİ Mİ?

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Özellikle son yıllarda akademi içersinde ataerkillik, erkeklikler ve toplumsal cinsiyet eşitsizliği üzerine çalışmalar yapan erkeklerin sayılarının arttığı gözlemlenmektedir. Bu bir anlamda feminizmin erkekler üzerinde bıraktığı etki olarak da yorumlanabilir. Her ne kadar erkek egemenliğini inceleyen ve eleştiren daha çok erkeğin olduğu farkedilse de, bu kişilerin ataerkilliğe karşı mücadele vermek için ataerkillikle kurdukları ilişkiyi değiştirmeye ne kadar açık oldukları önemli bir sorudur. Bu çalışma akademik olarak erkek egemenliğiyle mücadele eden erkeklerin bir değerlendirmesini yapmayı amaçlamaktadır. Bu sebeple erkeklerin feminizmle ilgili düşünce ve duruşlarını anlamak için on üç erkekle derinlemesine görüşme yapılmıştır. Araştırma grubunda görülmüştür ki erkekler ataerkilliğe karşı mücadele vermek için feminist kadınlara katılmak istemektedirler. Öte yandan erkeklerin ataerkilliğin kendilerine sağladığı kurumsal

ayrıcalıklardan vazgeçmeleri ve ataerkillikle kuracakları ilişkiyi yeniden düzenlemeleri oldukça zordur. Bu sebeben ötürü bu çalışma erkeklerin feminizme dahil olmasının önemli bir sorunsal olduğu kadar faydalı olacağını da savunmaktadır. Bununla birlikte bu çalışma erkekler feminizmin gerçek müttefikleri olabilir mi temel sorusunun ‘evet’ ya da ‘hayır’ biçiminde değil, erkeklerin değişimini izleyerek cevaplanmasını tercih etmektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Erkekler, Feminizm, Ataerkillik, Erkeklerin Değişmesi, Profeminizm, Erkekler ve Erkeklikler Üzerine Çalışmalar.

To women who have let me witness their lives

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“Most men don’t realize the impoverishment to their emotional and spiritual lives, the price they pay in personal authenticity and integrity, how they compromise their humanity, how they limit the connections they can have with other people, how they distort their sexuality to live up to core patriarchal values of control. They don’t realize how much they have to live a lie in order to interact on a daily basis with their mothers, wives, sisters, daughters, women friends and co-workers—all members of the group patriarchy oppresses in men’s name. So, the first thing men can begin to reclaim is their sense of aliveness and realness, their connection to themselves and the world—which they may not even realize was missing until they begin to feel its return”

Johnson, *Unraveling the Gender Knot*

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This study is a frank search for hope. It's a hope for a more egalitarian world where speakers' sex is not realized if they do not say so. It is an attempt to do a feminist work which analyzes men's feminist initiatives. This is neither to state differences nor to widen the distance between the sexes. On the contrary, the motivation of this study stems from the belief that it would be our common initiative which will construct the future. We need to listen to each other in order to hear and understand truly. Hence, I have tried to listen to men, in this study who state their shared ambitions with feminists in their struggle against patriarchy as well as other forms of gender based discrimination. Therefore, this study is a search for hope to explore the extent to which words of feminists' have reached men; and moreover to show that we, as feminists, are ready to listen and answer those men if they are as ready to work as feminists in order to engage with common initiatives for a non-patriarchal world that we have been striving for.

The "women's problem" has not been included in the primary problems stated in the agenda of social struggles for a long time, and has been left to be solved merely by women. Hence, when feminists oppose men's gender blind attitudes, and demand women's rights, the mass media (which is also masculine) presents feminists as "men haters" contributing to reinforce most of the negative attitudes towards feminism. The "men haters" image of feminists has been coupled with an assumption that all feminists are lesbian. The "anti-feminist" stance gained power

over the years as feminist women's initiatives have acquired momentum. Nevertheless, feminists have been problematizing men as agents of patriarchy. They have articulated that the burdens of patriarchal system were not only damaging women but society as a whole. In this context, some men have been positively influenced by feminism and paid attention to feminist discourse. These men, who have been engaging with feminism, realize that the system of patriarchy has been impeding women as it is impeding society. All through this time more men and women have recognized the reality of "women's problem". Furthermore, some of these men have started to support feminism as their individual attempts. Yet, feminist women have been very suspicious about men's intentions due to their previous experiences with them. It has been a crucial question for feminists **whether men would leave their privileges that are provided and maintained by the patriarchal system and whether they could really change themselves in practice.** To pose the question in another way; it is important to know **if men can be true allies of feminism.**

This critical question constitutes the main focus of this study. Feminists have been verbalizing women's subordination and the oppression of women due to the system of patriarchy. Today, many academic studies deriving from different branches or strands of social sciences (gender studies and masculinity studies) claim that men are adversely affected by patriarchy, although it is different from women's experiences. Men have started to express their own subordinate position within patriarchy, while some of them have even said that "*masculinity oppresses men more than anybody else!*"¹ This statement could make a shock-effect on many feminists or at least would make them angry when their real life experiences are considered, because though masculinity and patriarchy oppresses men, women have this share of that oppression. This quote can be taken as a reprisal of men against feminism. However, it is better to interpret it, as men are changing and that quote is an endeavor to talk

¹ *The article of Tayfun Atay, Erkeklik en çok erkeği ezer!* Toplum ve Bilim, Güz 2004, volume 101, Birikim yayıncılık, pg 11-31.

about patriarchy. It signifies that some men are ready to talk about patriarchal burdens starting from their own experiences. This should be considered as the outcome of feminism which has opened a new path to emphasize the political importance of personal experiences. Although these men are not many in number, feminism and feminist women would better respond to those attempts of men in order not to lose the potential allies of feminism. In other words, those few men seem to be much closer to understand and support feminism compared to the rest of the society and it would be of benefit to both feminists and those men if any cooperation could be constructed. Therefore, although women have been discussing this issue among themselves since the beginning of the women's movement, it is probably time for feminists in academia to talk about "men's engagement with feminism" when more men are on the scene to state their support into feminism. Motivated by this approach, this study is an attempt to talk about "men's engagement with feminism" within academia. In order to understand men, this study will try to state feminist standpoints of those men whose aim is to struggle against patriarchy.

The study is based on the research conducted with male students either studying at women's studies departments or graduated from other social sciences departments of various universities where they had written their master's theses on feminist theory, gender studies and masculinity studies. These men were interviewed because it has been assumed that they all must have something to say about feminism and patriarchy although they studied in different departments. Moreover, two male scholars were included in the research group who had given courses on feminist theory and gender studies. The reason for choosing graduate students and scholars from academia is due to two reasons. First of all, I didn't find it fruitful to do interviews with men who merely identify themselves as feminists. What I was looking for was a serious intention and endeavor demonstrated by them in order to join the struggle against patriarchy. Besides, and more significantly, I thought if they

had chosen to study feminist issues, this could be taken as an indicator of their intention to problematize patriarchy, because academia also has a masculine atmosphere where men cannot easily talk about their feminist attitudes. Thus I preferred interviewing men from academia and have relied on their testimonies for this study.

In fact, men outside academia might have been included in this study in order to explore their attempts to contribute to the struggle against patriarchy, for instance, men who work in NGOs or in mass media. However, such men were not taken into consideration since the focus of this study was to discover what men in academia could do and have been doing personally or politically to change the patriarchal order.

Initially, I did interviews with seven men who either have been studying or graduated from women's studies departments at the University of Ankara, Ege and Middle East Technical University. One specific difficulty in finding male students in women's studies departments was their limited number. However, I have noticed the increase in the number of men within the field of masculinity studies for the last couple of years. Therefore, four students who had graduated from Anthropology department at Hacettepe University and Marmara University joined the interviews, because they had engaged in either feminist work or masculinity studies during their graduate studies. Although the backgrounds of interviewees varied (some coming from women's studies departments and others from anthropology), they enriched the study. Also, talking to two different groups helped me to identify their differences and commonalities within their approach towards feminism. Last but not least, Mehmet C. Ecevit and Tayfun Atay participated in the interviews from Middle East Technical University and Ankara University as two male scholars of the research group. I have done interviews with thirteen men. I was given the names of some ex-students who also prepared their master's theses on feminist issues and gender

studies but I could not reach all of them as I did not have some of their addresses. I have used the snowball method for reaching male students in different departments. Men who I already know or had met just before the interviews helped me reach the subsequent interviewees. I used In-depth interviewing as the data gathering technique facilitated by a pre-administered question list. Interviews took between one and a half hours at least and close to four hours at maximum. With keeping the feminist methodology in mind, I tried to avoid having a hierarchical relationship between me (researcher) and the respondents (researched). While doing that I tried to share my experiences that I had through participating in feminist groups with the interviewees in order to establish a comfortable dialogue. This was in order to assist them to express their thoughts and own experiences with ease.

There have also been some limitations of this study. The group of thirteen men whom I talked to was small because of the limited number of feminist men in the academia. Thus I did not provide the profile of those men in order not to make generalizations which, actually, is a limitation of the study. Another limitation of the study is that, although it acknowledges the structural character of patriarchy and its intersection with capitalism and class, the questions used in the research mainly focus on patriarchy as an ideology. In other words, during the interviews, I did not ask the respondents to correlate patriarchy with structures and class. This is a subjective choice where I did leave the identification of patriarchy to those men in order to comprehend their understanding of the concept. Moreover, the research group did not include homosexual men because I have not met any homosexual man in these two groups who study either feminist theory or masculinity studies. This is a limitation because the contribution of gay liberation and gay scholarship is crucial for the critical works on heterosexual men and patriarchy. However, the study mentions the crucial contribution of the 'gay liberation and critical works on heterosexual men' in chapter two.

This study consists of seven chapters. The following chapter is the introduction where it provides the theoretical framework and explains the work of both feminist women and men who struggle against patriarchy. It includes four sections: the first section focuses on the different perspectives of feminism towards men through distinct standpoints; such as liberal feminism, Marxist feminism, socialist feminism and radical feminism. The second section continues with men's responses to feminism and the women's movement. This section is mostly to present the influence of feminism over men and state their reactions in either "anti-feminist" or "pro-feminist" stance. In addition, it describes the influence of gay liberation on criticizing the heterosexual characteristic of masculinity, which has been an invaluable attempt to reinforce the struggle against patriarchy.

The third section discusses the responses of feminist women to the men who support feminism as a political standpoint. As it is well-known, feminist theory has been built up on *women's experience* and this section tries to get answers from feminist women whether men's lack of *women's experience* prevents them from producing feminist theory or being feminist. Moreover, this section states what feminist women expect from men to do and not to do in feminist circles. Women's witnessing to changing characteristic of men and masculinities is also taken into consideration in this section.

In the last section of chapter two, the increasing number of profeminist men and their main issues are discussed. Although the literature review lately conceptualizes men who support feminism as 'profeminist', many men in the research group signified that they have doubts about calling themselves as so. Further debate on this issue will be done in the interpretation of research chapters. Finally, this section includes a part which concentrates on the works of the critical studies on men and masculinities.

Chapter three presents the general male perspective towards feminism after a women's movement emerges in Turkey with a modest search through the mass media periodicals, newspapers and books. This chapter is divided into two sections where men's thoughts are presented in two stances of "anti-feminism" and "pro-feminism". Moreover, their opposite approaches from different circles (from left, center and right) towards feminism are presented in both sections of "anti-feminist" and "pro-feminist" stances.

The following three chapters present the findings of the research group. More specifically, chapter four, based on interviews, discusses men's relations with feminism and their mutual contribution to each other. Chapter five presents men's relation with patriarchy and questions the potential of men to change towards the requests of feminist demands for a non-patriarchal world. And as a final research chapter, chapter six represents men's reasons and alternative suggestions to struggle against patriarchy. This chapter also questions whether men do want to join women to confront patriarchy or stay apart from women and carry a separate struggle

CHAPTER II

FEMINIST WOMEN AND PROFEMINIST MEN: PROBLEMATIZING PATRIARCHY

Women have been working for more than a century to achieve equality between sexes. In fact, if it is an endeavor to reach equality within a society where women and men live together, are women solely responsible for altering this inequality? What if men are also uncomfortable or dissatisfied with living in the system of patriarchy and want to express their sentiment? Feminism has been paying attention to women's words and experiences in order to end male domination, but how have men responded to feminism after witnessing distinct feminist arguments, and what have they done to end the inequality between the sexes? To answer these questions, the endeavors of feminist women and the male reactions to feminism should be examined. There are both positive and negative male responses to feminism, and it is important to understand the perspective of men who are against male domination with an emphasis on 'why' and 'how' men can contribute to the creation of non-patriarchal model of society.

This section aims to glance over the feminist critiques of men and male domination which enabled feminists to develop their theorizations on *patriarchy*. In addition, examining the significant feminist perspectives towards men and male domination would open the path for comprehending different aspects of feminism whether they

are against men or against the system of male domination. Acknowledging this question would indirectly enable a reply, through the feminist lens, to the main question of this study: can men be true allies of feminism? This is because feminist progress and women's distinct approaches towards men or patriarchy, and finally towards profeminist men, somehow would evaluate men's potential place and support within feminism from feminist perspective. The following section, after the brief exploration of feminist approaches, will illustrate the different reactions of men to feminism and will concentrate on a small group of men who support feminism through profeminist works. The main arguments of both women and men, which have affected the current works on patriarchy and male domination, will then be discussed in order to renovate our feminist thinking.

2.1. The Feminist Progress

Throughout history, women have been experiencing oppression in public spheres, subordination in intimate and sexual relationships, and exploitation of their labor power in private spheres and in other fields of work. Moreover, there is still unequal treatment of women, invisible to some extent and very distinct from what men experience as the subordination caused from "unequal gender order". Men and male solutions to emancipate all humankind have been insufficient to address women's needs and concerns, and particularly to tackle disorders within the system that affect women's lives. For instance, poverty becomes a much more complex issue for women where women's oppression grounds different manipulations compared to men. To verbalize the distinct and unequal positioning of women, feminism can be generally identified as the attempt of women, speaking on behalf of their own experiences, to resist subordination and to improve the prospects for emancipatory politics at every level of women's lives. Although the concept has no firm meaning,

feminism implies different identifications and standpoints to different women. As Whelehan states, “all feminist positions are founded upon the belief that women suffer from the systematic social injustices because of their sex”, but the difference among feminist positions emerge when “it comes to isolating ‘causes’, or posing ‘solutions’” to foreground the same substantive issues (Whelehan, 1995: 25-26).

Women have made different stands for signifying social injustices and various strategies to struggle; but above all, the privileged position of men, which causes inequality between the sexes, has been the core issue of feminism. In addition, the concept of patriarchy is used to define this superior positioning of men, implying the systemized male domination within the relationships between women and men. However, feminists have been basing women’s oppression on different correlations between men and patriarchy. Some of these feminists problematized the system of patriarchy, whereas other feminists accused men of being the dominant agents of patriarchy. Surveying through the different strands of feminism is therefore important to understand feminism’s initial approaches towards men and male domination which would then help to comprehend men’s responses to feminism.

2.1.1. Widening the Rights of Men to the Rights of Women: Liberal Feminists

In the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, the rise of capitalism with the industrialization process encouraged the language of autonomy and self-improvement which politically motivated individual rights in the name of *citizenship*. The right for suffrage, for instance, extended from upper class to middle class and to other male citizens of the society. In addition, the ideal woman was then defined as a mother nurturing at home, dependent upon her husbands’ income, and the division between public and private spheres restricted women’s access to

political facilities and decision-making mechanisms (Freedman, 2003). Therefore, most nineteenth century feminists concentrated on rights for education, which was seen as a way to facilitate women's entrance into the public sphere in order to be recognized as full citizens.

Mary Wollstonecraft, probably the earliest known feminist thinker, insisted on women's education as she argued that women did not, by nature, have an essence that was more pleasure seeking and pleasure giving than men (Tong, 1995). If women were not characterized by nature, their restriction from civil and political rights due to their lack of capacity in 'reason' had been nothing but fictional. Wollstonecraft advised women to be economically independent of men in order to live the same rational human nature. Although her arguments were somewhat radical, she did not question 'rationality' or the other values of male traits as part of patriarchal system. Instead, she formulized how women should raise their own value to constitute equality with men. It was the same for subsequent major liberal feminist supporters like John Stuart Mill and Harriet Taylor: almost a century later they were celebrating the male-oriented rational way of living. However, compared to Wollstonecraft, Mill and Taylor differed and widened their requests on behalf of women. They believed that giving more opportunity to individuals, not only to men *but also* to women, would adjust the inequalities in society. John Stuart Mill fought for women's suffrage whereas Harriet Taylor encouraged women to acquire rights for *education* at every level, *partnership* in labor and family gains, and *coequal* share in the administration of the law (Tong, 1995). All these attempts to raise women's individual participation in the public sphere through education, property and suffrage veiled the systematical problem of male domination. Most liberal feminist thinkers were blind to questioning men's domestic responsibilities as much as their capability of doing the domestic labor. Moreover, following liberal feminists

in the twentieth century, like Betty Freidan, did not advocate the giving up of women's responsibilities within the household such as 'care-giving motherhood' or sharing this division of labor within the household whilst they merely insisted on women having careers.²

Liberal feminism has a crucial impact on defining the unequal position of women in society, but it was persistently insufficient at exploring the problem. Instead of examining the system of male domination that surpasses individuals, most arguments of liberal feminists, like non-liberal feminists criticized, focused on the ambitions of middle-class women: the bourgeoisie designing their requests to gain the rights to have higher education, work outside the home and equally share the marriage property. Although there were problems that hindered women from celebrating their 'individual rights' within society, the notion of 'individual rights' remained open to question. In that sense, liberal feminists expressed that the problem was the lack of equality between women and men, and not the male-oriented liberal thought or the agents of that thought. Therefore, liberal feminists have been more open to men for two reasons. Firstly, liberal feminists do not identify the problem directly as men. Secondly, "men have had an honorable place in the history of the liberal struggle for women's rights" (Clatterbough, 1990: 38). Marxist feminists criticized those characteristics of liberal feminists and highlighted that improving the unequal conditions for women needs more than changing social inequalities or extending individual rights to women. According to Marxist feminist stand, the capitalist system and women's unseen labor force in the capitalist system has to be recognized to overcome the oppression of women.

² Betty Friedan in *Feminine Mystique* of the 1960s indicates that housewives are bored due to being stuck into the domestic sphere, and Freidan asserts that they are capable of working both in and outside the home at the same time. Twenty years later, in her next book "The Second Stage" she explains that women are tired of being 'superwomen': working and being a mother at the same time. She adds that those careers haven't made women as happy as it was originally thought.

2.1.2. Surpassing Individualism: Marxist and Socialist Feminisms

What Marxist feminism articulates different from liberal feminism is that women's oppression should be understood as a product of the political, social, and economic structures related with capitalism, rather than the result of an individual's actions like in liberal thought. This is because Marxist feminists argue, from the Marxist concept of human nature, 'what women are' can be defined by 'what women do' through their *production* (Tong, 1995). Thus, ending the system of capitalism, which is actually the system of exploitation, would lead to end of the exploitation of women's labor.

To define the exploitation of women, Marxist feminism primarily focused on the institution of the family, where women's labor is unseen and it holds women back from entering the work force in other fields. Margaret Benston, who is a significant Marxist feminist, argued that women's labor is "nonproductive" because women do not sell their labor. "Benston was concerned that unless a woman is freed from her heavy domestic duties, including child care, her entrance into the work force will be a step away from, rather than toward, liberation" (Tong, 1995: 53).

Marxist feminists took the nature and the function of women's work as a primary concern to understand the exploitation of their labor and to end women's oppression. Alison Jaggar criticizes Marxist feminism for not perceiving the patriarchal influence on capitalist exploitation because the mere end of capitalism can not bring the emancipation of women. Although Marxist feminists have extended the critiques on women's oppression to the system of capitalism, it remains insufficient, according to socialist feminists, for not criticizing the male centered arguments of

Marxism. The problem actually stems from the male centered argument of the Marxist left, as Lynne Segal expresses:

A socialist-feminist, I take it for granted, is aware that there is a fundamental power relationship between women and men, with men as the sex dominant in every sphere- cultural, political, economic, sexual, domestic ... [The]... urgent need to rethink the kind of civilization we want, and the kind of human relationships it could foster and encourage, is stymied because the left, and particularly the men in it, are so rooted in what has to change (Segal, 1990: 6-7).

Socialist feminists developed the arguments of Marxist feminism and placed patriarchy in their critiques of capitalism to state women's oppression. For instance, the German radical, Clara Zetkin, led many women in the socialist movement to signify the various concerns of women's work that are different to men's. Like Heidi Hartman asserts, Marxist feminists gave no clues as to why women are subordinate to men inside and outside the family.³ Hence, socialist feminists have developed two distinct ways, dual-system theory and unified-systems theory, to identify women's oppression and to overcome the sex-blind analysis of Marxist feminism. Dual-system theorists, like Juliet Mitchell, conceptualized patriarchy and capitalism as distinct systems that oppress women at the same time. Although this assumption pays attention to the system of patriarchy, Iris Young criticizes dual-system theorists due to their nonmaterial identification. Many dual-system theorists describe patriarchy more like an ideological or psychoanalytic structure rather than a material structure that has a direct influence on women's lives (Tong, 1995). Therefore, Young, a unified systems theorist, suggested the gendered category of "division of labor" to deal with the nonmaterial interpretation of patriarchy of dual-theorists and the gender-blind class analysis of Marxist feminists. Moreover, unified-systems theorists did not separate capitalism from patriarchy when these systems both

³ See 'The unhappy marriage of Marxism and Feminism', Hartmann (1979), which includes critical discussions on the controversial coupling of capitalist and patriarchal system.

controlled women's oppression. Like Young, Alison Jaggar, put forward the concept of "alienation" to analyze women's subordinated position through the systems of capitalism and patriarchy. All these attempts of unified-systems theorists tried to maintain an umbrella concept to use for analyzing women's oppression both in capitalism and patriarchy from a common description. Nevertheless, their conceptualizations to identify patriarchy were not specific enough, because either the concept of "sexual division of labor" or "alienation" was insufficient to address women's various experiences in public and private spheres. Therefore, Tong states they "have to be flawed either because any methodology calling itself Marxist has to make class analysis its priority[,] or because they do not permit women to ask and answer nagging questions about reproduction, sexuality, and the socialization of children" (Tong, 1995:190). As a consequence, socialist feminist notions on patriarchy can remain oversimplified for not considering women's material and diverse experiences of oppression compared to the radical feminists' direct endeavors to eliminate every dominant activity of men over women.

2.1.3. Analyzing Women's Oppression as *Women*: Radical Feminism

"We [radical feminists], in this segment of movement, do not believe that the oppression of women will be ended by giving them a bigger piece of the pie, as Betty Friedan would have it. We believe that the pie itself is rotten" (Hooks, 2003:49)

Radical feminism developed the argument that sexuality has been the basic reason for all oppression of women. According to radical feminists as long as the world continues to base itself on the notion of sexuality, the oppression of women and the system of patriarchy will continue to exist. Hence, the notions of 'femininity' and 'masculinity', which are implications of gender, should be removed to eliminate the separation between the sexes. Kate Millet expresses that patriarchy feeds biological

differences between the sexes which predispose a powerful role for men over women. In order to exceed the patriarchal binaries of 'femininity' and 'masculinity', Millet suggests the construction of androgynous person. Moreover, Mary Daly and Marilyn French challenged the construction of gender but Daly advanced the strategies which women need "far beyond the possibility of an acceptable androgyny, [because] at the end of any road that begins patriarchy" (Tong, 1995: 102). According to radical feminists there is only one way to realize women's liberation, and that is through constructing "women spaces" because men are holding women back. "Women spaces" is due to the need for women to pass over the spaces that men hold because women need to share joy and power with other women, and this very act is mutually reinforcing. Pornography, prostitution, sexual harassment, rape and women battering have been the particular subjects that radical feminists discussed along with abortion, artificial insemination by donor, etc. - all of which are evidence of men's control over women's bodies (Tong, 1995). Radical feminism materially conceptualized patriarchy by expressing which place is filled by whom and tried to remove institutionalized male power. However, radical feminism is criticized for referring to patriarchy as a 'universal phenomenon' instead of acknowledging various patriarchal implications on women in the different places and cultures of the world. Despite the extended critiques on this thought, radical feminism is crucial for gaining very powerful materials for feminism as it inspired the subsequent feminist theorizations on patriarchy.

As a consequence, feminists have given diverse reactions to men and male domination. While liberal feminists try to establish equal opportunities for women as men have in society, Marxist feminists directly target the capitalist system to alter the exploitation of women to reveal women's unrecognized labor. There have been socialist feminists who had the foresight to struggle not only with capitalism but also

with the system of patriarchy in order to emancipate women from their dependencies. And last, but not least, there are radical feminists who have directly questioned men's power over women and identified them as the agents of patriarchy. These approaches of feminists, as mentioned before, enabled the further development of feminist theorizations on patriarchy.

Throughout the 1980s and the early 1990s, varied discussions on patriarchy continued to express the systematic oppression of male dominance. Thus, simply, what is patriarchy? "Patriarchy is not simply another way of saying men" like Johnson states; "a society is patriarchal to the degree that it is *male-dominated*, *male-identified* and *male-centered* (Johnson, 1997: 4-5). Andrea Dworkin (1983) divides patriarchy into two spheres of private patriarchy and public patriarchy in *Right Wing Women: the Politics of Domesticated Females*, which inspired many feminists to develop similar frameworks. Frequently, feminist theorists had discussed the concept of patriarchy usually with its flow of effects from private patriarchy to public patriarchy⁴. Sylvia Walby, in her significant book *Theorizing Patriarchy*, also used the transition between patriarchies and she identified six structures to show the change from private patriarchy to public patriarchy. These structures are the patriarchal mode of production, patriarchal relations in paid work, the patriarchal state, male violence, patriarchal relations in sexuality and patriarchal culture.⁵ Walby showed the structural character of patriarchy and its intersection

⁴ For further writings of feminists on patriarchy see Ann Oakley (1972) *Sex, Gender and Society*, London: Temple Smith; Heidi Hartmann (1979) *The Unhappy Marriage of Marxism and Feminism: towards a more progressive union*, Capital and Class 8(2); Zillah Eisenstein (1981) *The radical future of liberal feminism*, New York: Longman; Christine Delphy (1984) *Close to home: A Materialist Analysis of Women's Oppression*, London: Hutchinson; Sylvia Walby (1990) *Theorizing Patriarchy*, Oxford Blackwell.

⁵ Walby published her famous book *Theorizing Patriarchy* in 1990 just one year after that she published her previous study of an article in *Sociology* journal with the same name, where these structures of patriarchy are taken from (*Sociology* 23: 213-34).

with capitalism, class, state, culture and gender relations. One may ask how these structures strongly influence the patriarchal relations. State, for instance, acts to support patriarchy on various ways such as: “[by] limiting of women’s access to paid work; the criminalization of forms of fertility control; support for the institution of marriage...” (Walby, 1989: 26) Furthermore, asserting state represents class relations within capitalist interests (by controlling women’s paid work for instance) is not sufficient to analyze the whole patriarchal relations. Like Walby continued to express, without considering the impact of gender inequality, both “women’s political struggle on the state” or “the significance of state actions on gender relations” became invisible in the analysis of patriarchy (Walby, 1989).

Before continuing with the concept of patriarchy, it may be beneficiary to express what is meant with *gender relations* for purposes of clarity, whose definition is different than *sex relations* because *gender* is not equal to the meaning of *sex*. It may be congruent to articulate Butler’s conceptualization of sex and gender due to its simplicity:

Originally intended to dispute the biology-is-destiny formulation, the distinction between sex and gender serves the argument that whatever biological intractability sex appears to have, gender is culturally constructed: hence, gender is neither the casual result of sex nor as seemingly fixed as sex. The unity of the subject is thus already potentially contested by the distinction that permits of gender as a multiple interpretation of sex... Gender ought not to be conceived merely as the cultural inscription of the meaning on a pre-given sex (a juridical conception); gender must also designate the very apparatus of production whereby the sexes themselves are established (Butler, 1999: 10-11)

Gender consists more complicated meaning comparing to *sex* thus; focusing on *gender relations* does not imply merely focusing on the relations between men and women. What more is that *gender relations* manifest themselves historically like Ertürk asserts (Ertürk, 2004) As a consequent, Walby’s analysis of patriarchy does

not only imply structural characteristic of patriarchy or its intersection with capitalism, but also signifies the importance of gender relations which are historical as well as they are cultural.

However, the diverse commentaries on the conceptualization of patriarchy have slowly vanished in theoretical studies in time and the concept has loosened its umbrella function due to new challenges.⁶ Another reason why most theorists today, especially gender theorists, do not use the concept as much as before is due to the claim that patriarchy implies ahistorical and very generalizing meaning which is insufficient to recognize specific categorizations such as class, ethnicity...etc. (Connell, 1987). In addition when it is called patriarchy, some profeminist men argue, it directly suspects men and not the system of male domination.

In some radical feminist theories of patriarchy, all men are seen as a coherent 'gender class' with the same vested interests in controlling women. Such analyses are biologically or structurally determinist and the political prognosis is pessimistic... If all men are innately violent and controlling there can be little optimism for change, let alone there ever being any future in which men and women can live their lives together in some form of justice and harmony. (Pease, 2000: 14).

Since feminists have problematized men and the system of patriarchy, men have given various negative and positive reactions to those arguments of feminism. The next section will analyze those distinct responses of men in order to determine their apparent standpoints towards feminism.

⁶ Addition to other reasons, the literature on patriarchy has diminished at a sudden after the 1990s when it intersects with the rise of postmodernism; and divisions in theories started to take the place of grand theories. Bearing this notion in mind, the new literature on gender relations cannot be called entirely a postmodern study area because, in these new works of sociology, divisions and differences are not used to ignore commonalities. Nevertheless, although there is a decline in using the concept of patriarchy comparing to 1990s, it is obvious that the efficiency of the concept is still valid both in theory and practice.

2.2. Men's Responses to Feminism

As men, we've responded to women's movement in different ways. Some of us ignored it, thinking that it would disappear. Some of us felt that it was a dangerous distraction from the central issues of class politics. Some of us were simply excited by it, but we were all, in one way or another, threatened and confused by it, as soon as it touched the everyday reality of our relationship. (Seidler 1991: 64)

It was another question that how men would respond to those arguments of feminist women. Most men “responded with either hostility or stunned silence to women’s liberation movement in its early years, and the ones who did dare to ask questions on this matter tried to answer what did this all have to do with men” (Messner, 1998: 256). Men’s confusion with feminism formed a crack in traditional male roles which is referred to as a ‘crisis in masculinity’. “The rise of feminism in late nineteenth- and early twentieth- century United States provoked a variety of responses among American men and prompted what we might call a crisis of masculinity, because the meanings that had constituted traditional gender definitions were challenged” (Kimmel, 1987: 262). All the trouble which was derived from the ‘crisis in masculinity’ entailed a new question, namely that of how can men overcome this crisis? The asking of this question flourished causing disputes among men and sparked the establishment of various men’s movements in response to feminism in the United States.

Kimmel, Messner and Hearn highlight different groupings within men’s movements in response to feminism. Kimmel identifies three groups of men such as: anti-feminist, masculinist and profeminist. Whereas Messner, in his book, *Politics of Masculinities: Men in Movements*, uses the two simpler groupings of conservative and moderate men within the anti-feminist men’s rights movement and the progressive wing which is, in fact, the profeminist movement. Hearn states that men’s responses are more detailed and different than Kimmel and Messner. In addition to men’s rights, male backlash and profeminist wings, he also defines

groups of pro-male celebration, anti-sexism and effeminism. This study will follow Kimmel's general classification due to the importance of the basic division between the anti-feminist and the profeminist movement, and because every group of U.S. men's movements does not relate with the aim of this study.

As long as men have started to re-identify themselves in terms of the arguments of feminism, a division has occurred in the responses of men. By the mid- to late 1970s there were basically two movements which were quite distinct at their origins, and these were: the anti-feminist men's rights movement and the anti-sexist (which would subsequently be called profeminist) men's movement. And before proceeding to the different disputes among men's movements in the following section, it is noticeable to keep in mind that most of these groups of men and men's movements in U.S. and in Europe today have loosened their previous energy and impact. However, while some men's groups have seriously declined both in number and activity; some groups changed their structure and have kept producing works in different fields like the profeminist studies within academe, which this study will particularly focus on later.

2.2.1. Men against Feminism

Although this study will particularly concentrate on profeminist attempts, men's reactions to feminism often have not been in an embracing manner. On the contrary, the majority of men's groups, which are assumed to be conservative or moderate in Messner's terms, feel uncomfortable with feminist arguments. These men call themselves 'anti-feminist' because they claim that male sex roles are not dominant or privileged as feminists believe. This group of men argue that the circumstances and the burdens of being male and the heavy responsibilities of 'male sex roles' are not well-known. Contrarily, anti-feminist men continue, women have broken the natural circulation and orders of Christianity by pushing the limits of the public

sphere. Therefore, it would be better for women to turn back to their private domains (Kimmel, 1987). This movement of anti-feminist men argues that if masculinity has gone through a crisis, it is women's fault, and the solution lies with the revival of the subordination of women.

The other group of men are masculinists, which are not directly against feminism but ignore the feminist statement of 'women's subordination'. Some members of this group were previously supporting feminist arguments until they realized that they couldn't obtain any approval from feminists on the issue of men's subordination. Hence, masculinist men state their disadvantaged position in society where women have the control and domination over men. From this perspective, feminists have been reducing the importance of men and masculinity in their relationships; for instance, fathers do not have as much rights as mothers do within the home. In their further works, masculinists claimed that women are powerful and men are powerless in the private sphere, and men should realize that they need rights to liberate themselves. Arguments of masculinist men provoked the men's rights movement and men's rights organizations. They have been stressing the heavy responsibilities of being male. However, these discussions about men's rights do not mean turning back to traditional masculine roles or preserving the old notions of manhood. They aim to revisit the male roles and construct new sex-roles in order to emancipate men.⁷ Nevertheless, they have been slow to see the oppressive relationship between the sexes simply because they use the language of 'sex-roles'.⁸ As Messner

⁷ Clatterbough in his book *Contemporary perspectives on Masculinity* remarks that there are two main publications embellished in America to emphasize the men's rights movement which are considered as milestones: one is Herb Goldberg's *The Hazards of Being Male* (1976); the other is an article, written in 1988 by Richard Haddad "The Men's Liberation Movement: A perspective" (Clatterbough, 2000: 62) Another crucial work is Warren Farrell's *Why Men are the Way They Are* (1986). Farrell was a liberal profeminist and changed in time due to the hurt of women's responses to men. Lastly, there is Robert Bly's *Iron John: a book about men* (1990) which is perhaps the most significant work of the masculinist movement and made quite a sensation in America.

⁸ Although sex-role theory's origins predate feminism, starting with Parson's structuralist notion and Freud's psychoanalysis, it was revised by feminists in the late 1960s to demonstrate its restrictions.

indicates, men's rights arguments are far from making an institutional critique and they have been assembling on an individual pattern (Messner, 1998).

Messner highlights three common lived processes from the arguments of men's rights activists as such:

First is the claim of having been an early and ardent supporter of (liberal) feminism in hopes that it would free women and men from the shackles of sexism. Second is the use of the language of sex-role theory that equates sexist thoughts and attitudes with oppression without discussing gendered institutional arrangements and inter group relations. And last is a sense of hurt and outrage when women do not agree that men's issues are symmetrical with those faced by women, coupled with an enthusiastic embrace of an angry and aggressive anti-feminist men's rights discourse and practice (Messner, 1998: 269)

From 1977 onwards small groups have been flourishing to rally support for men's rights in society. First they were calling themselves the 'Free Men'. Then, they preferred to use the "Coalition of Free Men" to define themselves. Finally they established the "National Congress for Men" in 1980s (Clatterbough, 2000). These groups were raising questions about the sex-roles of men and of fatherhood in order to give men an awareness which would then put them into a conflicting position; in other words, "Men's rights groups have found themselves split between men who seek to pursue exclusive agenda of father's rights and men who want to talk about a wider agenda [the oppressive nature of traditional masculinity]" (Clatterbaugh, 2000: 891). This long-term split without unification of common strategies led to a substantial decline among the supporters of the men's rights movement. These men, in the long run, could not sustain their arguments against feminism.⁹

Sex-role theory focuses on sexes as women or men and is not concerned with gender relations. Therefore, it has been ineffective at emphasizing power relations and domination between the sexes.

⁹ In Turkey, there have been two recent books which can be given as examples of anti-feminist and masculinist thoughts. *Power with Skirts* by Sinan Akyüz is an anti-feminist book where he presents his arguments against feminists and praises the values of real men and manhood. He dedicates his

2.2.2. Men Supporting Feminism

Contrary to anti-feminist and men's rights activists, another group of men who advocated feminist principles launched the profeminist men's movement in the mid-1970s.¹⁰ In order to dissolve the 'crisis in masculinity' these men initially acknowledged feminist goals and start to struggle against patriarchy. Kimmel identifies their mission as such "Profeminist men believe that their ability to transform masculinity is inspired and made possible by the women's movement and that the social changes precipitated by the modernist feminist movement contain, in both theory and practice, significant and desirable changes for men as well, including a vehicle for the resolution of the contemporary crisis of masculinity" (Kimmel, 1987: 280). Profeminist men argue that men are also badly affected by the system of patriarchy because they are isolated from their emotions within their relationships and are pushed into being competitive in public in order to gain and preserve power over women and other men. Like Betty Friedan's famous work *feminine mystique*, Jack Sawyer mentioned the exaggerated features of masculinity in *masculine mystique* in 1974.¹¹

book to Hıncal Uluç whom he believed set a real role model for men. And the other book is Zafer Kılıç's *The Great "Stupid" Men* in which he asserts that it is all men's fault in letting women ask so much from men. This book is dedicated to his father.

¹⁰ For the first classical writings of profeminist men, see Snodgrass, Jon (1977) *A Book of Readings for Men against Sexism*, Albion, California: Times Change Press.

¹¹ See also: Sawyer, Jack (1974) "On Male Liberation" In *Men and Masculinities*, ed. Joseph Pleck and Jack Sawyer, New York: Prentice Hall, p. 170-73, and another influential book by Joseph Pleck's *The Myth of Masculinity* (1981). For the literature about the history of profeminist men in United States, see Kimmel (1992) *Against the Tide: Profeminist Men in the United States, 1796-1990*.

According to Clatterbaugh, the feminist and profeminist movement has some commonalities in terms of their implications in America. For instance, while the feminist movement had its strands like liberal feminism, radical feminism, or black feminism, the profeminist men's movement also divided into some strands like radical and liberal profeminism.¹² Moreover, similar to the move of feminists into academe, profeminist men have also made a place in academe to criticize men and male domination (Clatterbough, 2000).¹³

Commonly, the profeminist movement put emphasis on the power relations which illustrate the unequal division of power between the sexes. Profeminist men assume that gender inequality is also damaging and *dehumanizing* for men like Johnson asserts: "when men join the movement against patriarchy, they can begin to undo the costs of participating in an oppressive system as the dominant group...Most men don't realize...how they compromise their humanity,...how they distort their sexuality to live up to care patriarchal values of control" (Johnson, 1997: 252). Therefore, profeminist men declare that they share the feminist ambition of eliminating men's privileged position within society: "This movement tended to emphasize the primary importance of joining with women to confront patriarchy, with the goal of doing away with men's institutionalized privileges. Patriarchy may dehumanize men, profeminists argued, but the costs of masculinity are linked to men's power" (Messner, 1998: 256).

¹² For further information about divisions in feminism that affect men's thoughts see Michael Messner, *Politics of Masculinities*, 1997 page 49-63.

¹³ Profeminist men within academe criticize male sex roles and men's relationship with power. They recognize that sex-role theory has many limitations with regard to analyzing power in men's lives. Therefore, masculinity is not only defined with sex-roles by profeminist academicians but the analysis of power relations also takes crucial place in their studies. Brittan's book is a good example of a psychological work on masculinity that includes an analysis of power relations. Brittan (1989) *Masculinity and Power*, New York: Basil Blackwell.

Profeminist men's focus on changing power relations led to the formation of consciousness-raising (CR) groups again following feminists. There were different sympathies towards feminism that inspired distinct groups of profeminists. Based on the importance of women's experience, these groups pinpoint men's experiences in order to criticize, change and create more egalitarian standards for anti-sexist men. Some anti-patriarchy organizations have been established to practice anti-sexist politics like the *National Organization for Men against Sexism* (NOMAS) which has been the most significant anti-sexist group in the United States. In addition to broadening anti-sexist politics an anti-sexist periodical, *Achilles Heel*, was produced in Britain. A number of academic journals and publications came out in 1970s and 1980s such as "Unbecoming Men" or "Gentle Men for Gender Justice" which was later renamed as "Changing Men: Issues in Gender, Sex and Politics". As well as the initial publications based on men's supportive attitudes, profeminist men have founded national organizations which are related to the subjects of 'Men and Masculinity'.¹⁴ The first national congress on this issue was held in 1974 in Tennessee (U.S.) under the auspices of the Women's Studies Program at the University of Tennessee (Clatterbough, 2000).

Before continuing with the major debates in the studies of profeminist men, one development which helped to strengthen the criticism of male domination should be cited due to its invaluable contribution to anti-sexist men's politics. It was the gay liberation movement that seriously highlighted the problem of male domination in society.

¹⁴ By the mid-1970s, men's profeminism had begun in Berkeley with East Bay Men's Center (EBMC) and it was different from men's rights group. For further info, see Messner "The limits of males sex role" page 271.

2.2.3. Gay liberation and Critical Works on Heterosexual Men

The category of sex is the political category that founds society as heterosexual.

-Monique Wittig

It (women's mothering) creates heterosexual asymmetries which reproduce the family and marriage, but leave women with needs that lead them to care for children, and men with capacities for participation in the alienated work world.

-Nancy Chodorow

Gay activists problematized male domination and particularly the hegemony of heterosexual men and the patriarchal heterosexist ideology in society. Connell depicts the foundation and impact of the organization of Gay Liberation as such: "It was sparked by the 196[9] Stonewall riot in New York when there was resistances to police that were raiding a gay bar. Close association with radical feminism, also growing explosively at the time and the broad 1960s challenge to establish power, allowed Gay Liberation to mount an explicit challenge to hegemonic masculinity and the gender order in which it was embedded" (Connell, 1995: 217). These men support the sexual politics which radical feminists also do, and they have done numerous works to unveil the sexual politics of homosexuality whilst citing the oppressive heterosexist structure of male domination. In problematizing gay sexuality, the gay movement has questioned the power and oppression of heterosexual men over other men. In addition to their contributions, most of the books on masculinity or the men's movement do not mention the politics of homosexual men as Carrigan, Connell and Lee complains: "Homosexuality is a theoretical embarrassment to sociobiologists and social learning theorists alike, and a practical embarrassment to the men's movement" (Carrigan, Connell, Lee 1985:

584). However, the gay movement and afterwards, gay scholarship, have been a major force for the development of critical studies on men (Hearn, 1998: 784).

Moreover, the gay movement, when it was first emerged, used to have more radical questions for social legitimating and traditional practices. It was against the institution of the family which was seen a product of heterosexist ideology. Subsequently, it relaxed its revolutionary impulses and changed its campaigns to areas like social rights for homosexual people (and families) in society. Despite the weakening in its radical vein, the gay liberation movement has increased the alternatives and possibilities in the struggle against men's oppressing heterosexist society. It is still trying to find anti-sexist answers for both homosexual and heterosexual people as it states with its famous motto: "every straight man is a target for gay liberation".¹⁵

The proceeding sections will center particularly on the issues of profeminist men and their standpoint relative to feminism in order to comprehend and analyze alternative ways of reinforcing the struggle against male domination. However, before shedding light on profeminist issues, it is vital to understand what feminists would say when feminism is embraced by some men to gain a political position in society. Feminism has been constituted on women and their experiences since the early years, and a critical question to be answered is what feminists would do if some men wanted to join women to confront patriarchy. The following section makes an effort to perceive the understanding of feminist women on this issue.

¹⁵ KAOS GL, which is one of the most significant gay and lesbian NGOs in Turkey, created a slogan to highlight the fundamental need to end sexism both for heterosexual and homosexual people: "the salvation of homosexuals would also emancipate the heterosexuals".

2.3. Feminist Responses to Profeminist Attempts

The first section of this chapter analyzed the feminists' distinct approaches towards men through liberal, Marxist, socialist and radical feminism. As presented in the previous section, it is obvious that feminism has been strongly affecting men as they have given different reactions back to feminism. Before following the works of profeminist men, one may ask, what would feminists say if some of those men - profeminist men - requested a place in the feminist struggle against patriarchy? As some feminist women may ask, how could men contribute to the struggle against male domination? Women have long been at the forefront verbalizing patriarchy, so it is crucial to ask them whether they believe men can hold the responsibility of criticizing male domination. In addition, what would feminist women achieve with the contribution of men? Answering these questions is as vital for feminism as it is to profeminism, where feminists should give their own reaction, if so men assert their works are referenced and inspired by the attempts of feminists.

Sandra Harding, a famous feminist theorist, states her confusion about why men are still out of feminist studies as such:

Are we really supposed to assume that our enthusiastic men students and colleagues are unable to think for themselves and come up with original feminist understandings, just as our women students and colleagues learn to do? Are men only supposed to parrot what women feminists say? Not only is such an assumption unreasonable in itself; it is also paradoxical since many of us assume that European American feminists are perfectly capable of using the insights of women from other parts of the world to generate important anti-racist and anti-imperialist insights of our own. So how could it be that no men can create anti-sexist, anti-androcentric, feminist thought? (Harding, 1998: 172)

Later, she contemplates what kind of knowledge men can produce in order to contribute to feminist knowledge and with which theory or from which direction.

She searches for possible contributions from men to “feminist thinking that are encouraged or permitted by major contemporary Western public agenda feminist theories...[because] it can show that the major public agenda feminist movements and their associated theoretical frameworks each do make available arguments about what can be men’s distinctive contributions to feminist theory” (Harding, 1998: 174). Thus, she discusses different standpoints of feminism, such as liberal feminism, Marxist feminism, radical feminism and socialist feminism, with a new perspective in order to open a place for men in them. Nevertheless, her discussion is trapped in the same points of those standpoints’ limitations. For instance, Marxist feminism “offers men the possibility of powerful feminist subjectivities of the sort Marx and Engels themselves possessed, it cannot yet offer them the possibility of gender-distinctive gender subjectivities” (Harding, 1998: 179). Despite her attempt to place men in the existing feminist standpoints, her suggested argument is limited and not sufficient enough to demonstrate that men can contribute to feminist knowledge. However, Harding also discusses how men’s progressive studies can relate to the varied fields of feminist studies, such as multicultural and global feminism, and the queer public agenda, as much as studies on men and masculinities (Harding, 1998). Harding, without naming what they are, also acknowledges there might be probable limitations and critiques of men’s contributions to feminism, but consequently, she accepts the notion that men can be subjects (producers) of feminist thought.

Harding is not the only feminist woman who directly argues for men’s possible contribution to feminist thought. Bartky, who wrote the foreword to the book *Men Doing Feminism*¹⁶ states that men were absent in the development of feminist politics and practice due to the feminist thinking that *all* men oppress *all* women:

¹⁶ See Digby, T. eds. (1998) *Men Doing Feminism*, Routledge, London.

“Given the central role played by the raising consciousness in women-only venues, and given the closeness of theory and experience, it seemed obvious that men had no role to play in the development of feminist theory or feminist politics. Anyhow, we told each other, ‘all men oppress all women’¹⁷” She also remarks that although the aim of second wave feminism was not directed at men, it was also embraced by men: “Second wave feminism did not beam its messages primarily to men, but I find it serendipitous that many men have received them nonetheless” (Bartky, 1998: xiv). As Bartky expresses, men have become more interested in responding to feminism especially after the influence of the second-wave women’s movement.

Nevertheless, men’s relation to feminism has always been problematic due to the epistemological acceptance of feminism. “Feminism has traditionally viewed feminist knowledge and politics as based in women’s common experiences of oppression” (Ashe, 2004: 187). Women have been oppressed by the system of patriarchy, thus to completely understand the *women’s experiences of oppression* it requires actually going through such experiences *as* a woman. Therefore, according to that notion, it can only be a woman who can truly understand feminist politics and produce feminist knowledge of feminist theory. At this point one may ask if feminism is developed from the *women’s experiences*, which are the experiences of oppression, can men fully understand women and their experiences in order to join feminism and confront patriarchy. Heath, in his early writing on “male feminism” answers this question as such:

Men are the objects, part of the analysis, agents of the structure to be transformed, representatives in, carriers of the patriarchal mode; and my desire to be subject there too in feminism-to be a feminist- is then only also the last feint in the long history of *their* colonization. Which does not mean, of course not, that I can do

¹⁷ This explicit statement of feminism was used in The Redstockings Manifesto which appeared in New York in July, 1969.

nothing in my life, that no actions are open to me, that I cannot respond to and change for feminism (that would be a variant on the usual justification for the status quo, men are men and that's that); it just mean that ...I am not where they [feminist women] are and I cannot pretend to be... For a man the negotiation is blocked, doubly contradictory: his experience is her oppression, and at the end of whatever negotiation he might make he can only always also confront the fact that feminism starts from there. (Heath, 1987: 1-2)

As a reply to Heath's statement Jardine develops a counter argument on the question of what men can pragmatically do in feminism either as men or as feminists:

You could read women's writing—write on it and teach it...You could recognize your debts to feminism in writing. While doing so you could watch out for the 'shoulds' and 'should-nots' and stop being so reductive. Please don't make a mythology—in the Barthesian sense—out of feminism...You could critique your male colleagues on the issue of feminism...And the most important, you yourselves could stop being *reactive* to feminism and start being *active* feminists-- your cultural positionality as men allows you to! (Jardine, 1987: 60-61).

Jardine, contrary to Heath, emphasizes the potential of men's active positioning within feminism. Ashe is another feminist woman who asserts that men's relationship with feminism should be closer: "It is in charting the effects of male experience that feminism can gain a fuller and more sophisticated understanding of the possibilities for men to reformulate their identities in non-oppressive ways. Advances in theory have facilitated this type of analysis, and it is now time for feminism to remove the experiential bar to male feminism" (Ashe, 2004: 202). What is meant by "experiential bar to male feminism" is women's experience as this prevents men from joining feminism to speak as feminists as much as to produce feminist knowledge. Ashe wants to stress that feminist resistance can be harmful not only to men who want to contribute to feminist theory, but also to feminist struggle due to obstacle producing further politics in feminism. Despite the debate being valid about men having a limited approach to feminist theory due to a fundamental lack of women's experience, feminists have suggested work that men can undertake in feminist theory. For instance, Jardine states that men have at least twenty years of

feminist theory to take seriously and, at the most general levels, men could take on some of the symbolic fields mostly addressed by feminist theory; for instance, studying the deeper realms of psychoanalytic inquiry, or working on inter-male relationships in the post-feminism era (Jardine, 1987).

On the other hand, Whelehan spawned a counter discussion on the conceptualization of ‘male feminism’ as Ashe puts above, and states her confusion if men still pose the question “who owns feminism” when the feminist outcome has already moved into a position of celebration and acceptance of heterogeneity: “it is interesting that why such men are not content to be ‘profeminist’, or ‘anti-patriarchal’; and why therefore, the question of the ‘right’ to a feminist identity itself seems to be at stake” (Whelehan, 1995: 185-186). Actually these questions within feminism forced anti-sexist men or men from the progressive male movement to invent the new concept of *profeminism* in the United States as this implies men’s parallel support the goals of feminism without owning it. “Profeminist men began to lay the groundwork for this perspective in the late 1960s. Deeply affected by the ideas of feminism, they met in order to discuss the impact of feminism on their lives...[profeminist men acknowledged] society is sexist, that women are discriminated against and dominated by men, and that women are objectified sexually and excluded from many, if not most, areas of power that are open to men” (Clatterbough, 1990: 37). However this concept is not internalized by most of the “feminist” male scholars or activists in Europe as much as it is in America.¹⁸ However, this concept does not encapsulate a profound ideology like feminism does. It generally refers to men’s close relationship with and support for feminism and feminist ideology. In addition,

¹⁸ While many American scholars have introduced themselves as profeminist within their works for the last twenty years, some members of academe in Europe have just started to consider themselves profeminist.

profeminism isn't mass movement like feminist movement, rather it involves individual men and groups of men who work against the oppression of patriarchy.¹⁹

Feminism and feminists have been becoming more open to men's contributions, and this is especially true after 1990s due to the efforts of the profeminists. These developments demonstrate that some men want to have the responsibility of criticizing male domination and patriarchy. Nevertheless, men's support of feminism needs to be cautions at some levels. For instance, like Whelehan expresses, men's desire to support feminism should not be merely 'servicing' roles where men are being in the role of servicing to women and women's movement, because this would suggest an apolitical position for men in feminism (Whelehan, 1995). Additionally, and as Harding asserts above, men ought to develop their own political stand in feminism which is more than simply parroting pre-existing feminist arguments. Jardine develops an argument on the question of what feminists want from men as such: "And what do feminists want? If you forgive me my directness, we do not want you [men] to *mimic* us, to become the same as us; we don't want your pathos or your guilt; and we don't want even your admiration (even if it's nice to get it once in a while). What we want, I would even say what we need, is your *work*. We need you to get down to serious work. And like all serious work, that involves struggle and pain" (Jardine, 1987:60). The profeminist men's stand has gained strength with these urgings and fed feminist thinking by providing new fields of research on men, male domination and masculinities. Of course, all these developments help to renovate the identification of 'feminism' in current works.

¹⁹ Whelehan recognizes some men who have indirectly contributed to feminist theory; however. their works may not be called feminist (Whelehan, 1995). Many post-structuralist theorists contribute to social sciences **within** their theoretical frameworks, but these theorists like Jacques Derrida, Robert Scholes or Terry Eagleton cannot be called profeminists even though their work has contributed to feminist theory. This is because feminism asks for definite works that are against women's oppression and the interests of patriarchy.

Socialist feminist, Lynne Segal, in her book *Why Feminism*, envisages such a feminist consciousness for this century: “we need collective efforts to find solutions when the dreams and realities of specific groups of **women and men** are most awry; we need its potential, at its most thoughtful, to embrace complexity and conflict in the experiences of individual **women and men**, as the resilience of images of **masculinity** as power are shaken by the actualities of shifting gender dynamics and the fragilities of gendered and sexual identities” (Segal,1999:8). Hearn in his book states that “feminism has shown the importance of the personal experience, the political nature of the personal, the personal nature of political, [and] the interrelation of the private and the public” (Hearn, 1992:18). That is why profeminist men and their works are focusing on the personal experiences of men and men’s lives within the new field of *the studies on men and masculinities*, which is derived from feminism.²⁰ These profeminist works primarily try to understand men’s power and domination over women and other men in order to confront the system of patriarchy as *men*. Like many feminists today agree, the studies on men and masculinities can benefit feminist theory by reinforcing the levels of struggle against male domination. “Feminist thinkers are benefiting from the theoretical insights and empirical findings of masculinity studies that concern the complex asymmetries, changing histories, local conditions, and institutional variances of gender in a wide variety of specific settings.” (Gardiner, 2005: 47). After Gardiner’s statement, one

²⁰ The studies on men were initially called **Men’s Studies**. This conceptualization wasn’t recognized by many profeminists and feminists due to its contradictory implication on Women’s Studies. Therefore, Masculinity Studies emerged in another field concentrating on men’s lives in order to unveil the patriarchal circulation in daily ‘normalized’ practices of men. Nevertheless, the conceptualization was still centering on ‘men’ which was a risk to justify his dominant place within the studies. Hearn asserted to use “Critical Studies on Men and Masculinities” which is actually examining men and male dominance through men’s relationships with women, children and other men. The latest study in this field, which was edited by three of the field’s most renowned theorists, is titled *The Handbook of the Studies on Men and Masculinities*, inferring that future studies would be following in this tradition.

might ask what lack is in feminist perspective that theoretical insights and empirical findings of masculinity studies can benefit feminism. Furthermore, why is the analysis of men and their relationship with women crucial for feminism to understand? Segal reasons that knowing your 'enemy' is sufficient to answer the question: "For the success of women's struggle against men's habitual power, knowing the forces of opposition lined up against women's full autonomy and equality will always be necessary. But feminists share little agreement about the nature of this 'enemy'" (Segal, 1990:5).

Feminism has been studying women's oppression through the experiences of women. While men practice the experiences of oppression, domination and power which are the variable implications of patriarchy, learning these constructions and knowing these practices would help to change the current motives of men. Ertürk accords this thought by urging that "it has become clear that women's empowerment and the achievement of equality between men and women requires an understanding of how masculinity as well as femininity is historically constructed and reproduced under diverse and changing conditions" (Ertürk, 2004: 4). In addition, studying men and masculinities is an expanded research field which requires the symbolic and material dimensions of power to be acknowledged in both personal and public structures as Sarah C. White expresses: "Making the issue of masculinity therefore means not only focusing on men, but on the institutions, cultures, and practices that sustain gender equality along with other forms of domination, such as race and class. This will involve questioning symbolic as well as material dimensions of power" (White, 1997:21-22). Either as a personal practice or as a cultural form, masculinity cannot be isolated from the institutional context which is unquestionably related to women's oppression. Hence, studying these subject matters are attempts to

restructure the gendered society, which would benefit the feminist desire to live in a more equivalent society for both sexes.

Contrary to most of the welcoming notions of feminist women about profeminist men and their studies on men and masculinities, Segal poses critical questions that examine men's real motivation for wanting a more gender equal relationship. She asks, "How can men change?" or "can men really change?" - casting some doubt upon men. In her book *Slow Motion: Changing Masculinities, Changing Men* she shows how the close relationship between power and masculinity resulted from wide social relations within society (Segal, 1993). In addition, she underpins men's resistance to change, which is not in fact related with men's incapacity or psychological obstinacy: "...the extent and direction of change has not been arbitrary. For heterosexual men, change has occurred when and where the social as well as the individual possibilities for it have been greatest, and in particular where *women's power to demand change in men* has been greatest" (Segal, 1993: 630). Segal emphasizes women's demand for men to change, and this coincides with Ashe's assumption that if feminism can contemplate the possibility of accepting male experiences in feminism, it would have stronger influence on men when requesting to change their privileges (Ashes, 2004).

Segal criticizes men and warns feminists against a contradiction. She asserts that while their behaviors seem to be becoming more egalitarian, their male privileges and power could remain as unchanged as ever at its core. For instance, "...the transformation of men [as to spend more time within the house like some feminists requested] allowed them to enjoy fatherhood and intimacy with women and each other more fully, as simple giving men Best of Both Worlds" (Segal, 1993: 634). She also warns that there is not a fixed, structured "masculinity" style; there are

various 'masculinities' deriving from different ideological struggles that feminists should consider. Furthermore, Segal agrees with the idea that situating and knowing masculinities would shape the type and the women's demands from men as well. It seems, for most of the feminists, that men's relationship to feminism and, moreover, to masculinity studies is critical in order to reinforce the struggle against male domination while, at the same time, these emerging interests of men should be followed by feminist women. This track of feminists would also help not to lose men's focus from the relation to women.

This section has focused on feminist women's responses to men who have the aim of supporting feminism. Although women have been trying to understand men and their attempts to embrace feminism, feminist women still have doubts about men's interest in feminism, which is due to yet unknown practices. For that reason, feminists' responses to profeminist approaches fill a crucial space to break the feminist resistance towards men as much as to watch men's practices within feminism. The following section will continue with the works and issues of profeminist men which would help the study to reach a dialogic style between women and profeminist men, rather than single-sided statements.

2.4. Profeminist²¹ Men and the Main Issues of Profeminism

I think one of the reasons that many men have felt both deeply jealous and drawn to the women's movement and personal politics, has been a sense that the instrumentalism of life had been cracked by women, and somehow, a sense of what is important in human life has been rediscovered in the questions the women's movement was asking.

From Seidler in Recreating Sexual Politics (1991)

This section will particularly try to comprehend profeminist men's relationship to feminism, discuss the main concepts of profeminist men and present profeminist arguments. What is meant by profeminism in this study can be followed by Kimmel's identification: "Profeminism [is] a position that acknowledges men's experience without privileging it,.... to both adequately analyze men's aggregate power, and also describe the ways in which individual men are both privileged by that social level of power and feel powerless in the face of it" (Kimmell, 1998: 64). Like the questions asked in the previous section, one may ask why some men try to identify or relate themselves with feminism, and how can they study or work against patriarchy as men? Why do some men want to change, and do these men really desire a fundamental change to their patriarchal privileges? The study has already shown the thoughts and concerns of feminist women, and this section will continue with the statements of profeminist men that pertain to the questions that were asked above.

²¹ There is a discussion raised by Harry Brod as to whether 'pro-feminism' with a hyphen or without, 'profeminism', is politically correct in use. He asserts that there is a serious, but unrecognized, ideological difference between the two. 'Pro-feminist' is used by those men who think that the word "feminist" should be exclusively reserved for women, and they therefore prefer pro with hyphen to further support feminism. On the other hand, Brod prefers to use the concept without a hyphen because he advocates that 'pro-feminism' distances men from feminism. This study will continue by using 'profeminism' in order to follow those men who have been working in this field and identifying the concept as 'profeminist'. For further writings, see Brod, *To Be a Man or Not to Be a Man- That is the Feminist Question* in *Men Doing Feminism*, 1998.

Connell, who is one of the most well known theorists in the field of men and masculinities, stated his reasoning for struggling against patriarchy in his famous book *Gender and Power*:

- (1) Even the beneficiaries of an oppressive system can come to see its oppressiveness, especially the way it poisons areas of life they share.
- (2) Heterosexual men are often committed in important ways to women- their wives and lovers, mothers and sisters, daughters and nieces, co-workers- and may desire better lives for them. Especially they may see the point of creating more civilized and peaceable sexual arrangements for their children, even at the cost of their own privileges.
- (3) Heterosexual men are not all the same or united, and many do suffer some injury from the present system. The oppression of gays, for instance, has a backwash damaging to effeminate or unassertive heterosexuals.
- (4) Change in gender relations is happening anyway, and on a large scale. A good many heterosexual men recognize that they cannot cling to the past and want some new directions.
- (5) Heterosexual men are not excluded from the basic human capacity to share experiences, feelings and hopes. This ability is often blunted, but the capacity for caring and identification is not necessarily killed. The question is what circumstances might call it out. (Connell, 1987: xiii)

This statement, undoubtedly, is not only to a self-confession from Connell; but it is, at least, designed to appeal to feminist women and men, especially in academe, who have distanced men from the works of gender studies and feminists theory. Kimmel articulates that profeminist men must stand in front of other men as feminist's cheerleaders, allies, and foot soldiers, and states that there is no other choice for women and men who embrace a vision of sexual equality and gender justice (Kimmel, 1998).

While profeminist men such as Connell stress men's support of feminism, Kimmel draws attention to an opposite feedback coming from two groups of men and women. He reveals that it hasn't just been feminist women who have resisted to men's relationship with feminism; the works of profeminist men are also doubted, or

feared, by other men who think that supporting feminism represents an ‘abnormal’ stance for men. Kimmel complains about this situation:

What are these two groups [women and men] so afraid of? Why can’t men do feminism, or at least be seen to support feminism? After all, feminism provides both women *and men* with an extraordinarily powerful analytic prism through which to understand their lives, and a political and moral imperative to transform the unequal conditions of those relationships. Why should men be afraid of feminism? And why should some feminist women be afraid of profeminist men? (Kimmel, 1998: 61)

Presumably, reasons vary for these two groups, but a common argument from some feminists is that men cannot contribute to feminism due to their basic lack of women’s experience because the development of feminism critically depends upon such experience. This argument, indeed, discomforts men very much who want to support feminism. Hopkins, for instance, argues that “having women’s experience and perceiving as a woman isn’t what makes a woman feminist--plenty of them aren’t. So then what does make a woman a feminist? Presumably, her beliefs, actions, political positions, and critical perspective...Therefore, what seems to be the ground of feminist praxis (and theory) is a critical attack on ideologies of gender that lead to certain people being classified into certain groups and oppressed” (Hopkins, 1998:50-51)

Most profeminist men give reference to feminist goals, which are to change women’s subordinated positions in gender relations; therefore, the main goal of feminism, which is also supported by profeminist men, is to change the patriarchal system which dominates relations of both men and women within society. Harding contributes to men’s stand at this point: “if women are not the sole generators of feminist knowledge, men are obligated to contribute to feminist analyses and, in doing so, they must learn to take responsibility for the position from which they

speak” (Harding, 1992: 183-186). And many profeminist men quote Harding’s words to suggest that unequal power relations within society can be transformed by women and also by men. And men’s uneasiness with patriarchy, both at a personal and ethical level, requires recognition of *a total awareness of men’s historically conditioned stance*, which may be possible with a continuation of the dialogue with feminism. “Acknowledging that when speaking as a man, I speak with a different voice from women, I need to develop a biographical critique of my own position and self-interest in the existing relations of gender dominance. From this position, I can seek to continue dialogue with feminism as a basis for critical self-reflection.” (Pease, 2000: 12). This critical thinking of men’s own positions helped them to analyze their male experience of daily life.

Feminism has presented the importance of the personal experience and the political nature of this experience, and men have realized the importance of their own experiences as men, which is political as well (Hearn, 1992). Therefore, profeminist men have established anti-sexist, consciousness-raising groups among themselves to question the practices of the ‘oppressor’, which are beneficial both for men and women.²² Moreover, it became another question as to how these men validate their feelings of dissatisfaction with patriarchy and support feminism. As feminists have pointed out, men’s contribution to feminism should not only be in servicing roles or limited with men’s confessions of guilt due to being the sex of ‘oppressor’; this would be a false identification with feminism and a further estrangement from their own experiences as men (Seidler, 1991). Another problem with men in feminism is, men could never ‘get it [feminism] right’ in the eyes of female feminists. This has become a significant problem for men, which causes a delay in their accepted

²² There were two consciousness-raising groups in 1970s (although the anti-sexist group was a splinter group of men’s liberationists), but by the early 1980s, both of these groups had disappeared. It was in the middle of the 1980s when the profeminist men retook anti-sexist groups from the profeminist stand. For the male consciousness raising groups that see patriarchy as a problem, see *The Achilles Heel Reader*.

association with feminism, and confuses men on what to do in feminism. According to Pease, what profeminist men have to do in feminist theory and practice is to “work on contradictions of men to resolve internal and external dialectics between patriarchy and anti-patriarchal attempts where the groups can provide a link between personal experience and wider social context of men’s lives” (Pease, 2000: 55). In this complex notion, Pease emphasizes the importance of finding and constructing non-patriarchal practices for men for their personal and group experience.

Men’s awareness can be improved and this can contribute to men’s alternative political stands, for instance in consciousness-raising groups or within academe, but one might ask will their attempt to analyze their own experience contribute to women as much as it does to men? And furthermore, why should studying profeminist experience be included into the considerations of feminism? To comprehend profeminist men’s standpoint and their relationship with feminism, the question should be answered by a profeminist man. For this, we can turn to Pease, in his book *Recreating Men*, as he identifies five reasons why understanding profeminist men is crucial:

First, profeminist men are not exceptional. They still occupy positions of dominance and they continue to embody much of the internalized domination of ordinary men. They are only different through their attempts to confront both their internalized domination and their dominant position. Secondly, profeminist men’s awareness of their privilege and their socially legitimated oppressive behaviors are minimal requirements for a progressive politics of change among men. Thirdly, the attempts of such men to change will give some evidence to women as to whether men potentially become reliable allies in the struggle to transform gender relations more broadly. Fourthly, because these men are attempting to create a collective politics of gender among men, they are, or can be, at the ‘cutting edge’ in changing dominant masculinities. Finally, such men’s experiences give a useful insight into determinative factors of gender construction and its associated structural components to see whether men who want to change actually can do so. (Pease, 2000: 2)

As seen in Pease's words, being close to the experiences of men would benefit feminist goals as this can enable a challenge against patriarchy from the perspective of those who are in the privileged position as well. This statement is also very congruent with Segal's 'knowing your enemy', where the enemy can be considered as the male dominators. Moreover, knowing the structure of patriarchal production might create a strong demand for men to change their subjectivities as the "oppressor". John Stoltenberg, as he concluded his speech at the conference of Gay Academic Union in New York City (which was in 1974), emphasized that men should definitely change: "None of us [men] can presume that we have yet done enough in our own lives to eradicate our allegiances to masculinity... Unless we change, we cannot claim to be comrades with women. Until we change, the oppressor is us" (Stoltenberg, 2004: 49).

Such arguments of profeminist men imply that some men could be in favor of changing their positioning in the system of patriarchy due to their (both personal and wider) dissatisfaction in order to construct more equal relations in society. And, in order to change male domination, it is crucial to disclose the domination of men, and men's power in unequally structured gender relations; otherwise, leaving them unspoken would cloak men's resistance to change like Hearn and Collinson warn: "Not talking of men is a major and structured way of not beginning to talk of and question of men's power in relation to women, children, young people, and indeed other men, or perhaps more precisely men's relations within power"(Hearn and Collinson, 1994: 97). In other words, overtly describing and defining men's domination and power would reinforce the way to recognize and undermine, subvert, deconstruct and dismantle it. Indeed, in the wider aspect of political accumulation, as Seidler and many other theorists argue, social theories have been about men under the concept of 'human' or 'humankind'. And not being able to talk

about 'men' as 'men' excluded 'women' and women's experience from social theories and historical accumulation, as well as justifying masculine character in every level of social science without saying so.

...various challenges of feminist theory to traditions of positivism, Marxism, and phenomenology have largely gone unheeded, for we have failed to appreciate the level at which they are working. It is not simply that social theories have tended to illuminate the experience of men and not women, but that they have also served to legitimate a particular form of masculine experience. (Seidler, 1994: 12)

Whilst distinct approaches have been urged to analyze male domination and patriarchy, some profeminist endeavors created formulations to break men's resistance to change. May is the profeminist theorist who has developed a model which has four conditions that set sufficient conditions for a progressive male standpoint. In other words, these are the essential conditions that can enable men's change. These essential dimensions are: personal experience of traditional male roles; critical reflection on that experience in light of the possible harms to women, as well as men; moral motivation to change; and practical proposals for changes in traditional male roles that are regarded as believable by other men.²³

However the intentions for change do derive from different motives for profeminist men - sometimes moral necessities or personal gains influence more strongly. Pease opposes asking the questions of whether it is in men's interests to change or whether men ought to change [for feminist demands and] for moral reasons, because these two formulations might divide the basic motivation for change (Pease, 2002). What is more important is to enable men to understand the real circumstances of those unequal relations that are not only harmful to the relations between men and women,

²³ For further readings, see Larry May, *A Progressive Male Standpoint* in *Men Doing feminism*, 1998.

but also damaging for the relations between men and men, which will, most probably, provoke the desire for change. Therefore, instead of focusing on for what reasons do men want to change, the question should be how men's patriarchal interests are constructed, and how they can be reconstructed again. To respond the question, profeminist men use different categorizations than feminists to specifically analyze the construction of patriarchy in men's lives. Some of these categorizations of profeminist men can be examined under the subtitle of 'studies on men and masculinities'. Although these are not the complete works of profeminist men, 'studies on men and masculinities' constitutes a significant space in order to analyze men's attempts to confront male domination and patriarchy.

2.4.1 The Studies on Men and Masculinities

The concept of 'masculinity' mainly embodied within gender studies and established the field of 'masculinity studies', 'men's studies' or 'critical studies on men' to understand male domination through the male experience. What is meant by 'masculinity' is expressed by Stoltenberg in 1974:

What is denoted by the word masculinity derives from the objective reality, the fact of our lives under patriarchy, that all members of the gender class of males are entitled to obtain their sense of self by postulating the selflessness of the gender class of women, their sense of worth by asserting female worthlessness, and their power in the culture by maintaining the powerlessness of women. (Stoltenberg, 2004: 47)

Stoltenberg cited men and women as a single gender class in accordance with radical feminist theorizations. The theorization of 'masculinity' has mainly shifted from the "male sex role". Yet, role theory has not been sufficient enough to posit traditional roles, as feminists have been indicated, in distinct contexts and histories in order to disclose patriarchy. Therefore, men's critiques of sex-role theory have been

extended from feminism, where the concept of masculinity is used to re-identify the male roles in a more particular context to problematize male domination and power in gender relations. In addition, the concept of masculinity addresses the dynamic roles of men, and the concept has been further developed since the new social research of profeminist men acknowledged the notion that there is no singular masculine role or no one pattern of masculinity to identify. Due to different cultures, different periods of history, and different constructions of gender, it is, almost, compulsory to speak of ‘masculinities’²⁴ rather than ‘masculinity’ (Connell, 1995).

The field of studies on men and masculinities has strongly illuminated the power of men over women and other men after the very important concept of ‘hegemonic masculinity’ was devised. Comparing various “men’s movement” and “sex-role” literature, the theoretical work of the “gay movement” more directly attempts to argue against the dominating power of men to other men and women (Carrigan, Connell and Lee, 1985). *Hegemonic masculinity*, as quoted from Connell: “can be defined as the configuration of gender practice which embodies the currently accepted answer to the problem of the legitimacy of patriarchy, which guarantees (or is taken to guarantee) the dominant position of men and the subordination of women” (Connell, 1995: 77). The aim of the concept of *hegemonic masculinity* is to implicate power in gender relations, while it simultaneously constructs itself as a myth, where most men, traditionally or culturally, adhered to that myth for most of their lives.²⁵

²⁴ On the other hand, it is bare to notice that different masculinities can co-exist at the same time. For instance, working-class masculinity can also intersect with other masculinities due to different variables such as class, age, ethnicity, socio-economic sources, body...etc.

²⁵ While hegemonic masculinity is used to signify the power of men over other men and women, the subordinated positions ‘subordinated masculinities’ is conceptualized to notify the disadvantaged identifications of men in power relations.

Although these conceptualizations have led to widespread application on the research on men and masculinities, some theorists argued *hegemonic masculinity* has unclear points and contradictions in demonstrating the autonomy of gender system (Donaldson, 1993). In addition, Hearn discusses unresolved problems of *hegemonic masculinity* by expressing that the concept was too confusing what to address in patriarchal dimensions (whether cultural representations, everyday practices or institutional structure) in order to connect the relation with each other. Moreover, according to Hearn hegemonic masculinity is glued to the concept of ‘masculinity’ which, somehow, unifies men’s practices with a fixed citation to power (Hearn, 2004). Nevertheless, Kimmel asserts that feminist critique of masculinity often makes the same mistake of uniting men’s power, and feminists assume that individual men feel as powerful as the men in a group where all women are oppressed by all men (Kimmel, 1994). Kaufman clearly explains that men do not always feel powerful in society, and in fact, do feel pain in the incessant attempt to reach power although this motivates *contradictory experiences of power* (Kaufman, 1994: 147). Kaufman continues that men exercise power not only because men are gaining advantage from it; the demonstration of power also suppresses the fear and the wounds which have been experienced through the endeavor to hold power.²⁶ Kaufman’s statement on the relationship between men and power assumes that what seems like a privilege on the behalf of men (to hold power) may not be advantageous; on the contrary, it can be painful to create fear.

Moreover, the fear of being powerless or seeming to be powerless constructs another fear for men: the fear of being humiliated in front of other men, which would then identify them as not being a real and strong man. That is, the fear of *homophobia*, which takes a man from the manly world and stigmatizes him with the weaknesses

²⁶ The fear of powerlessness brings the alienation of men at the same time. For further readings on men’s power and alienation, see Hearn (1987) *The Gender of Oppression*.

of women or ‘abnormality’ of gay men. “Homophobia is the fear that other men will unmask us, emasculate us, and reveal us and the world that we do not measure up, that we are not real men. We are afraid to let other men see that fear. Fear makes us ashamed, because the recognition of fear in ourselves is proof to ourselves that we are not as manly as we pretend...” (Kimmel, 1994: 131) All these elucidations on men’s fear and the construction of men’s desire to hold power is a kind of pain at the same time, like many profeminists notice. And shedding light onto that pain, as Kaufman states, can reinforce the impetus for change (Kaufman, 1994). All these attempts of profeminist men are to analyze male domination or patriarchy as men. Pease fortified this notion with a focus group of profeminist men where most of them in the group were of the opinion that ‘to understand the benefits of being true to yourself’ is one thing that profeminist men should express to other men in order to launch the drive of change. This is due to the fact that as long as men need more proof to prove their manhood, they will get more alienation in their lives. Hence, it is a striking fact that these men preferred to see men’s ‘oppressor’ role as a weakness instead of powerfulness (Pease, 2000). Seeing patriarchy as weakness would also stop men identifying institutionalized privileges of patriarchy as powerfulness for men which could also provoke men into leaving their privileges. Nevertheless, leaving the benefits of the primary positioning of men is not as easy as saying it like Segal and Messner expresses.

While continuing with profeminist discussions and the conceptualization of men and over masculinity, one may recall the relationship of those arguments with feminist praxis and feminist theory. Although there is a need to understand the studies on men and masculinities, which is also acknowledged by feminists in the preceding part, focusing merely on men, like Hearn and Kimmel notices, brings possible dangers in re-excluding women. “If one focuses on the lived reality of most men’s

lives, however, one also runs the risk of reproducing patriarchal consciousness. Focusing basically on men's standpoints will typically produce a picture of men's felt powerlessness. One must be careful to acknowledge that these same men [who feel powerlessness] exercise considerable power in their lives, particularly over women, but also over other men." (Kimmel, 1994:55) Therefore, to reduce the risk of women's exclusion, specific approaches should be consistently questioned which connect men in gendered power relations with women, children, young people and each other (Hearn, 2004). All these feminist insights and cautions of re-centering and reproducing male domination drag the studies of profeminist men more to gender studies, where men would study masculinity from a relational perspective. This situation puts these studies more into gender perspective and lessens the emphasis on feminism. For that reason, it could be risky for men to study masculinities without emphasizing feminist perspective.²⁷

On the other hand, many profeminists pay attention to feminist observations, where they remark that it is not only possible to understand men and masculinities solely through the experiences of men. Hearn also cites that feminists "can know men through the effects of men upon women. In this sense, power is not possession or even evidenced by the ability to produce known outcomes, but is known through effects, often on women and children" (Hearn, 1996: 4). Women's approach to understanding men and masculinities is important in order to comprehend the potential of men to be true allies of feminism. Messner's article, on changing men in the United States, could be given as a very good example for analyzing men through

²⁷ The research on men and masculinities has included diverse topics such as men in families, men in the workplace, men's friendships, intimacy relations (with women, boys and children), male sexuality, homophobia, boyhood, adolescence, fatherhood, ageing, men's movement and violence against women. In these approaches, it is quite critical to resolve men and masculinities in a relational or dialectical approach to locate them within socially variable forms of gender relations. For further reading on men, masculinities and social divisions, see Hearn and Collinson, *Unities and Differences between Men and between Masculinities* (1994).

their effects on women. Inspired by Segal's book, *Changing Men and Masculinities*, Messner analyzes the change of men's discourse for a more egalitarian structure of society whether it is real and practiced in their manner or not. After the influence of feminist endeavors and profeminist attempts, such as the attempts on *new fatherhood*, men do give the impression of change in their behaviors (Messner, 1993). However, Messner states that although men seem to be more egalitarian in taking part within the division of labor at home, as they cook or participate in housework much more than before, most of them still consider these works as women's. Moreover, the gap between what men say and what they do still persists as Segal argues: "the fact that men's apparent attitudinal changes have not translated into widespread behavioral changes may be largely due to the fact men may (correctly) fear that increased parental involvement will translate into a loss of their power over women" (Messner, 1993: 726). Therefore, to diminish the risk of an imaginary change in men, Messner suggests that a feminist analysis of changing masculinities might begin to watch and review the change in men at various levels. In addition, Kaufman accedes by expressing that feminist theory has proliferated a space for men's emancipation as much as it has challenged to break down men's power. Many men have supported feminist insights for the last few decades; likewise, feminist analysis should include men's analysis of other men, women and patriarchy.

In this chapter, the distinct responses of men to feminism and especially profeminist issues have been stated. Feminists' responses had been presented before in order to grasp a dialogic quality. Feminists have reasonable hesitations about men's approach to feminism and patriarchy due to previous mistrusts of men, but the majority of the given feminist references shed light on how to react to those profeminist men both with suggestions and attentions. In addition, this section has been concerned with the

relationship between profeminist men and masculinity studies while significant issues and main concepts are emphasized as well. The attempts of profeminist men can contribute to feminist theory as feminists and profeminist men discussed above. It is also crucial to assess the potential of men as to whether they can be true allies of feminism. Instead of a direct “yes” or “no” answer, it is more critical to realize to what extent this is possible or is not possible. In addition, stating the tensions both from a feminist and profeminist standpoint enables the formulation of critical questions which can be posed to profeminist men through their practice against patriarchy.

CHAPTER III

MEN'S RESPONSES TO FEMINISM IN TURKEY

Women's movement has become significant after 1980s in Turkey and since then, many men from different backgrounds have given various responses to feminism. This chapter will mainly focus on these diverse reactions of men towards feminism in Turkey. While some of these perspectives were "anti-feminist", others have had a "pro-feminist"²⁸ stance. With this feature, men's responses to feminism in Turkey can be classified in two distinct stand points, similar to the responses of men in United States which was stated in the previous chapter. Academic studies conducted by male scholars and students will not be included in this evaluation, because they are not the examples of work that truthfully represent the popular attitudes of men towards feminism in Turkey. Hence, instead of academic works, representative examples of approaches towards feminism will be presented from different political backgrounds such as standpoints from left, center and religious.

In order to demonstrate the approaches towards feminism from these three different stand points, mass media materials has been examined including best known (nonacademic) periodicals, newspapers, journals and books. Nevertheless the aim of this examination was to give a general idea of men's attitude towards feminism rather than a profound analysis of feminism in Turkey. So only the best known

²⁸ In this section, contrary to previous chapter, men are categorized as "pro-feminist" (with hyphen) or "anti-feminist" because their reaction and thoughts about feminism are primarily taken into consideration rather than their political standpoint, where "profeminism" (without hyphen) implies a political standpoint.

names who discussed the matter in their writings are included. Therefore, this chapter should not be considered as a complete representation of men's diverse perspectives towards feminism since the early 1980s. Following chapter will state interviews with men who study on feminist theory, gender studies or on men and masculinities within the academia which can be identified as the continuation of profeminist attempts of men within academia.

3.1. Men against Feminism in Turkey

The first influence of feminism was not hospitably welcomed at every place in Turkey. Some men from different circles were not happy to witness an increased attention to women's specific questions and requests. One of these groups was the men in the socialist groups who were uneasy to hear women's separation from left movement for a new movement as to gain feminist goals.

Kayaligil's study (2005) analyzes the "anti-feminist" and "pro-feminist" perspectives through the socialist journals after 1980s. He expresses the characteristics of socialist periodicals which are against feminism as follows:

Seeing feminism as a deflection or a deviation from the socialist path is truly the characteristic of the socialist authors who are strictly against this [feminist] theory and the movement. While developing a discursive stance hostile to feminism, reference to the bourgeoisie is a usual phenomenon among these authors and makes up the dominant rhetoric found in the socialist periodicals. This discursive stance is also the one where an ethical concern on sexual dynamics appears, too. Such concern emerges from the misconception of the feminist struggle for the women's freedom in the private domain. (...) But although the feminist conception of sexual freedom does not convey any crude idea like "sexual extremeness" or "unlimited sexual intercourse", some socialist writers perceive it so. (Kayaligil, 2005:117)

Kayaligil stated that some socialist writers have doubts about feminists and throughout their perspective they can even call those women as *enemy within* the

socialist movement (Kayaligil, 2006). In addition, although some male writers in socialist periodicals were not “anti-feminist”, they were against the women’s movement to be seen as the attempts of bourgeois women. For instance, Yalçın Gür in his article in “Flag of Labor” (*Emeğin Bayrağı*) rejected to call 8th of March as “World Women’s Day” and instead asked from everyone to call it “Global Women Workers Day” due to deception of anti-revolutionist people who try to trick others by saying that the emancipation would come with the equality between women and men rather than socialism:

The laborers will only be saved by socialism. Because socialism will call off an individual’s hegemony over the other; it will abolish the privileges of property on the material means of production; and it will equalize men and women in front of the means of production. (...) In this case, those who truly support and believe the women’s emancipation and those who move forward for the totality are the communists. What the laborer women are supposed to do is to organize their laborer husbands, yet to do this not as “women” but proletariats, not as the female rivals of their husbands but as their combats. (...)Therefore, let’s not fool ourselves as “World women’s march”; let’s celebrate “world women laborer day” (Gür, 1988: 25-26)

As seen above, Gür thought that women should not be separated from socialist men and movement to organize feminist movement because the struggle then would be divided. Of course, this attitude of the writer in socialist periodical cannot be generalized to all men within the left; there have been examples that are more supportive for feminism to organize a distinct movement which will be mentioned in the following part of “pro-feminist”.

Moreover this is not the only environment which contains “anti-feminist” perspective; some very well known names within the center media also motivated the general opposition towards feminism with their misinterpretation. However, the reaction of men in this group is far different from the reactions of the socialist men although both groups have oppositions due to a variety of reasons. One of the famous names within the media who reinforced the negative attitude towards

feminism is Hıncal Uluç. He has been talking over feminism for quite a long time and considers himself as well informed on that issue. Moreover he wrote a foreword to a book called, *Power with skirts* which is written by Sinan Akyüz and criticized feminism for annihilating masculinity. Uluç had started the foreword by directly asking the question what feminism has done to the relations and answers his own question with negative implications as such:

The latest situation of the relation between women and men, takes long time to explain. Instead, it can be asked like “where has feminism brought the relations?” Look! There lays feminism as the main reason for the homosexual relations. I have been following the developments since I started to publish *Erkekçe*. Feminism first appeared as “women’s rights, emancipation and equality”. Two inventions supported this appear: Vibrator and birth control pills... Feminists solved the “orgasm rights” with vibrator and emancipated sexuality with birth control pills. The reflection of this over women has become as such: more and free affair [sex] with men. But not to be dependent to men for orgasm. (...) That is the most significant improvement which feminism has brought to women men relation starting from America. Social scientists would easily diagnose the similarity between the development of women’s rights and their emancipation, and the explosion of homosexuality (cited in Akyüz, 2003: VII-VIII)

Hıncal Uluç reduced feminism to homosexual relations and stated that feminism spoiled relations between men and women. In addition, in his column he had written on feminists as if they were male haters he asserted in one of his articles that Duygu Asena was not a feminist because she loved a man. Popular media, which is also masculine and patriarchal, has been representing feminism with a different image than it really is. Moreover, he is not the only one who uses a negative discourse about feminism and feminists in the popular media. Fatih Altaylı is also another well known journalist whose attitude can be stated as an example of negative perspective towards feminist women within the media. Eren Keskin who was the head of Human Rights Association Istanbul office stated in a conference that “women had been raped by the soldiers” on 16th of March in 2002. Two days after, on 18 March 2002,

while Altaylı was making comments in a radio show on the daily news, he directed attention to Keskin's statement and said:

Dirty slanders from Eren Keskin... Actually these women shouldn't be taken seriously... In a meeting in the city of Köln, Germany the lawyer Eren Keskin, who is the head of Human Rights Association, complained that in Turkey soldiers are doing sexual harassment to women, and only to make torture they even push married women to have virginity tests. I am not chivalrous [*namertim*] if I don't sexually harass Eren Keskin in the first place I see her. Yaa.. that's not possible yaa... I mean, if you tell the reality about Turkey... There is enough trouble in Turkey though... why is this exaggeration... Why is this lie... maybe she wants to impress that... Eren Keskin want to say that "why you are not sexually harassing me" (cited in Gözke, 2002)

These words of Altaylı did take too much reaction from column writers and women NGOs in Turkey but after this occasion he did not make any apology or self-critique. Moreover, he had been taken to a better position in another newspaper. Hıncal Uluç and Fatih Altaylı are two examples from the center media who are against feminism and feminist women.

Another negative response to feminism was from religious wing after the influence of women's movement in Turkey. Tatlı in her study (2001) which analyzes Islamist women in the post 1980s' modern Turkey writes about the construction of women in Islamist discourse as such:

...it can be said that Islamist thinkers in Turkey, with a theoretical framework mixture of essentialist pragmatism, social utilitarianism, and organic functionalism, construct an ideal Islamic community working with the principle of harmony and free from conflicts. Within this theoretical construct, Muslim women become an element of equilibrium and a source that can be exploited in order to prevent social 'deviance', conflict and inconsistencies. Moreover, construction of women as obedient, natural, innocent and semi-conscious establishes a safe home for the calls of authenticity. Women's existential Otherness becomes the constitutive element of 'true' Muslim community and Muslim male identity. Gaining visibility by her invisibility, her body

becomes one of the major sites that the ideological values and means of indirect control are inscribed (Tatlı, 2001: 72-73).

With the words of Tatlı, it can be said that women within the Islamist perspective, became an element of equilibrium and a source to prevent social deviance. Therefore, one can conceive that feminist women and women's movement were not very welcomed from the Islamist perspective due to noticing women's subordinated position compared to men within society. That would probably break the equilibrium role of women as mothers, wives, sisters and lovers and moreover provoke the social deviance. For instance, Abdurrahman Dilipak who one of the most is known Islamists rejected the "Campaign against Battering" (*Dayağa Karşı Kampanya*) protests and stated that in Turkey most of the women, who were beaten, lived in un-Islamist family circumstances.²⁹

Ali Bulaç who is another Islamist writer who has been writing in a newspaper for many years, responded to feminism and feminist women in 1988 by writing an article titled "Feminist Women's Short Mind" (*Feminist Bayanların Kısa Aklı*)" in his column (Bulaç; Zaman, 1988). In his article he mentioned feminism as such: "Feminism is an occupation which calls women to revolt against men(...) If the antagonism, conflict, and contempt will become the natural and inevitable part of social life, feminism becomes a way of life, the humankind means to come to an end on our planet" (Bulaç; Zaman, 1988). Moreover in that article he expresses that in societies where feminist world view and moral perspective becomes dominant the only model for sexual relationship which is valid and possible would be homosexuality and lesbian relations. This signifies a parallel thought between Islamists and socialists where some men who are against feminism reduced feminist thought to homosexual relations. Bulaç was criticized by many women writers due to that article. After twenty four years Bulaç in another article used less assertive

²⁹ For Further information see Koç in Ortak Haber, <http://www.ortakhaber.com/v2/haberler/haber.asp?a=1589&print=yes> (25 Mayıs 2006)

discourse when he was writing about feminism. This indicates that the assertive discourse on feminism has been transformed through the years. Nevertheless, the Islamist perspective, more generally, has not been very welcoming to women's demands for women's emancipation.

3.2. Men Supporting Feminism in Turkey

Previous chapter has been signifying the "anti-feminist" perspective of men through well-known names of media from distinct circles. Contrarily, this part will focus on the same circles to display "pro-feminist" attempts of men through known journals and newspapers.

As it was presented in the first part socialist men had written on women's issues in socialist periodicals with either from an "anti-feminist" or "pro-feminist" stance. As Kayaligil indicated in his study "those authors who support feminism [in those socialist periodicals] are typically also the ones having a faith in socialism, but think that socialist theory is limited in its solution for the women question" (Kayaligil, 2006: 112-113). When those socialist articles are examined, some examples can be given as "pro-feminist" stances of socialist men. For instance, contrary to previous example of socialist men, Abdürrahim Gümüştekin expressed that struggle against class inequality and feminist movement should be divided due to the distinct potentials for revolution. He stated in "Class Consciousness" (*Sınıf Bilinci*) as such:

I have mentioned that one of the three main problems of humanity is the women's position as the despised gender. And of course, each problem needs to be analyzed within its specific discourse. Therefore, feminism (i.e. woman struggle) and class struggle should be organized and positioned separately in different paths, but not within a same context. The common feature of social feminism and class struggle is anti-capitalism; and it is a basic fact. However, this does not lead the relation between feminism and class struggle into a single way; and it neither requires nor legitimizes a common organization. To think of feminism as a back-up for the class struggle means to position it as the

second priority. By this way, the woman problem is inevitably shaded. Thinking that feminism should be necessitated to the class struggle is not right at all. Thus, in this way, the movement of women could not become a strong dynamic. Therefore, a very basic dynamic for the revolution would be abandoned and the solution for the woman problem would have to be postponed (Gümüştekin, 1990: 135)

Moreover, in another periodical, “Theory” [*Teori*] the article of Mahmut Çiğdemal can be given as an example to “pro-feminist” stance of a socialist man as such:

How can socialists, who are struggling against social inequalities, behave as the narrow-minded at home? The notion that majority of men who accept women and men are equal, still contains the understanding that men’s priority hasn’t been annihilated (...) Men who can present democratic, equal behaviors feel obliged to act “manly” in order not to be shamed, “understood wrongly” by others in their environment. (...) Women by opposing men’s oppression not only defend themselves and protect their rights, but also, even from now on, they would help to reinforce the democratic socialism [harcını karmaya başlayacaklar]. (...) Men, only, from due to some indispensability, in some conditions such as when woman is ill, when a guest come to house for a visit...etc do small help like doing the salad or tea which makes relief in their hearts; in that way it is considered that the work is done and the class of civilized men is established. Nevertheless, even under this “helping” approach, the understanding is that house works do belong to women. (...) The process of democratization at home reduces the subordination and pressure over women in a significant degree but is not sufficient for women’s emancipation (Çiğdemal, 1991: 73-76).

As seen above this man who seem to have a “pro-feminist” stance wrote that men, especially socialist men who ideologically support equality in society, were not in the manner of stopping oppression over women both in the left movement and in their home. Moreover, he criticized that men do not share domestic chores; instead, they do “help” women in some special occasions. Although sharing the household would not totally emancipate women, he expressed that would reduce women’s subordinated labor which would also reinforce democratic socialism in society at every sphere. Numerous examples for “pro-feminist” stance can be found in socialist periodicals in the early 90s. In addition, fifteen years after those socialist periodicals more examples can be given from newspapers or journals where some men from the

left support feminism or feminist women. Çetin Altan is some of those well known names who give place to women's issues in his articles although he does not directly point feminism. For instance on 8th of March in 2003 Altan named his article in his column as "Women's Day, or Day of Pain" (*Kadınlar Günü, Yahut Acılar Günü*) by explaining women's unchanged position compared to men in Turkey (Altan; Milliyet, 2003).

On the other hand, when center media is examined there is another category for some men who seem to have a "pro-feminist" stance due to their strong dedication to humanism. Yıldırım Türker is one of these well known names whose stand point is distinct from other center media representatives. He has written on the subjects of social sensitivity and strongly supports women's struggle, gender equality, gay and lesbian rights while he criticizes pornography, homophobia and women's subordination. Since he has been writing on these issues for such a long time, some of his articles titles will be given in order to indicate his "pro-feminist" stance: "A Family Murder" (*Bir Aile Cinayeti*, 2006) where he gave a commentary on murder of women in Turkey, in "Women of Some Other" (*Onun Bunun Kadınları*, 2004) he had written on honor crimes, in "The Exam of Femininity" (*Kadınlık Sınavı*, 2004) he again wrote on honor crimes, "A Number of Women" (*Birkaç Kadın*, 2005) was his article where he expressed the position of women in Turkey, "Porn and the Lightness of Shame" (*Porno ve Utanmanın Hafifliği*, 2002) as it is apparent from the title, was about the production of pornography in Turkey. In "Women of Some Other" Türker mentioned feminism as such:

The representation of women as a personality took a couple of centuries. Women's struggle for political identity is actually a matter of this century which has not been accomplished yet. The history of women's movement includes many rises and falls. Feminist movement has a very significant influence on the better living conditions of the world that we currently live in compared to the world at beginning of this century although feminism is mouthed in a grinning way by majority of our society. Women have shown that history can be written in different syntax. They embraced the silenced moments of history

with another interpretation. (...) They read [history] differently, and opened a path to be read differently. They approached with a doubt to the winning and losing stories of formal history which are heroically built among men. They questioned the holy (Türker; Radikal, 2004)

Hopefully, Türker's column is not the only reference for "pro-feminist" stance in Turkey although it is very strong comparing to others. Another very significant name in media is Can Dündar who is known for his humanist stand point. He has also written on sexism, homophobia, honor crimes and women's subordination in Turkey. One of his articles "Things Again Happened to Women" (*Olan Yine Kadına Oldu*, 2003) expressed women's ambivalent position in the problematization of head scarf debates in Turkey. He has written as such:

We have to realize this: As [türban] much as it is a symbol for many women, it's at the same time a visa for entering the street; a ticket which is given for social life... It's a ticket for the young girls who put a headscarf and go to university and women who deal with politics. The reaction which is given towards headscarf for "women's emancipation", contrarily, can service (for seventy percent of) their exclusion, turning into a slave [köleleşmesine]. However, even with headscarf women's entrance into social life would benefit to break men's power in conservative environment, release women from their passive position and help women to question her position, transform women-men relations. (Dündar; Milliyet, 2003)

The problem of headscarf has been a crucial problem in the debates of secularism and modernization in Turkey and as seen in statement of Dündar, headscarf has a paradoxal dimension in the aim of women's emancipation. Moreover, Dündar has written about honor-crimes in his "There Are Three Women" (*Üç Kadın Var*, 2003) article and some of his other article titles are such: "Why Aren't There Women Poets?" (*Neden Kadın Şair Yok*, 2005); "A World Without Women? God Let Not" (*Kadınsız Bir Dünya? Allah Vermesin*, 2004); "Homophobia" (*Homofobi*, 2004), and lastly he criticized media for being sexist due to publishing women photos in a certain way in "Sexist Photographs" (*Seksist Fotoğraflar*, 2005).

Moreover, last example from the center media who can be considered “pro-feminist” is Bekir Coşkun. His “pro-feminist” stand is more nourished by his humanist stance. He has written about world women’s day and about violence toward women. Moreover, he has also written on headscarf where he presented parallel perspective with Dündar. In that article which was named “If Men Put Headscarf...” (*Erkekler Türban Bağlarsa...*) he expressed his thoughts as such:

If you have realized we don’t discuss ‘inappropriate’ man in Çankaya [where the parliament is], we discuss woman. Man does not put on headscarf. Actually the inside of men’s head does not become a problem, the outside of women’s head become a problem. Although those are men, who veil women, make them ‘dangerous’ (*sakıncalı*)... Nevertheless, men can enter and leave university without any trouble, be governor of a province-be supreme, and there is no harm for them to be in the parliament as representatives, president and even vice-president. Men, who veil woman, exclude her from social life; use her head scarf as a political tool, can enter everywhere in the foreign clothes. But women who is walking behind him becomes ‘dangerous’. (Coşkun; Hürriyet, 2005)

Coşkun expressed that women had been excluded from social life because headscarf is considered a problem for women’s entrance into public sphere and contrarily do not impede men at any sphere. Moreover, he emphasized that men decide the political decisions about women although they are not exposed to it. All these men, Türker, Dündar and Coşkun, who are writers in center media periodicals, state a “pro-feminist” stance.

There are not strong supporters of feminism among Islamists when it is compared (in parallel) to the previous part of “anti-feminist” Islamists. Yaşar Nuri Öztürk possibly can be given as a contrary example to Dilipak and Bulaç due to his regenerated representation of women in Islam. Different from the general Islamist perspective of women that considers women as the obedient, natural, innocent and semi-conscious who establishes a safe home mentioned in the previous part, Öztürk asserted that women can join men to do religious practices in the public sphere. That

argument of him was strongly reacted from Islamist circles due to suggesting new Islamist images for women which were considered evolutionist ideas. Moreover, in Islamist discussion where beating women had been questioned from an Islamist perspective, Öztürk rejected the interpretation of sura [pray] that men were not allowed to beat their wives in Islam. Nevertheless, the number of men among Islamists is not many to be given as examples which can be identified as “pro-feminist”.

When another political stance has been searched within the center media there are also a few “pro-feminist” stances from liberal right wing. One of these names is Taha Akyol who writes in a daily newspaper. He had been written in his column about “Women’s Movement” (*Kadın Hareketi*, 2006) and “Women’s Movement in Islam” (*İslam’da Kadın Hareketi*, 2006). In Both articles he gave references to women’s words in the international and national conferences and stated the traditions of male sovereignty which had to be broken. Although he is mostly influenced by liberal stance at this time, he used to be strong supporter of right wing in the past years. Possibly, that is also the reason why his perspective towards women and women’s movement is more egalitarian in his discourse today.

This chapter has been signifying the general perspective of men towards feminism, feminist women and women’s movement in Turkey. Therefore, it has been divided into two parts in order to express two distinct thoughts as “anti-feminist” and “pro-feminist”. In the first part, the perspective which is against feminism has been described including perceptions of different environments. Following part tracked a parallel approach in order to indicate “pro-feminist” stance. As a consequence, this chapter tried to demonstrate the general perspective of men towards feminism and feminist women from different standpoints.

CHAPTER IV

MEN'S RELATIONS WITH FEMINISM

The purpose of this chapter is to focus on the close relation between men and feminism which will be held in two parts. The first part will particularly focus on feminism's contributions to men and their lives as an ideology. The second part will concentrate on the question whether men can contribute to feminist theory. The expressions of thirteen men within the field provide the basis of interpretation. The reason why "men's relations with feminism" is analyzed to understand how they met feminism, were influenced by it and engaged with it. To understand their engagement, it is crucial to ask whether they call themselves feminist or what they think about new conceptualizations such as "profeminist" which represent men's support to feminism. Moreover, men's contribution to feminism and feminist theory stays as another thorny problem in the field of women's studies and feminist theory. To this end, conceiving what these men think about contributing to feminism and feminist theory as men would help to advance the main question of this study, that is, whether men can ally feminism.

4.1. Feminism's Contributions to Men

There are not many men within the academia who are interested in feminism as a subject of study. While the ratio is very low, the way that these men start to engage

with feminism is an important issue to understand feminism's contributions to men's lives. On the other hand, as mentioned before, men's engagements with feminism have been possible by the influence of feminist tutors and peers in their previous years. Like this argument, majority of the thirteen men who have been interviewed for this study explained that their first engagement feminism had been through readings during courses or with readings individually chosen by some of them. A number of students in the interviewed group told their first interaction with women's movement and feminist theory as such:

My undergraduate thesis was about Iranian Revolution. While I was reading on Iranian revolution I realized that women took a serious part in the political process, especially in the revolution. It was interesting for me. Then we started to talk with our friends about the women's studies program at METU, as to attend master's classes there.

Student 1 was studying at women's studies program Student 2 told his opinions as such:

While I was working at the newspaper, I was following the changes in legislation in the parliament. The positive discrimination thing confused my mind and I started to think that I need to read more on feminism.

Next student, Student 3, below who is also from women's studies program, expressed that his interest in feminist theory enhanced throughout the courses:

My interest in feminist theory started when I was taking courses from women's studies department. Earlier, I used to have prejudices about feminists, and then I realized that those were thoughts that were actually prejudices.

The impact of course readings upon men is very significant as to realize the affects of gender through their lives. As the above expressions show, some men used to have prejudices about feminists before attending feminist courses or reading on feminism. On the other hand, M. Ecevit and Atay who are scholars at different universities explained their engagement with feminism through women's movement that was politically on the agenda in the mid 80s. It became their field of interest either by witnessing women's concerns which were told by the rising number of women's groups or by the influence of their partners involved in these groups. Here is what M. Ecevit reported:

One dimension is my wife; she also started working on this subject at a very early age [of feminism] for Turkey, it was in early 1970s and seriously started studying after 1975. Her interest made a deep influence within the family where two social scientist live. Her professionally studying on this subject as a doctoral candidate influenced me and expanded my field of interests. But in my opinion, I can tell, my world view towards social inequalities and class inequalities played the most important role in gaining a feminist perspective.

Moreover, Atay expressed his thought as such:

I was aware of that movement in Turkey from the mid 80s. What I meant by aware of is that I attended their [feminist's] meetings. For instance, I remember that I used to attend a feminist group's meetings. I remember a serious discussion blew up there. It was a discussion between the two groups who argued "first socialism and then feminism" and "first feminism and than whatever".

These two scholars, M. Ecevit and Atay, are older than the rest, so it is the fact that they had the chance to observe the emergence of women's movement in the 80s, before women's movement influenced studies in academia. And it is quite noticeable that the rest of the interviewed group, who are also younger at age, first met feminism through books rather than involving in women's groups and that's due to

feminism's influence on academia which has become a more common subject after mid 80s in Turkey.

Although men's engagement differs according to their age and background, in most of the interviews, they made common points which they learned from feminism. In other words, feminism made contributions to the lives of these men. As it is discussed in the previous part many male academics told that feminism helped them to understand the unequal conditions and the importance of experiences that occur in relations (Kimmel: 1998, Hearn: 1992, Pease: 2000, Seidler: 1991, Stoltenberg: 2004). Student 4 who was from women's studies program expressed the contributions of feminism as such:

It [feminism] has influenced me so much! I'm very grateful. I mean I'm definitely very grateful, because inequality is not only between men and women; there is inequality in every meaning and every level. Feminism made me see this, made me learn that I have to be slyer. It showed me how the inequality could be hidden and invisible and it showed me to analyze events from a new perspective.

Student 5 uttered the influence of feminism in his life with these words:

Actually feminism showed me that biology is socially constructed and my body forms my daily life. I've seen that the gender relations I interfere are actually related with it [socially constructed biology and body]. I've seen that throughout the relations I have had, I do not put my sex to one side, as a man, and communicate. I've seen that even in my friendship, [or] when I'm bringing up a certain subject, it is related with my sex.

Student 3 stated that feminism has shown him that the perceptions he had about life are also formed by gender:

Feminism benefited me to understand how gender forms our perception as subjects. It thought me that we have to deeply criticize

them [our perceptions], criticize them [our perceptions] within ourselves. This is the thing which benefited me.

The student 6 indicated that feminism fit an empty place that he had been looking for in the classic literature:

Feminism was like finding something that you had been looking for. Something was missing in the classic literature and feminism filled that gap. Maybe feminism helped me to speak and identify what I could not speak and identify. It helped me with concepts...It brought me frames to comprehend life. You know, when you are uncomfortable with something and you don't know [the reason] until you really learn what it is... feminism may have shown me what the problem is.

Besides, feminism did not only provide a basis for men merely to understand women's subordination, unequal gender relations but also filled an empty place in the classic literature by criticizing it. In addition, like Messner articulated, feminism has presented that unequal positioning of sexes in society help to understand men's dehumanizing practices while men try to prove their privileged position (Messner: 1998). As Pease discussed before, men live more alienation to themselves when they try to confirm their manhood (Pease: 2000). Student 3 uttered how feminism helped him to understand his masculinity as such:

Feminism mostly gave me a chance to identify my problem of masculinity; it helped me to cite it as a discourse. I mean, I was affected as a subordinated man from all the critiques that feminism had made on male power. I changed that language; the female language of struggle into male language. As to struggle against male power, I constructed a male struggle language according to myself. At this point I can tell that I'm very much influenced and benefited from feminism.

Student 7 expressed that feminism helped him to relieve from masculine responsibilities that he didn't like to do:

I feel that I'm relieved from lots of masculine responsibilities. I feel that I am comfortable now. I will be sound in a pragmatist way but, I don't

know... I'm not sitting in macho way, although I didn't use to sit like that, but... [Now] knowing why you are not doing that is much better, feeling that [what I do] is right, and taking support from somewhere [from feminism]... I don't know, it [feminism] eliminated all my previous anger and requirements.

Another student, Student 4, cited that feminism has helped to understand women much more than before:

Starting to think about patriarchy, straightened my relations with women for instance. It was striking. It [thinking on patriarchy] helped me to stop my alienation towards my feelings. Patriarchy brings alienation towards men's feelings. It's a terrible thing. It's really terrible.

All these arguments present that feminism contributed men not only to understand women but also men and their own position in relation. Therefore, feminism, as those men indicated, has also contributed men to comprehend their own masculinity.

It is another striking question to learn how these men relate themselves with feminism. All of the interviewed men willingly attended courses, wrote projects and theses or gave courses on feminism. However, after all of their close relationship with feminism, do they call themselves feminist? Or do they think that feminism can be possible only for women like Heath believes. Heath asserts that men are the objects of feminism that men's desire to be a feminist can be a last feint in the long history of their [women's] colonization (Heath, 1987: 1). Both of the academics who thought courses on feminism call themselves feminist. They explained their reasons as such:

I do serious work to analytically analyze women's position and women's inequality in society. Although I only work at academic level, I believe that my academic works are for the emancipation of women. But when I think of myself, including other fields I am a scientist whose academic works has priority. I mean I am a scientist whose daily politics or active politics or activism dimension is weak. Despite this weakness, I think that the political and activist dimensions are

interconnecting and because of the work I do about understanding women's inequality in society I think that I am a feminist.

As M. Ecevit expressed, he called himself feminist because he had been intellectually working on feminism in order to analyze women's unequal position in society. Moreover, Atay called himself feminist due to these reasons:

Yes, I do identify myself as a feminist. [For which reasons you identify yourself as a feminist?] First of all, women's subordination causes a trouble for women, but on that it measure causes a trouble for men either. That is to say, without fixing that inequality, I think that a man cannot get well in his own masculinity and in his subordination within the group of other men. In society where women are effective in economics and administration, there is no women power. In another words, in the tribal communities where women are economically and politically centered, these are small measured tribes, hunter-gatherer or small agricultural communities, in these communities we see that gender equality is maintained. I mean there is a relation between masculinity and power; not male power, power's sexuality is male. Therefore, this male sexuality desires power and as I have written or stressed before, masculinity power oppresses men as much as it oppresses women. It constitutes an unbearable weight on men to handle. It can dehumanize men. It pushes men to compete their masculinity all the time. Under this I think that a man's life cannot go on well. I mean, I don't think that this can be an acceptable human situation. For that reason, in my opinion, men should think much more of feminism, get closer to feminism and be feminist.

On the other hand, men who are studying at women's studies programs and other social science departments hesitate directly to call themselves feminists. Three men, student number two-three and one in order, who were graduated from women's studies programs from different universities, testify that:

That's a really hard thing, I'm not sure. To say it right, do feminists accept me? Because there is such a thing, there is very thin line between man and masculinity. I cannot suddenly declare that I'm relieved from masculinity and I'm a real feminist and let's altogether... No... if that had been possible I would say that I had to be in the streets at 8 of March, therefore... but I can have a feminist perspective. However, I think I have to hesitate a bit when I identify myself as a feminist. I don't know, I think in such a way. But I don't want to be

misunderstood; I don't mean that I'm not feeling ready for it, it's not that.

Yes, I do [call myself feminist] but actually I can't explain why. Why am I feminist? I can tell very simple things: I do problematize women's subordination and try to analyze the ways through which they are subordinated and for this reason I think in my mind that I'm a feminist.

[Laughs] I don't know if feminists would allow me to but... if feminism is identified as women's liberation movement; when I think I support this at a hundred percent, I can call myself feminist but if their identification of feminism is different, they would assert that I'm not a feminist. [Question: what about you, do you call yourself feminist?] If Ziya Gökalp did call himself once upon a time, there is nothing wrong for me to call as such.

Majority of the male students both from women's studies and other departments in social sciences hesitate to call themselves feminist. Therefore, when their opinion was asked whether they call themselves "profeminist" which implies men's support to feminism and acknowledges that women are excluded from many areas of power that are open to men (Clatterbough, 1990). This conceptualization started to be used after studies on men and masculinities had been expanded. Thus throughout the interviews, men who have been familiar with masculinity literature were in the manner to accept the concept of "profeminist" for themselves. On the other hand majority of the women's studies students, unlike the students who studied "masculinities", either did not know the meaning of profeminism or most of them did not warmly welcome the concept after learning the description. Instead they produced alternative names rather than profeminist. For instance, the Student 1 told as such:

Of course feminist movement should be strengthened, theorized and called by women but all the social movements include others as supporters although they are not actual members. In that sense, I can be called as comprador, like as comprador bourgeois.

This is an important statement because although ‘studies on men and masculinities’ are deprived of feminist theory, two groups of men who study ‘feminism’ and ‘masculinity’ described themselves differently, whether as “feminist” or “profeminist”. First of all, women’s studies students in the interview group would like to call themselves feminist but they hesitate to do so due to feminist women. In addition they did not prefer another conceptualization for men such as “profeminist” instead of feminist. And students who study men and masculinities find themselves close to understand practices of men in gender relations, therefore the concept of profeminism is more familiar and sympathetic to them. In addition, both scholars expressed that they do not feel uncomfortable to use profeminist in some occasions. But M. Ecevit told his own impression on profeminism as:

A smart [men who is also] feminist would not call himself a profeminist! What is meant by ‘feminist man’ is someone who gives attention to all feminist theory and acknowledges it. That is all my point to criticize in the concept of ‘profeminist’ men; profeminist men cannot, do not and do not want to include all [feminist theory] or they are not aware of that [whole feminist theory].

This part was about the understandings of the interviewed men about feminism’s contributions to their lives. Whether they call themselves feminist, profeminist or comprador feminist, they declared that they want to have a part in feminism. Their attending women’s studies programs, writing thesis on gender related subjects in other social science programs or teaching courses in this field can be considered another proof for their will. While they have a strong intention to have a part in feminism, it is remarkable to question whether men can contribute to feminism. Since it has been a familiar question among feminists, next part will try to issue articulations of men on this topic.

4.2. Can Men Contribute to Feminism and Feminist Theory?

This question probably has been posed many times both in the field, in women's movement, in women's NGOs, and in the academia wherever feminist women would have brought the question. Although this time would not be the first for feminist women, this would be a first for men to deal with this question in such a feminist study. To pose the question again; what would it contribute to feminism if men express that they want to join the struggle against male hegemony? Student 2 responded to the question:

It would contribute feminism a lot I guess. Feminism has a message for men. It tells men that this world is for all of us and we are going to live equally. And [feminism tells to patriarchy that] "I won't let your domination molded with cunning, sexism and power". If men join this [struggle against male hegemony] we would rock this sexist structure from the origin where patriarchy winded every place such as the computer you use at your desk. I mean we can call out "we are also burdened from that structure as men and we don't want to oppress women". That is terrible. I mean, really, we don't want to be part of this. To say it short, I'm not harassed on my way back from Kızılay due to being a man, but a woman is harassed and not being harassed doesn't make me feel comfortable. That doesn't mean that I would also be harassed, no, yes we don't want this. I don't need to be harassed to be painful from this structure. Not all men are harasser, not all men would like women to cook all the time and men get rest. There is no such a thing. Maybe there are some men... but... no, if we are rational human beings; actually there is no need to be rational; if we are human beings, we should see there is an inequality and we should work to change ourselves. That is our issue.

This man's words about "not all men are harasser, not all men..." reminds the preceding notion mentioned in the second chapter that acknowledges not all men are the same which keeps a potential for some of them to join struggle against patriarchy (Pease: 2000, Bartky: 1998, Kimmel: 1994). Student 4 who studied men and

masculinities in his master's thesis replied this question different from the women's studies graduate student as such:

First of all, men's engagement to struggle would support feminism. Secondly, it would contribute to annihilate patriarchy. Today, it seems totally impossible. I mean, men's devotion to struggle against patriarchy... On the other hand, there is a transformation in gender identity. That transformation is very slow but men's receding from hegemonic masculine identity become possible with the influence of feminists by the way. Feminists suppressed and then men moved backwards. Feminism wakened men from their sleep. Feminism contributed me to understand the "other". But I'm against the idea of explaining gender relations only with women. I find it insufficient for the theory as well. Both sides should be analyzed. This would help men to be understood in patriarchal society and the complicated steps which a man has to pass. Men are also being damaged from patriarchy. This [understanding men] would also help to deconstruct men's oppression over women. My point is this at the moment; the oppression. This would also contribute feminism... I believe that feminism ought to be studied with gender and include men too. All right! In my opinion, after all the struggle should continue with a gender perspective.

When these scholars are taken into consideration their attitude towards men's contributions to feminism seems to fall apart. Atay who gives a lecture on "gender and culture" uttered that men's contribution to feminism is essential. He articulated his thoughts as:

In my opinion it [men's engagement to the struggle against patriarchy] would contribute a lot. I mean you cannot give a fight with half of the humanity which relates all humankind. In other words, the problem of male power is valid for all human kind and it is insufficient to fight against as women's struggle only. We have to change this. Maybe the name of feminism is a tradition; it has to be preserved due to being a birth, an origin. But we should definitely put a dimension in feminism which also includes men. This can be a prefix, a suffix, a sign. We have to do that.

During the interview Atay pointed out that he had started reading from latest literature to backwards which means he had started to read from masculinity literature to gender studies and finally feminist theory. As he declared in the

interview his main problem was men's power in gender relations so he would definitely agree with the idea that men should have a place in feminism. When the same question was posed to M. Ecevit he replied the question oppositely:

Men's contribution to feminism is marginal, despite all their organizations, groupings, good will, and critical stand point –however we call it-. Because it has seen that in either patriarchy or social class inequality men have been the origin and caused transportation and reproduction [of these inequalities]. Men have not shown any change from their responsibilities or positioning.

Unlike M. Ecevit, majority of the interviewees have the same opinion with the former Atay who expressed that men's contribution to feminism is both essential and beneficial. Although most of them believe that men can contribute to feminism it is also crucial how men can contribute to feminism, by doing what. One of them stated that:

Men can contribute to feminism by diminishing the oppressive discourse on women's subordination among men's groups where women cannot reach, for instance, in academia. Academia is a place where the ratio of men is higher. The existence of these men who are interested in women's concerns can help the transformation of academia or for instance military. Military is the place where sexism really works.

Student 3 stressed that if men wanted to contribute to feminism they should show women that they are ready to listen them:

First of all, men should demonstrate that they are at the back of women and ready to be dragged by them- I'm sorry for the vulgar concept, I cannot think of another one right now. Showing that men are ready to be dragged by feminist women can be a significant contribution. It includes the self-criticism which asks more than self-devotion. Men contribute by saying that "you helped me to make my self-critique, critique of my masculine identity". I guess all they can do is that. Let's think that there is a feminist meeting, a meeting where men are also invited- which I'm not against, there is not such a thing that men can't be invited to feminist meeting. For instance, sitting there at the back rows has a symbolic meaning. It says that "we, men, understood what

you have said. You primarily have to talk". When you make the discourse analysis of sitting back, it means "we are listening what you say and we will talk less than we listen".

This reminds Whelehan and Seidler as they express men should avoid purely 'servicing' roles in relation to women's movement, because this would suggest an apolitical position for men in feminism and estrangement from their own experiences as men (Whelehan: 1995, Seidler: 1991). Student 9 from women's studies program expressed how men can contribute to feminism as:

I can support feminism by merely re-forming my daily life. We can change our perspective, the one that we use to look at our daily lives. By verbalizing it we have to dissolve [the present perspective] and we should verbalize feminism at this point.

As Hearn declared above in the second chapter, feminism has shown the importance of experience which is political as well (Hearn, 1992). What this student told coincides with Hearn as they both stress the construction of daily life and personal experiences. Even though most of the interviewees believe that they can contribute to feminism with their self-devotion or by re-forming daily life experiences, contribution to feminist theory is another dimension. Feminist theory has been built upon women's common experiences of oppression and that epistemological difference can put men aside to be part of feminism like Ashe uttered as feminism's experiential bar (Ashe, 2004). While some men agreed with this thought akin to M. Ecevit, the rest did not agree. They did not agree because they asserted that being a feminist was not only related to being a woman; plenty of women were not feminist, therefore feminism asked more than women's experience to be a feminist (Hopkins, 1998). These students below articulated their thoughts about men's contribution to feminist theory despite men's lack of women's experience. Student 2 expressed his thoughts as such on this contribution:

But a man can also contribute feminist theory by studying masculinity. I mean by mentioning his experience. For instance, by telling what had

happened when he had long hair in the town. But let me say something; men are the witnesses of all of women's subordination; if they are human beings, they should remember those. They [men] must start from their family and tell that "my mother's experience of inequality and the beating I witnessed was part of my experience also". Men are not inexperienced in that. We are experienced not only as subjects- I mean we are experienced as beater, harassers and witnesses, but also as injured. When we think of it, we are also injured from this [patriarchy].

In addition, student 6 asserted that people did not need to experience everything in order to understand it, therefore he concluded that men do not always need women's experience in order understand women and support feminism:

There is such a thing here; we don't know everything that we have lived and experienced. If things were as such, there wouldn't be any schools or education. We know most of the things without experiencing it. Of course, we don't know how it is lived or how it is experienced but we know something about it. For instance, without living the homosexuality, we know the difficulties. I have never been a black, but I can understand the difficulties that a black person lives. Of course, blacks should verbalize it but if only blacks verbalize it how far can it go to?

Student 1, like student 2, stated that men could learn from women's experiences without experiencing:

Men wouldn't have women's experiences of their subordination or discrimination as women do but they would provide experiences from other women's oppression in their environment. Men can transform these to theory like women transform their experience and knowledge into theory. It's not always possible to be the oppressed as to produce knowledge or contribute to theory.

Like these interviewees, most men from women's studies programs agreed that men are witnesses of women's subordination and their experience of being a witness can also produce knowledge for feminist theory. Besides, dissimilar comments for men's witnessing were made by Student 3 as such:

Yes, but men's witnessing of women's subordination should definitely be from men's perspective. There is no escape from that. There are various dimensions for feminist studies. An important dimension is historical studies. In these historical studies, I think that the researcher's sex is not very important... therefore, men only contribute historical studies only as a scientist. That could constitute a dimension. On the other hand, they can express their experiences of masculinity. This does not have to be their own experience, this could include the studies that explain how men see women at their position. This would also contribute to feminist theory.

Most of the interviewees talked about studies on men and masculinities and its contribution to feminist theory. The studies on men and masculinities constitute another field that this thesis is analyzing. For the last few years there has been a rise in the number of men who are involved in masculinity studies in Turkey. As mentioned in the second chapter, studies on men and masculinities emerged from feminist theory and gender studies. However, it is a striking fact that there has been no man studying 'masculinity studies' in the women's studies program yet. Students who had studied on this issue of 'masculinity' have been from other social science departments and especially from the department of anthropology. Therefore, in order to state the difference between the interviewees of distinct disciplines, they were asked if they agreed with the idea that analyzing men; their practices and experiences would contribute to feminist theory. While people who study on 'masculinities' directly gave immediately a positive response, Student 2 from women's studies program responded as such:

I think these studies contribute [to feminism] because majority of the problems that women face are related with 'reproduced masculinity.' Today, when we think of Turkey the woman identity is subordinated and the fact of men is hegemonic in this cultural environment. And it presents that we have to criticize masculinity and the institutions that produce masculinity. I think feminism specially should study this topic.

Student 3 expressed that studies on men and masculinity contribute to feminism as such:

Exactly! [Studies on men and masculinity contribute to feminist theory]. Because feminism's point is not to annihilate men, it is to face men with their masculinity in some sense. Feminism has already put the diagnosis of inequality, now it's time for this; to work on men.

Student 1 also agreed with the idea:

I agree with this idea hundred percent. If there is an inequality, both sides should be examined. Putting them [women] a side and calling them unequal, calling them that they are secondary, and let's analyze them... [He nods] As long as we try to understand the oppressed, we also have to understand the psychology of oppressor. Men's experience can also be beneficial for feminist theory. If that's the advantage of interdisciplinary studies, women's studies should use everything, in my opinion.

Almost all of the interviewees replied that those studies which analyzed men and their practices contributed to feminist theory. As cited before, Ertürk accords this thought by urging that women's empowerment and the achievement of equality between men and women requires an understanding of how masculinity is constructed and reproduced (Ertürk, 2004). However, studying men and masculinity has some risks like re-centering and reproducing male domination or women's exclusion from the studies, as Hearn uttered before (Hearn, 2004). Men were questioned whether they saw such a risk in those studies which were actually far different from feminist goals. Almost all the interviewees who study men and masculinity replied negatively to this question. Contrary to those responses two men conveyed that they have serious doubts about the studies on men and masculinities. Student 3 emphasized the problem with these words:

Definitely it seems there is [the risk of excluding women in those studies]. For this reason when I see "masculinity studies" I quickly step

backwards: I feel that there is such a risk in it. [On the other hand] this situation has a positive side: at the end new texts will be written, and because they will be academic texts that would demonstrate men cannot totally be released from male hegemony although they consider themselves [or their work] as feminist... it would indirectly contribute to women due to being men's text.

In addition, M. Ecevit who is rather pessimistic about the men who study masculinities:

These groups of men and the profeminist networking... [Silence] if men learn more about their patriarchal attitudes... the benefit of it is low and it's a bit dangerous from an aspect (...) Let me exaggerate a bit more: if men learn about their patriarchal manner and don't do anything in order to change it, then they give us the bad news. Profeminists would then become the men who know about patriarchy [but don't do anything to struggle against patriarchy]. They can suddenly leave their position [of supporting feminism]. If they have higher conscious [about patriarchy] it doesn't mean that they won't turn out to be an anti-feminist.

Like Hearn cautioned above, some men in the field of women's studies did mention the risk of re-centering men while analyzing patriarchy through male practices. Student 4 told that his intention for studying patriarchy was not to contribute feminism:

...my first intention exactly is not to contribute feminism although I have a similar perspective. Men's intention to deconstruct patriarchy is my ambition.

Like Hearn and the other two men assert, while studying men and masculinities, re-centering men as the primary intention seems to be a potential risk for the future of this field. Hearn is one of the most known theorists of this field who emphasized this danger in many of his writings. He suggests connecting men in a relational perspective, for instance, in gendered power relations, with women, children, young people and each other to reduce the risk of reproducing male domination (Hearn, 2004). In addition to Hearn, Atay did not aim to focus merely men's practices:

We cannot merely think of men's situation by itself. We have to meet at a point where the human level is. We have to emphasize that the femininity and masculinity are not categories excluding each other; actually there is the oppressed femininity in men and oppressed masculinity in women. There, we have to emphasize that these oppressed backgrounds lessen our humanity. We have to emphasize in the continuation of this oppression the inequality is inevitable. In order to do this, we have to be in interaction. And the field of, destination of interaction is feminism. If we are going to discuss inequality of women and men, change the inequality of women and men the field is feminism. I mean, that's why I told that you state your standpoint according to the context, occasion. If the problem is inequality between the sexes then you have to be in the formation of feminism. But by the conditioning name of, term of feminism we should not directly think of women's liberation. There is an inequality here, and the reason for inequality is male power, that's why the name of this movement is feminism. But we again express that this male power behaves unjustly to men as well. Therefore, the place where the man is going to take place, due to the oppressive nature of male power, is feminism. I think in such a way.

All these arguments that have been made are the reasons for men why they see themselves in the field of feminism, how they identified themselves within the field and how they plan to contribute feminism as men. Nevertheless, these are not enough for the study to understand men's positioning in feminism. In order to comprehend their relation with feminism, their attitude towards patriarchy should be taken into consideration. Next chapter will particularly focus on men's relation with patriarchy.

CHAPTER V

MEN'S RELATIONS WITH PATRIARCHY

The purpose of this chapter is to comprehend men's understanding of patriarchy. What does patriarchy mean to these men and how does it feel like for men to live in a patriarchal society? Do they feel dissatisfied and if yes, does this dissatisfaction result in transformation in their manners for more equal gender relations? Is there any distinction between men who study at women's studies programs and in other social science departments who study men and masculinities in that respect? The second part of this chapter is critical on behalf of another reason for questioning whether men can change. Although there would not be a particular answer, the reason for posing such a question is to focus on men's intention to achieve feminist goals through their lives.

5.1. Men's Dissatisfaction with Patriarchy

Most of the feminists, including the author of this study, would hesitate how to react when they hear that men have dissatisfactions with patriarchy. Dissatisfaction for what, as a feminist may ask, isn't it comfortable enough for men? The idea for putting such a title grew after the interviews have been accomplished. Men told many times during the interviews that they were unhappy for living in such a patriarchal society and explained their reasons why. Therefore, before beginning this

part it would be noticeable to know that, the interviewees were the ones who determined the headline of this part.

While men's relation with feminism has been discussed in the previous chapter, most of the interviewees touched on the concept of patriarchy. What the concept of patriarchy means for these men in the interviewed group; rather than the identification of the concept, the symbol or the first thing which comes to their mind was asked to the interviewees. Students 2 and 3 who studied at women's studies program replied the question as such:

When it is called patriarchy, a huge sculpture comes to my mind. A thing with an enormous shape that watches knows and rules everything. Male hegemony... and the metaphor of jail... Patriarchy makes me feel that I am living in jail conditions, that there isn't much space to move and your roles [what to do] are already defined and determined.

As a matter of fact, it seems to me that patriarchy is a tool for us in order to interpret history. I understand an abstraction made from whole behaviours that is changing in history, which is seen in different contexts. In these total behaviours the only common feature is, there is something that benefits men in it, synonymously, there is something that harms women. So it is either made by men or not, the thing that benefits men and harms women where it puts men and women on the opposite poles. Although it changes in history, and it exposes in different shapes, the common side in all of that is called patriarchy.

Student 5 resembled the concept of patriarchy to air which surrounds everything related to human:

When we say patriarchy, the air we breathe comes to my mind as a metaphor. I always say that. That's why most of us, either women or men, men are more of course, cannot question due to being that big element in our lives. Then it turns out to be an existential thing. When you try to question it, you don't know where to stand; first of all you live with the fear of being excluded. It's a big threat. It doesn't have to be by words or behaviours.

Student 4 uttered that the concept basically reminded him gender inequality:

Patriarchy reminds me gender inequality. And, it expresses women's confinement to secondary position in society. It posits to do or not to do the things we do. Anyhow, inherently patriarchy is an unequal social system. Moreover, when patriarchy is called this also comes to my mind; Oedipus, the relations between mother and son.

As seen above, the responses of two groups of students did not fall apart: students from both women's studies programs and other social departments thought that it immediately reminded them an unequal system that put women into secondary, disadvantaged position. In addition to their recognition of women's position, both groups identify patriarchy as a system of control which affects all sexes and determine "what to do" and "what not to do". In addition to students, Atay simply described patriarchy as such:

Pressure... Patriarchy is a terrible burden that I have to deal with which shows change in time and space and makes me feel uneasy.

Interviewees articulated that patriarchy harmed not only women but also men as men felt pressure on themselves. It reminds the words of Kaufman, who claims that; men do not always feel powerful in society, and contrarily, men do feel pain in the incessant attempt to reach power while this motivates *contradictory experiences of power* (Kaufman, 1994: 147). Therefore, there is a strong relationship between power and patriarchy as the relation between men and power. Hence, profeminist study does analyze the power relations between men and women in order to understand construction of male hegemony and patriarchy (Brittan, 1989). Student 2, who studied in women's studies, articulated men's position in Turkey by telling a real story about a man who was afraid of being humiliated and tried to seem powerful:

Men in Turkey are in such a bad position, I think. Turkey is a place where you have to prove your masculinity. There is a social structure where military is exalted, and power means control over women. Since the establishment of Turkish Republic, there is such a thing. Like [in the expression]; “the healthy mind exists in a healthy body.” And what is meant by healthy body is men’s body, of course. Men are in such a poor position. Think about the conditions of gays in Turkey. You cannot uncloset yourself. Think about a man who cannot make sex. There is an example that comes to my mind; there is a new married couple in our town, I mean they got married two years ago and their parents were pushing them to make children. But the man cannot make sex... and think about it: the woman had to stand that for two years. And that’s not all, he made woman put a pillow on her belly, as she was pregnant. Think about the boy; he seems to be very poor here and the woman was oppressed in this position. And then of course, she pretended she got ill and had a miscarriage but after all she told [everybody] the problem was such and such and left back to her [family’s] home. Great, she did great but the man was ashamed so much that he couldn’t walk in the street for months. I heard this story after all these had happened. That is the situation of men in Turkey. Men are never happy to be men. They pretend that they are happy, everybody pretending they are happy. Excuse me but I will tell a last thing, that is also the same reason which cause harassment, as much as it is ugly in manner it is also such a poorest thing [of men].

At present in small towns or villages, it is also a common practice to blame women instead of men for not being infertile. In this example presented by the student, the man wanted to seem powerful, and the disappointment and incapability of not having a child put a shade on his masculinity. Therefore, instead of telling the truth he pushed his wife to pretend that she was pregnant. The student, by telling the story here, wanted to express that man was afraid of seeming powerless as a man and actually that put him in a much poorer situation while he pretended to be powerful. Kaufman’s statement on the relation between men and power assumes that which seem as a privilege on behalf of men (to hold power) may not be advantageous and on the contrary it can be painful for raising fear (Kaufman, 1994). These two students, who did their master’s thesis on men and masculinities, uttered that men were not aware what kind of a system they were living in and therefore, although they felt the burden of it they were not capable of identifying it as patriarchy. Student 4 articulated his thoughts as like:

I don't think that many of them [men] give attention to that [concept of patriarchy]. But...but is very important here, they are so uncomfortable that, they feel it within the depths of their being. But they are not aware of it. I take your question from being aware. Although they are not aware, they are extremely uncomfortable with the system of patriarchy. These men are unhappy. What else we are talking about!

Student 8 related the problem with being aware of the problem:

First of all, most of the men in Turkey do not know what kind of a structure they are living in. A consciousness is essential in order to form a standpoint. People, maybe, who conduct academic studies or intent to be intellectuals, analyze much more things [and know much more] but... for a normal educated person, due to not having that consciousness, questioning the system is meaningless. For instance, when you say women are oppressed, they reply that it is something natural. And without calling that patriarchy, men are happy to live in that system.

These two men above stated that although they felt the burden of patriarchy, they did not call it as such or would not intent to express it because men take advantage of patriarchy although patriarchy harms them somehow. Student 6 replied the question of whether men are uncomfortable to live in a patriarchal society as such.

I think men are not uncomfortable. [Silence] ...Because they are not even aware that there is "patriarchal system". This [patriarchy] isn't only a concept that social scientists put forward. There is such a thing [patriarchy] obviously. First of all, they are not comfortable due to not being aware of that. (...) They would ignore when they hear it. Yet this system of patriarchy constructs and develops because of these men, I mean we –I don't know why I exclude myself from those men- don't get uncomfortable.

His expressions were pessimistic about men's realizations of patriarchy. Moreover, student 5 made a different diagnosis for his generation and told that the relation between men and women had been changing:

Yes, there are some men [who are uncomfortable with living in patriarchal society] but they are minority really. Let me put it like this; I see some uncomfortable men in my generation. The relation between men and women is very complex but there have been some deconstructions in these relations. There are many characteristics influencing these relations such as; class, ethnicity, socio-economic background.

As seen above many students both from women's studies programs and other social science departments agreed on the idea that men are not aware of the patriarchal system that has control over women and men. In addition, some of the students told that men are happy for using the advantages of patriarchy and would not want to learn more about it. Two students expressed that although men are unaware of patriarchy they feel the influence within the depths of their being which makes them unhappy. On the other hand, the same question was asked to the scholars as well. Atay replied that in his opinion although men did not consciously put it as a problem, they had been feeling the burden of patriarchy on their shoulders. Moreover, M. Ecevit replied the question in this way:

I don't think so... Let's take the two groups as an example. One is intellectuals and the other group is scientists. In the group of scientists there is almost no one who is uneasy with the system of patriarchy, but there are in intellectuals. Because, the group we call intellectual, constitute the majority of the middle class. Authors, poets, journalists, you can add every kind, even the musicians.

Although there have been different definitions of patriarchy, majority of the interviewees expressed that they, themselves, and other men in society have discomforts and dissatisfactions because of living within the system of patriarchy. Therefore, what they did to show their dissatisfaction towards patriarchy is also asked to the interviewees. In addition who they talked to or in which groups or surroundings they could bring up this issue. This question is asked due to feminism's political influence on daily lives. As most of the men in the interviewed group expressed that they either call themselves feminist, profeminist or attempt to support

feminism it is crucial to know how they act in response to patriarchy. Atay responded what he does to show his dissatisfaction with patriarchy:

I talk to everyone from the age of seven to seventy. I talk to my mum, I talk to my male friends, I talk to my daughter, I talk to my wife... I'm already performing my dissatisfaction over an intellectual activity; I'm giving a course, putting it as a topic in my environment, writing on this subject, sharing with society. That is to say, I'm seriously uncomfortable with that. I mean, being a man, in biological way, isn't the thing that makes me uncomfortable. I don't have any problems to be born as a male; I'm enjoying, performing and using the pleasure to be man. But I'm uncomfortable for the manhood which is made to be as this. Being a man shouldn't be like that, I think. I believe it is the consequence of a patriarchal pattern. I try to find the historical dynamics of it. I am emphasizing it as a problematic field in all my surrounding.

He expressed that either by talking with people in his environment, putting the issue as a problematic one or expressing it in an intellectual way, he demonstrated his dissatisfaction. In addition to Atay, M. Ecevit told what he does to show his dissatisfaction with patriarchy as such:

I give most of my reaction in my scientific studies. And secondly, I try to respond my reaction to patriarchy in the relations with women; I mean, while consuming the daily life. The position that women are in, for instance let's say as an intellectual activity, I try to attend conferences that are related to women, join the walk or try to support if needed. If an article is essential, I do, but not academic; intellectual. These kinds of things... While you are walking in the street if someone tells improper things to women, I am psychologically irritated, society is psychologically irritated. You insult if it's needed. In every place of daily life, there are patriarchal things: when you go to a restaurant there is "talk over women", you go to a [football] match there is "talk over women". There is no such place that men are not talking, consuming chat over women in daily life; you go to a pub; "women talk", you turn on the TV; "women talk". Everywhere is as such. As I told, if someone tells improper things, you try to interfere. You can also show inactive resistance. For instance in a restaurant if your friends make such a talk, you threw an excuse and leave the place or you directly tell that "I'm not comfortable to make that conversation" or you interfere by telling that "that conversation is not a good conversation".

What M. Ecevit told about showing dissatisfaction is parallel to Atay's expressions. These words of the two scholars resemble what Jardine uttered about what feminists would want from men. She told that what feminists want from men is their serious work; and like all the serious works it asks struggle and pain (Jardine, 1987). Parallel to Jardine's thoughts, what these academics present to feminist women is their work in the academia or in intellectual life and their struggle in their daily lives. In addition to Atay and M. Ecevit, students join the endeavor of work and struggle. Student 2 conveyed his reaction to patriarchy with these words:

As I told at the beginning, this inequality irritates me. At the same time, being obliged to play the masculine role irritates me. How do I show my dissatisfaction to those; everyday at work, when I go back to house I drive people crazy (because of talking). But there is also such a good thing about; I have two room mates, one of them is a man and one of them is a woman. In time I realized that my complaining started to influence them; for instance although she wasn't close to feminism I learned that she joined the walk at 8th of March and another time, the man showed me a sexist article in a magazine. That's good for two reasons. One, I stay awake by talking to them and I keep on getting confused. This thing of being confused is very important for me. I'm always confused because I believe that nothing can be changed without being confused. Therefore, by speaking, writing. For instance, when I was in high school at 19th of May Celebrations one of my friends was taken out of the sports groups due to not being a sportive boy as we were. In quotations he was acting like a girl. I wrote that and I always tell this. There you go; you can see how close relations there are between fascism and sexism.

This man admits the importance of showing one's dissatisfaction against patriarchy. By showing reaction to it, he drew attention to this issue. Moreover, these attempts produce the quick feedbacks in daily lives when it is compared with intellectual activity. That is also an important influence of feminism which politically affects the practices of daily life. Student 9, 1 and 3 told about their reactions to patriarchy as such:

For instance, when my sister's going outside alone it was a problem, they [parents] were saying: "you are a girl, don't spend too much time outside, or don't walk around at that late". When I witness such kind of behavior I express my discomfort. How can I do it? I tell that every period of time could have different conditions; they should be flexible get used to them...etc. Majority of the people in my environment has knowledge about this subject [of feminism]. I can discuss these subjects with my friends. There were times that we questioned these [issues] and feminism is a very significant tool for questioning. Frankly, it needs a lot of effort to break sexism in daily life.

It's very hard to find male allies. Everybody accepts that the system is denigrating women. I'm especially irritated from cursing and the men talk over women. For instance, when my friends make jokes about homosexuals I quickly interfere their chat with jokes. Then I am being blamed [for not joining them].

I have recently decided to talk to the people who don't think like I do [about feminism]. As a way of personal struggle I decided to talk to these people [who seem to be unaware of patriarchy] at the cost of humiliating feminism or being seen not convincing enough. Because that kind of a dialog, that kind of a struggle would help to come closer to the thing we want.

Another significant point of this study is its emphasis on the relation between the women's studies students and students in other social science departments who study on men and masculinities for their master's thesis. Since the beginning of chapter four, men's obvious responses to feminism and feminist theory have been given. The significant thing was their distinct identification of themselves. For instance, as mentioned before, students who studied at women's studies programs much more willingly attempt to call themselves feminist rather than profeminist, unlike the masculinity studies' students. Contrary to their personal identification, in chapter five, their way of showing dissatisfaction against patriarchy did not present distinctions like their personal identification. In other words, the interviewees' reactions to patriarchy from both groups coincide with each other. Either by talking within their environment or by intervening the sexist chats, these men tried to show their dissatisfaction against the patriarchal pattern. Moreover this part has shown the

close relation between men and power within the context of patriarchy. Most of the interviewed men in the groups expressed that they felt implications of patriarchy obliged to them, what to do and what not to do as men. Therefore patriarchy, in the eyes of these men, does not only indicate women's subordination but also men's contradictory experiences of power as Kaufman asserts (Kaufman, 1994). Additionally, majority of the interviewed men agreed on the idea that studying men and masculinity would help to understand patriarchal construction.

However; it is also another question whether men's dissatisfaction with patriarchy would bring change in men. Although they express that patriarchy harms not only women but also men, can these profeminist men and men in general change due to the patriarchal burden? Segal criticizes men's real motivation to change for more gender equal relations (Segal, 1993). In order to understand men's real motivation to change, next part of this chapter will deal with the concept of "change" in the interviewed group.

5.2. Does the Dissatisfaction with Patriarchy Bring Change in Men?

Majority of the interviewed men conveyed that they were dissatisfied with living under patriarchy. Therefore, whether realizing the harms and burdens of patriarchy for both women and men would help men to change their positioning in gender relations and therefore open the path for men to put the feminist goals into practice reminds a question. The patriarchal system does provide privileges on behalf of men so can men leave these privileges in order to change the inequality between the sexes. This part will particularly focus on these questions and the concept of "change" constitutes the main focus.

When the question whether men can change as to reach more equal gender relations in society was asked, the student 3 replied as such:

Yes, but we will keep saying “men are changing”. I mean we will interpret it as “men are changing” and someday we will not probably say that “men have changed between these dates and now it’s over”. I mean the history will be continue as such because patriarchy can fit itself into new changing conditions. Therefore, a hundred years later we’re going to say that “men are changing”.

This student described “change of men” as an endless process and stressed the problem of changing patriarchy. Every time men are changing, patriarchy transforms itself to fit in new conditions of life. That is one of the things Segal mentioned in her book; even men seem to change, it does not mean that they are not practicing patriarchy anymore (Segal, 1994). On the other hand, another women’s studies’ student replied that “change” would not come so easily but at last it has to:

Maybe that would not directly bring change but provide consciousness. Because I, for instance, realized that in my surroundings: they were making fun of me at first but then I realized that they start to take this subject seriously. It is important due to that. If they are human they should change. Remember what Kant said; if you are laying your feet and somebody is uncomfortable because of that then, what you have done is not freedom. If the structure makes me free but oppress women then this is not ethical.

Student 10 who studied eco-feminism in his graduate program, told that not only himself but men in general should change:

Of course men should change. If there is no possibility what should I work for? There is no need to hope here, it is a reasonable thing. There are social dimensions here, if you change them...

Although these two students did not mention how, they stressed the inevitable need for a change. However, one point was striking here, when the question about “men and change”, was asked most of the men did not include themselves into the group that had to change. To say it in other words, these men –not on purpose of course-

did not answer the question by using the subject of “we”, instead they answered like “men should...” Student 5 believed in change as such:

I believe that; it’s important for people to change small things in their personal lives, although they need to accept some contradictions within themselves. Mostly this can be opposed but I believe something starts from individuals. It has always been like this in history, even the revolutions. Always it started at the top and then came down. I mean, it is like culture, something has to start from individuals, relations and responses. From this perspective if you ask me what I do, for instance I position my self opposite to most of men. I mean, there are times that I face that difficulty.

In addition to the idea that process of change starts with individuals, student 1 believed that change did not happen easily by seeing the unequal power relations between the sexes. He exemplified this through his personal experience as such:

Most of them see their sister’s, mother’s subordination – I am talking about educated men- but not develop some sensitivity on this subject. Let me make a personal critique again; until the age of 18-19 I have lived in a small town where women are subjected to unequal relations. But these experiences didn’t push me to understand women’s issues through 19 years. After coming to university, and reading the theories... then I start to realize. But, you cannot learn everything from theories. You have to make synthesis at some mature levels. And in Turkey if it [sensitivity] is not coming from experience, men are not interested in theory so...

This argument of the student reminded some of the former answers of other students and built up a new question whether witnessing women’s subordination is enough for men to realize the unequal gender relations. In this position of man, it obviously was not. In either ways “change” does not seem to come easily. Contrary to the student’s suggestions about changing men with individual attempts, Atay told his opinions about “change” that should come with in culture:

This is because of culture, patriarchal pattern of culture. We are living in a season of patriarchy. That is the air we breathe. But that is a metaphor you know, air is out of our control. Not like that, this is a

cultural space and we form that space. We can change it; we change it into something different. We can stop the patriarchal flow. That is possible. Within the absence of this [attempt to change culture] men are trying to be ‘men’ under this pressure. All the eyes are on them [men] in their environment, that’s why men obey those eyes where the patriarchal power is, rather than it is in men. In the relation with his wife, children and the women in the street, everywhere he forms his behaviours up to those eyes. That’s why you act as a consequence of that culture. Although you feel pain, suffer and regret after you have done, you have done the things that is asked from those eyes. It affects your humanity, almost destroys it. Resist them [those eyes that are watching], don’t do what they have told you, do what they’ve told you not to do.

Since the beginning of this part men have been citing that they believed the idea “men should change” not only to stop women’s subordination, but also for themselves and humanity. There have been two distinct opinions on the way to change; one student cited that men should change through individual attempts. On the other hand Atay, expressed that change should be cultural. In addition to those, another student uttered that men’s witnessing women’s oppression does not bring change in men emerged from his own experience. He told that theory and experience should complement each other.

However, the change of men is not easy due to men’s institutionalized privileges in patriarchal society as Messner indicated before (Messner, 1998). Messner told that profeminist men’s aim is to both join women to confront patriarchy and distance men from their institutionalized privileges. Therefore, it is also crucial to analyze what these men think about the institutionalized privileges in particular. Do their argument support Messner’s point of view as to make men leave their privileges? Student 11 who studied in women’s studies program expressed his idea as such:

Some men would of course leave their privileges, not majority, but I believe some of them would probably leave, would want to leave their privileges due to the ideal world that will be formed. But I think not majority of men would like to. As I said, the sovereignty of state is equal to the sovereignty of men. When I look at the popular culture, I

see the mentioned masculinities are these, again the men who reproduced these are the men that do not want to leave their privileges in the system, and moreover these men benefit so much from life that it is not easy to leave these privileges.

Another student, student 1, replied the same questions as such:

Leaving the privileges... [Silence] for a more equal world, if men are on the unequal side, I mean if men; we are on the oppressor position in quotations [slightly laughs], then of course I would leave my privileges for a more equal world. But when we think about the society, I mean I don't like to say that "I would [leave] but society won't, I'm like this but society is..." But really, I..., the possibility of society's change... Everybody tells that we are changing, we are transforming but this is really hard for society, especially Turkish society due to traditions or religion let's say. I think religion is very significant.

Although these two students who studied at women's studies programs were pessimistic about leaving privileges, another student who studied on men and masculinities, was more optimistic about men's attitude:

When you leave your privileges, the world doesn't come to an end. I mean, it's not end of the world, is it? When men leave their privileges the world doesn't end, [contrary] people are getting wealthier. That's what I call freedom, but they have doubts about themselves. But I experienced it, I speak from my experience. That is the example I gave about adult and child. It is also good to be an adult but people don't want to leave their childhood. And men do not want to leave their masculinities. The conceptualization of masculinity is different than the concept of patriarchy, I mean the concept of masculinity is more related to be manly, but the problem of gender is delicate here.... Masculinities should be wiped out.

Student 5 opposed the term of "men's privileges" because men also had been subjected to subordination under those 'privileges' like it was mentioned in the conceptualization of Messner's *contradictory experiences of power*:

To say frankly, I do question these privileges. How much do they privilege men? I mean these privileges are privilege according to what?

Besides, they are not privileges according to me. I really don't appreciate the word of "privilege".

In addition, student 8 uttered the reasons why men could ask to leave their privileges as such:

Men can leave their privileges for the people they love. Men can leave their privileges for their ideals. That's not the subject I studied but the system harms men too. I mean, it pushes men to behave in a particular way, and obstruct them to put themselves freely. As I said, initially it creates psychological problems for men who have feminine behaviours. Therefore, when it is examined the system of patriarchy has many burdens for men also. In addition men can leave their privileges when it is requested by women. Yes, their attention should be taken into consideration. And when we are talking about everybody, Turkish society, standard people, and the men in the street in quotations... I'm not sure how much sensitive they can react. It's not easy, that's for sure.

All interviewed men agreed that it was not easy to make men abandon their privileges. While everybody had different suggestions on the subject the previous interviewee conveyed that the change was also related with women's requests. There are also two other interviewees who expressed the same thought about women's requests from men. One of them, student 5, explained women firstly should show their joint organization:

In my opinion, women will influence men by presenting their joint organization.

Student 1 uttered what would make men leave their privileges as such:

Here, I'm talking about that [men's privileges]. Feminists and women's movement make us to realize that. I realized my matter with the assistance of women. And the more feminist movement develops, the more people like me will be convinced. I keep on telling that men should realize that these issues are against themselves. They have to realize that their freedom is not ethical or clear. And that would be

with the assistance of feminism. Or the government will not put a sentence for it. The government itself is masculine too.

As seen above, both students emphasized the importance of women's demands from men in order to leave their institutionalized privileges. These intersect with the arguments of Segal where she uttered that the change would be greatest where *women's power to demand change in men* is greatest (Segal, 1993). What is meant with "women's power to demand change in men" is like the realization of men on women's concerns when they meet with women's movement and women's struggle. One of the students previously told that witnessing women's subordination did not make any realization only by itself. He had to come to university, read and think on this issue as to comprehend feminism and women's movement. Therefore the suggestions for living together with women or experiencing women's subordination as the witness (experience of men) is not enough to understand women's situation in patriarchy. It's bare to remember that almost all of the men in the interviewed group stated their engagement with feminism had started either by reading on feminism and feminist theory or by witnessing women's movement and demands in media. One of the students that was cited in chapter four, expressed he was working in a magazine when the parliament was discussing positive discrimination for women. This debate influenced the interviewee to read more on the issue of women's rights and feminism. As a consequence, Segal's indication on women's power to demand change in men seems to have a very significant point.

Moreover, M. Ecevit had distinct opinions compared to the interviewed group. Majority of the men in the group expressed that men should leave their privileges due to various reasons as cited before. But M. Ecevit made his arguments very frankly. No one in the group has used similar words before, about men's attitude to leave their privileges:

This is very hard. I don't think men are [ready to] leaving them, including myself. I put my social privileges into my pocket and make

my comments. This is such a contradiction. Let's frankly tell this here, how much sophisticated I am in the matter of women and men, you are not picking up a life style or the action that seriously annihilates the existing patriarchy in society, I mean the gender inequality that provides you the advantages. [After the question asked, how] Now, the men who are feminists are already middle class-intellectuals. These middle-class intellectuals would take various actions regarding social inequalities but when these inequalities turn towards you, you escape anyway. Now, breaking the men's sovereignty in society may not mean breaking my sovereignty, because I'm an elitist. But I put effort to stop my own inequality [unequal behaviours] in my mind. I can give this effort for everyone; join the walks, do this and that but although I break it in my mind; it is more difficult for me to break it in my daily life. What is more refusing the advantages are much more difficult. I not only refuse my advantages provided by masculinity but also annihilate my inequalities practically done; in other words, both of them. First there are things provided for me, ok refusing them, are a certainty [çantada keklik]; I don't put them in my pocket [as an advantage]. Secondly I don't do anything to change the inequalities I live. In that sense, when I ask whether I can become a feminist I theoretically say yes but I cannot say yes with the same strength in the daily practices.

The answer of M. Ecevit is very striking as much as it is a frank expression. From his expression it is crucial to realize that he did not only speak on behalf of himself, what he gave as an example group was related to most of the middle class, intellectual men. In other words, although men make critiques on masculinity and patriarchal society, this scholar's words are the things not many men would easily either tell or admit. What he mainly presents in his expression is that, although men seem to be closer to feminist discourse, it doesn't mean that they frankly and quickly leave their patriarchal privileges. That brings a new problematization for men here; although they are using the feminist discourse or using a more gender equal discourse, it doesn't signify their true will to make critiques of their own patriarchal and masculine practices in daily life. Moreover, it reminds another significant problem for feminism to struggle against patriarchy. Messner, in his well-known article, "Changing men in the United States," analyzes the change of men's words for a more egalitarian structure of society and questions whether what they say is parallel with what they do (Messner, 1993). Therefore it is also asked to the

interviewees how feminists can trust men for their frank will to join women as to struggle against patriarchy. However, Atay expressed that ‘counting on men’ was such an old argument among feminists:

It’s also not a new saying; I mean it’s a cliché expression. Men are pretending that they are feminist, producing feminist arguments over feminist discourses and making feminist talk. Same things are also valid for women. Feminist women, women who support feminism can locate themselves into a very domestic position inside the home. Moreover, they are very assertive in business life but in private life they feel the need to be protected by a macho man. It was also on the agenda. These women are also feminist women but they are power lover women.

Atay wants to pay attention to contradictions which are not only among men but also among women. Here is student 1, who states that the change in men’s discourse is not easy to prove:

There you go, as I told before, the privileges of patriarchy has been expanded so much. Every educated man can make abstraction but can hardly leave the facts. When it comes to that [changing real life practices] men do make problems. When you look at it in Turkey, most male writers tell that they are against women’s violence; we [he used the subject of ‘we’ as not to exclude himself from other men] are against women’s battering, but when you read their articles it appears that they are totally exalting masculinity. It’s so common now due to that [reason]; it became political correctness to talk as such: “women are equal of course, we’re going to treat equal”.

This statement above is in parallel with the scholar’s articulations about middle-class, intellectual men’s discourse on women’s concerns. Although some men can easily talk on the gender equality it does not mean that they sincerely believe in or do practice it in their daily lives. Another student, student 5, expressed that men struggle to change their inner dynamics as such:

In my opinion, this sincerity of man is limited with his capacity to change his inner dynamics, and potential to make his self-critique. The thing that he brought from the past is important here, the society which

brought him up...etc. More to say, I also live huge contradictions on this issue. When I constantly look from my perspective, I see and feel that I can present hegemonic masculinity practices. To what extent can you criticize yourself? that is the question. Then the sincerity of men will be obvious I think.

In addition to his words, one might say that this process [of leaving the privileges to reach a more egalitarian society] is an endless endeavor to make self-critique someone's own. In other words, men are supposed to keep on questioning themselves since this is an endless process. On the other hand, one of the graduate students from women's studies believed that men can sincerely release themselves from their privileges as such:

Remember the expression: one's work is one's mirror (Aynası iştir kişinin)! I think a man, who joins the social transformation for women's emancipation, would release himself from his privileges sincerely. That kind of man, would realize that he should reflect those [ideas] to the practice.

Nevertheless, it doesn't seem quite easy to do it for student 6, from women's studies department, who expressed the paradoxical relation as such:

That's really hard. Masculinity involves many paradoxes within. It is something that includes exciting contradictions. While you are looking for equality you are also asking for things to be done by yourself. But as I told before, everything is related to ethics. If people wake up early in the morning to do religious practices to be pure for the other world... why would they do that? To live clean, die clean, be clean and also to go to heaven right? And if we believe that this is the way we also must practice it right, we should make our coffee ourselves (as men). Yes there are some men who talk about equality but they not only make their wives to cook for them but also beat them. And the thing is, this disgraceful thing has to be displayed; you are going to put the photo. I'm serious it's really very easy. ... But I have to tell that doing that [questioning men's sincerity to feminism] would not be good. I mean questioning people's intention always distances people. As I told, I haven't forgotten what a woman candidate told me, "What is a man doing here?" when I was in the day of interview [to enter women's studies program]. Therefore asking and questioning their sincerity is not politically correct. (...) On the other hand [if men] are insincere

[and speak a gender equal discourse while behaving oppositely] that is also a benefit for feminism. For instance if a man is hiding his face in a seminar [due to not thinking gender equality] or while writing [saying something about gender equality] this is beneficial because he knows that he is doing something that he has to be ashamed of. What he does when he get back home is another dimension, level. But the important thing here is, a man cannot display sexism obviously.

What this student mentioned here constitutes the origin of Segal's fear that some men, although they seem more in favor of gender equality, are unchanged in their minds which cannot be assumed as a benefit for feminism (Segal, 1993). Moreover, student 8 directed attention to an important argument of socialist feminists that capitalism is also influencing patriarchy thus it is harder to understand men's sincere attempts:

You analyze men's relation with other people, you analyze society. But that's not easy because there is something that socialist feminists discuss; patriarchy is a problem of its own and it goes parallel with capitalism. In other words, it also takes its constitution from capitalism. Therefore, capitalism is also a huge problem on its own. Thus, it's not very easy to change these. If the only problem was patriarchy then it would be easier, we would find prescriptions for the solution but it goes parallel with capitalism, and they feed each other, in that sense it's a serious problem. When capitalism recognizes that it cannot sell due to the current identification then it transforms [the identifications]. For instance, it won't be an academic comment, it's my own analysis; but now capitalism wants men to be more feminine. Men are more interested in what they wear.

What he meant is a crucial dimension in the process of change in men. Capitalism is producing femininity for men which make people think that the wall between polar sexes is disappearing. In addition it gives the impression that more gender equality exists in society. Nevertheless, as another student uttered above, patriarchy has the capacity to transform into new forms which let it exist in today's world. Therefore, it's not enough to express the great change in men since their behaviours in society show distinctions. As Segal mentioned in her book, although men seem to practice more gender equality in discourse or manners, it is still not gender equality; for

instance at home they are helping women in cooking, cleaning, etc. but they are still “helping” women instead of “doing” the housework (Segal, 1993). This discussion has been extended with M. Ecevit’s words where he told about the middle class intellectual men that they would admit essential support to feminism in their discourse, but not criticize their own patriarchal or masculine practices as to change them. Therefore, merely focusing on men; whether they change their discourse or practices in their daily lives is dangerous at some point because if the relation between men and women are not analyzed and women is excluded it would be insufficient to acknowledge the real change in men. This argument was also put by Hearn. He told that in order to reduce the risk of women’s exclusion from studies that analyze men and masculinity, the connection of men with women, children and other should be constantly questioned. This constitutes the way to reform men’s practices as well.

This chapter has been analyzing men’s relation with patriarchy. In the first part of the chapter men’s dissatisfaction within patriarchy has been stated; namely, in what ways men feel uncomfortable and what ways they present or express their discomfort. In the second part, the question whether men can change due to this dissatisfaction has been posed. Although the question is not newly asked, it is crucial for being asked to the men who claim that they are intending to support feminism. As given in their articulations most of them express that the process of leaving institutionalized privileges is not easy although it should be. M. Ecevit expressed very frankly that he believes leaving privileges for men is almost impossible even though they support feminism. Another student expressed that patriarchy is also fortified by capitalism and new patriarchal constructions are produced that are hard to identify. Nevertheless, although there are significant difficulties in truly identifying and changing men’s unequal practices, as Segal, Hearn and Messner indicate it is crucial to watch and analyze male practices with in the relation of sexes (Segal: 1993, Messner: 1993, Hearn: 2004).

Questioning men's strategies to struggle against patriarchy remains to be analyzed. Feminism is not only a theoretical framework that should be studied in the academia. Contrarily, feminism has been a significant movement where the experiences of daily lives reinforced the women's movement and politically aimed to change unequal relations in everyday practices. Therefore, if the men who really want to support feminism and declare that they are unhappy to live in a patriarchal system on behalf of all sexes, it is important to understand their attempts to struggle against patriarchy. What are their strategies to confront patriarchy? Will their attempts be limited to intellectual activities like M. Ecevit had mentioned or will they try to do more practical work? In other words, to what extent men can and want to ally feminism, which constitutes the main question of this study. Moreover, do they aim to join women within that struggle or they do think that they should give their own struggle? And last but not least, how do they position men in general and profeminist men in particular within this struggle? Although there are some men as in the interviewed group who call themselves either feminist or profeminist, what they think for the future of these attempts will be analyzed in the following chapter.

CHAPTER VI

HOW TO STRUGGLE AGAINST PATRIARCHY

This chapter will mainly focus on men's actions, strategies to struggle against patriarchy. The first two parts of this chapter will deal with the question 'for what reasons men would want to struggle against patriarchy?' What are the actions that men can take for constructing a less patriarchal society? If men can struggle against patriarchy, would it be with women or apart from women. Third part will question the present and the future attempts of men who aim to support feminism. Furthermore, it seems there have been more men who are engaged with gender relations and patriarchy for the last few years. Increasing engagement of men with these issues brings new questions, for instance; why is there such an increase in these studies by men for the last few years? and do these men know each other and communicate, and moreover would it contribute to feminism if these men politically work together for the same end?

However this chapter will focus on a last discussion point apart from the questions mentioned above. Throughout the interviews some men mentioned their difficulties while they were studying in this field for not being accepted by women's groups, by other feminist women. These were the points that they simultaneously raised during the interviews.

6.1. Reasons for Men to Struggle against Patriarchy

The previous chapter questioned men's dissatisfactions with living in a patriarchal society. Interviewees pointed whether they are uncomfortable to live in patriarchal system and how they showed their dissatisfaction. This chapter will particularly concentrate on their reasons, attempts and strategies to struggle against patriarchy. Therefore, before focusing on their strategies to struggle, it's crucial to recognize how they state their own reasons to struggle against patriarchy. That question is significant to understand men's priorities to change. Men have been telling that patriarchy does not only oppress or harm women, but also dehumanize and influence men in a negative way. For instance, Connell presented expressed five reasons of his own to struggle against patriarchy as it was presented in the second chapter. Thus, how men in the interviewed group state their reasons to confront patriarchy is significant to learn in that sense. Atay stated his reasons to struggle against patriarchy as such:

Patriarchal system should change because it produces inequality. Inequality makes humanity live in a more injustice way. Patriarchal system should change because half of the humanity [women] is treated unjustly. Patriarchal system should change because the others of that half is uncomfortable in some way to be part of that inequality. Being on the side of victory is also the consequence of that desire to provide power. In order to protect this, men become the police of patriarchal structure. ... Patriarchal system should also change because it oppresses men. Patriarchal system should change for making men polices. As men we have the rights not be police and we do have freedom.

M. Ecevit replied that patriarchal system should change neither for women nor for men only; it has to change to stop class inequalities:

Moreover, I more say that [patriarchal system should change for] class inequalities. In my world perspective what take place more are class inequalities. Therefore, I try to analyze patriarchy on that base.

Both scholars expressed different reasons to change patriarchy. While Atay concentrated on inequality in gender relations, M. Ecevit focused on class distinctions and inequality. As they were cited before, that difference in identification is due to their distinct priorities of interest. Besides, students drew their reasons to struggle against patriarchy more from daily practices and experiences. For instance, student 9, who was studying at women's studies program, replied the question as such:

It should change because it contains injustice at its origin. For example, in a family, just sending boys to schools and depriving girls from this is a treatment that consist patriarchy I think. At least, it should change to break such an injustice. Apart from that, it should change for not only it influences women, but it also helps men who want to escape from produced and obliged masculinity. For another reason, it should change due to blocking the communication between men and women. Patriarchy has to change because of saying that these two [men and women] are from other planets.

As seen above the student gave the example of different treatment of boys and girls when it comes to their schooling in families. Moreover, the student stated that patriarchy should change because of blocking the communication between women and men. On the other hand, student 3, again from women's studies department, replied the question as such:

Patriarchal system should change because right which is available only for men to walk outside after eleven o'clock irritates me because there is an unjust treatment of rights there. To say correctly, there is a deprivation of rights there. And this... is a wrong thing, to say shortly. Because there is nothing wrong with women, who cannot be there. Or the privileges that we [as men] have over them [women] are not correct privileges. I mean identifying the women as loose who walk outside after eleven o'clock is the thing that we; all men do. Even I do have [that thought]. Therefore, I don't appreciate the situations that make women's lives harder; thus it has to change for this reason. I will use the "half of the humanity" discourse, because the rights for half of the humanity become the torture for the other half. For that reason, feminism is essential to comprehend the things which are identified as "rights" are not actually deserved "rights".

This student here was expressing it the same way as Atay did by using the discourse of “half of the humanity”. Besides, he gave the example of women’s rights to walk late outside at nights, which was at the same time, this year’s slogan for the 8th march women’s March [*we want the nights action*]. Student 4 stated his reasons to struggle against patriarchy as such:

I want to change patriarchy because it constructs both sexes, and pushes them into positions that both of them would not want at their origin; because it [patriarchy] obliges them into an unwanted position. It puts them not only into social conditions but also psychological conditions. While doing this I have noticed that many institutions have to change as well. There are many institutions which constructs patriarchy. At the top of this, [patriarchy] has close relations with nationalism, and also militarism. The institution of family should also be questioned. Why the family institution still cannot be surpassed. The people who tell that they have surpassed? how healthy is that? There are many dimensions in it; class...etc. There are things to make changes at this point.

Student 8 expressed his reasons to struggle against patriarchy as such:

My starting point has been from the women that I love. The women I loved have been affected negatively from this system, and that made me sad. My starting point was that but of course I wasn’t thinking on the unequal world structure when I was fifteen. As I said before, I was unhappy for my mother, other...etc. ... I haven’t deeply analyzed but the system can also give damages to men. I mean, it pushes men to act in some way, impedes them to freely realize their selves. As I said, makes psychological problem for the people who have feminine behaviours. Therefore, when you look, the patriarchal system has much harm to men.

These words of the student, which he told it was essential to struggle against patriarchy and patriarchy made him think parallel with Connell’s statement: “even the beneficiaries of an oppressive system can come to see its oppressiveness, especially the way it poisons areas of life they share. Heterosexual men are often committed in important ways to women- their wives and lovers, mothers and sisters,

daughters and nieces, co-workers- and may desire better lives for them” (Connell, 1987: xiii).

As seen above many men in the interviewed group expressed that men have to struggle against patriarchy due to many reasons such as; 1) it oppresses women and damages their lives; 2) the system of patriarchy harms not only women but also men while asking from both sexes to act in a conditioned way; 3) it has an injustice construction at its origin. Hence, these men stated their reasons to struggle against patriarchy but it is another question in which way they plan to contribute or join the struggle. In other words, to reach a more egalitarian society, to weaken the system of patriarchy what can be done on institutional or personal basis. Student 5 in the interviewed group stated the things to be done as such:

First of all, the things some people are capable of doing, are very important at this point. I mean the people who have position of decision making and who have the capacity to transform the system. Besides, non-governmental organizations have to emphasize these issues and decisive politics. And education is very important but it's not easy to transform education [for a more gender equal way]. And as for personal attempts, like I've mentioned before, practices in daily lives are very important.

This student mentioned institutional changes mostly, where people should join the struggle from decision-making positions, civil society or institutional structures like education. Another student, student 1, replied the question like the previous student through decision making channels:

Actually, the struggle should be given at the highest level, in the Parliament etc. but I don't think this is possible in Turkey because women who become the members of parliament are turning into males.

Moreover, student 5 replied the question through using the concept of “humanism” as such:

Let's not look at this as men or women. I have been talking since the start, maybe it is better to look at it as human; it is more correct to look at this through humanism, to join people into this [struggle]. I mean, for this reason it's crucial to consider the men who are capable of criticizing this, rather than excluding them. It's better to establish partnership. (...) Moreover, I can also tell these on this issue: there are many men who do not want to join military service. I think these institutions should be criticized but I'm not sure to what extent it could be in our social structure, I'm not hopeful.

This student also emphasized the importance of criticizing institutions like military as the previous student criticized assembly. Moreover, while talking about men's strategies to struggle against patriarchy, this student expressed that it's better to approach the issue as not only men, it would be better if the strategies are looked through the lens of "human" and "humanism". Although it sounds very egalitarian Seidler's articulations are bare to remember here where he expressed that social theories have been actually about men under the concept of 'human' or 'humankind' (Seidler, 1994). Moreover, historical accumulations have been talking-writing on "men" for a very long time where indeed, it was a talk on the behalf of "human" until feminism has unveiled the patriarchal structure within. Therefore, feminist theory has been paying attention while using the concept of "human".

Student 2 replied to what can be done institutionally or personally as such:

For instance, many steps have been taken in Turkish Penal Code. There have been many new articles put, and some articles have been changed during to the constant efforts of women activists. European Union also affected the process but mainly if women's movement hadn't shown the reality to the government, they [government] would not have been convinced. Legislation... in my opinion, women should never give up pushing the parliament, because women are also the ones who provide power to the government. Thus, is it possible that you become the power with women's votes and decide on legislation that is against women's rights? Women have to keep asking for their own rights. ... Feminist organizations are also very significant at this point.

This student stated that it was women's movement which had shown the inequality in society and in order to weaken the system of patriarchy he suggested that women should keep on asking for their rights. On the other hand Atay gave the example for men's realization to struggle against patriarchy as such:

There are some good examples [for men's thoughts to struggle against patriarchy]; for instance philosopher and theologian Mehmet Aydın who is one of AKP deputies in the Parliament have told that "I wish, we could have established a women's language [kadın dili] within the assembly". If we can establish women's language and if more women enter the assembly, that is the code here, we can change the cultural disability of discussion, it would contribute us; more mature, more beneficial works can be done. That is a good kin of example I think. These types of examples are not many, I don't know if I can tell you more but that is a good example. We can think it as a moan of the man who is oppressed under the mentioned masculinity. Moreover, legislations can also be made [to change gender inequality]. But as you know legislations would be from top to down, their acknowledgements within society would be problematic.

As Atay mentioned above, the women's language should be established in culture due to the hegemonic structure of masculinity which also oppresses men. M. Ecevit, told that the things can be done in three dimensions in order to weaken the system of patriarchy:

For instance, one of the things that I am sensitive about is; I believe the contribution would be good to think women's movement within the worker's movement. That is one of the important fields; I believe that it would contribute to activities which are done within the cultural wideness. I think that it would have contributions to mass movements. Three fields, I mean; politics, culture, communication, -the struggle against patriarchy primarily in these three fields would contribute to weaken the patriarchal system, I believe. All these – politics, culture, and communication - are feeding, producing and reproducing patriarchy when we look from the other side.

Men in the interviewed group uttered their thoughts as stated above. One of the interesting points was although the question what men could do was asked, most of the interviewees replied the question as what could be done in general. Student 6

stated that men cannot do anything by themselves on this issue; moreover women cannot either, he expressed his thoughts as such:

Men cannot do anything alone by themselves and as I've told, women cannot do anything alone by themselves either. If they do something together, I mean, a social model which does not restrict either side or at least restricts the impeding of others can be established but the work cannot be done much by women working alone and men working alone.

This reply of the student touches upon one of the significant debates in the field of feminism, and that is whether men can join women to confront patriarchy. To say it in another way; if men want to struggle against patriarchy for all sexes, would it be with women or apart from women. Like the student uttered above, there are men who think that the struggle of men should be together with women. One of the students who were studying at women's studies program replied as such:

Of course, it is a complex thing. Of course, women are subjects who are exposed to sexism. This is [patriarchy] also valid for men. In order to widen this notion, I think it is important to act together. People think that dividing women and men's movement is correct. But since the start I am criticizing this approach, this would be a trap [to divide the act].

This notion of joining women to confront patriarchy was emphasized by Messner before in order to away with men's institutionalized privileges (Messner, 1998). Another student, student 3, who is a graduate, talked about the importance of symbols there:

It is important to give attention to symbols. In some occasions men need to be symbolically apart [from women] and in some occasions they need to be together with women. Finally, it would be realized that men and women are together [close to each other]. Men can join women to confront patriarchy but it is necessary to think men apart from women. It was a correct thing which was in the campaign "No to Rape of Media" [Medya Tecavüzüne Hayır], it was asked what are we going to do with men, this question was good. The solution was also correct in my opinion; there were two different texts for petition. It shows that an intersection was established between being apart and being together.

As the student articulated there have been symbolic distinctions according to the occasions; in some occasions it is symbolically essential for women to be together with men, but in some, men and women can act together. When it was asked if he could exemplify a symbolic situation where women need to be alone, the interviewee replied that the march of 8th March was one of them. Student 2 replied the same question whether men can join women to struggle against patriarchy as such:

I think the struggle should be given together. The same problem and the same goal... I think while keeping the differences of women-men in mind it would be good to meet at some point for the same goals. In the march of 8th March men's positioning is very tragic from those women's perspective. I've never been there at 8th of March as a man but, you know that there are women who tell that what this man is doing here.

As seen above, this student believed that women and men should find an alternative way where they could be together. Another student, student 8, directly replied the question by saying that women were not letting men to struggle against patriarchy together. When the question was asked he responded as such:

Women are not accepting [welcoming] men into their groups.

This argument has been controversial since the very early times of women's movement in Turkey; therefore next part will mainly focus on this issue as to comprehend the perspective of feminist and profeminist men.

6.2. Struggle with Women or apart from Women?

It has been asked to the interviewees about this debate whether they thought that joining women to confront patriarchy only consisted of walking together with women on the day of 8th of March. As it has been stated above, one student stated that 8th March symbolically belong to women, so there should be women only who march on that day. Besides, the women's march in 2006 has been witnessed a division within feminist women. One group stated that they would not let men to talk with them, and the other group expressed that they would walk with men due to their common goals. It was asked to the men in the interviewed group whether they thought same like that student who had uttered that men should not walk with women on that specific day. Some men in the interviewed group expressed that women should allow men to work together even on that day. Atay expressed his thoughts as such:

Is feminism composed of women, or whether men can be stated within or they are a jointed element? This shows that feminism produces new discrimination within itself. Treating men as such presents that women are presenting a counter-inequality. I'm telling that I find it wrong, in my opinion it is the best thing for men and women march hand in hand.

M. Ecevit expressed his opinion in a more realistic way as such:

In my opinion, they [women] have to break this notion. The group we are talking about [men who support feminism] consider themselves feminists. And feminists do not consider them feminist. Therefore, what is the solution for them to come closer? This group of profeminist [men] should convince feminists that they are closer to feminism and they work for feminism. But feminists think that [that work] is not important as such. Therefore, when we look in a more realistic way, I don't think that this unification is very possible. Feminists will walk on their way and profeminists will walk on their way. And what will happen to the story that we talked at the beginning? While feminism is walking like that profeminism will walk as such and profeminism will destroy itself.

M. Ecevit, told that profeminist men would not live long enough to join feminists. Student 2, who graduated from women's studies program, expressed that men's desire to walk on 8th of March is not easy to be accepted:

The cortege where women were walking with men was really funny [in a bad way], it was awful. Some people told that this [the way women behaved] was sexism. But actually the matter was not that [sexism], there was another matter there. Let's put everything aside, every conflict results from men's walk on 8th of March... let's just analyze like that: women are shouting slogans and there was a voice like hooo [strong sound] among them. That voice was everywhere already. And if men respected what women think, first of all, they wouldn't have gone there [to that walk]. Second, if women had thought on that issue, they wouldn't let those men to join them. ... It would be great, very striking thing if men had walked in another cortege and screamed that they didn't want to be a man anymore.

Student 4 replied the question from a different perspective and said that their walk would be together:

I wish we were hand in hand together. But if women want to express their own case by themselves it is worth respecting that. But it is also worth to remember that patriarchy is a matter of everybody. I mean, the men's articulations on their opposition to patriarchy are valuable at some point. Can you imagine that: patriarchy is the sovereignty and men are against that? That is a quite shaking scene I think.

Another student from women's studies program, student 3, indicated that men should walk but not with women, they should walk separately:

I support the idea of walking apart. Men should join the march but in the back rows. That picture, where women are walking at the front and men at the back, is the thing in my mind [to make it happen]. This picture is the same with the previous one: there is a meeting; men are sitting backside and women at the front... Women are shouting slogans... Men should walk silently, I think because that means "we are the men who listen to these slogans". That is also the picture I think as the organization practice in my mind.

All these men expressed their opinions whether men should join the women's march on 8th of March. While some of the interviewed men expressed that men should join the walk, others said that women needed to walk by themselves for variety of reasons. In addition, majority of respondents agreed with Messner's idea that men should join women to confront patriarchy and expressed their personal and social reasons to struggle against patriarchy. And as a last issue they talked about what can be done in general and in particular to confront patriarchy.

While these have been main issues for this part, there has been one question left for the men who were in the interview group: what is the current state of relation and communication among men who support feminism. Moreover, there have been increases in the studies of men which are on feminism, gender or men and masculinities; therefore would this enrichment of knowledge contribute to the struggle that is against feminism. Next part will discuss these questions in order to analyze the interaction among men and will try to evaluate the future of studies by men.

6.3. Future Organizations of Men to Struggle against Patriarchy

In this part, men's struggle against patriarchy consisting of men, who particularly expressed that their intention to support feminist movement, will be taken into consideration. Therefore, it is important to analyze that whether these men, who support feminism, believe that they could pave the way for other men-who do not support feminism- to increase their awareness about system of patriarchy.

A graduate from women's studies program replied the question:

I think the common perspective, also in women is this: Seeing men together with women would also mobilize men. There is a common notion as such and I'm questioning it. Is it really as such or... yes, basically, seeing the men who have worked with those women, who

have been influenced from those women, would influence other men. But there is such a problem there: [generally men who have nothing to do with women's rights (feminism) regard profeminist men as an alien group] see those men [who support feminism with women] not from them [common men].

This is one of the problems that the student thought for not being a role-model for other men. Contrarily, Kimmel articulates that profeminist men must be in front of other men as feminist's cheerleaders, allies, foot soldiers and states that there is no other choice for women and men who embrace a vision of sexual equality and gender justice (Kimmel, 1998). There had been some men in the interviewed group whose thoughts approximates to those of Kimmel's. Here is student 3, from Women's Studies program, who told his opinions as such:

Yes... As I told just like before, if the number of these people who problematize these issues increases, more men would come out and the number will be more. But what we call patriarchy hasn't been constructed within ten years and it would deconstruct easily. We have been born into and struggling against it.

According to another student, profeminist men could contribute to other men but this contribution would be limited:

Yes they [men who support feminism] can influence other men for change in a limited way. I want to tell this; this movement is more developing within academia in Turkey and, apart from that, in metropolitan cities it proceeds over non-governmental organization.

Student 1, again from women's studies program, suggested a rise in the number of feminist women to influence men rather than influencing men by men, he told as such:

I think to influence men there needs to be... for instance while we are speaking with other people, you know the chat "why men are as such and why women are as such", there is a dream of my friends in my

group. They expressed that it was really hard to find fully-fledged women. I mean, [they want to find a woman] who is beautiful, intelligent who understands from politics and who is a feminist...etc. In my opinion, the rise of women who are as such would probably influence men more.

This student has expressed that it would be again women who would express the need to change and show the new way of their own. On the other hand, student 6, women's studies program student made similar comments about who would be the motor of change:

Maybe they [these men who support feminism] would help the issue [of feminism] to be popular and legitimate but, if feminist movement, to which women confine themselves, does not pay attention to men and include them within, then men who are thinking in a similar way as I do, cannot do enough [to influence other men].

On the other hand, two men in the interviewed group noticed another risk of dealing with these issues and acting together with feminist women and hence being stigmatized, labeled as "gay". These two students, student 4 and 8 uttered their opinion on this issue as such:

I find it, obviously, valuable to support women in their movement. And it will be a role-model [for other men] of course, but they [men who support feminism] will be labeled as "dirty feminist men". But I don't care about it; I want to be as I like so I really don't care about it. I think more is needed, I mean it is necessary to go and ask those men whether they are aware of what they are doing.

The other men replied as such:

Definitely! Of course [the rise of men who support feminism would be role-models for other men]. I think the rise would help to change this: there is an image towards the sexual preferences of feminist men in society, these are prejudices of course. You know there is the image of "light man". That's not all; moreover there is the image of gay. Therefore, I think that this would contribute to men in the long run.

To summarize, almost majority of men said that men who support feminism would influence either fully or partially other men's thoughts the ones' who do not struggle against patriarchy. However, there are differences between the students who are in women's studies departments and those who studied other departments on feminism and masculinity studies. The students in women's studies departments learn feminist theory through out courses and moreover are in interaction with feminist women almost all the time. Therefore, students of women's studies departments are much more sensitive about feminist theory and what feminist women say on changing patriarchy rather than men's sole capacity to change. This sensitivity is also seen in the last question. Most of the men in the women's studies programs expressed men would have limited influence on other men who do not problematize patriarchy and added that, women should pay more attention to men as to influence them. On the other hand, men who had studied feminism or masculinity studies in other departments are not in an interaction that much with either feminism or feminist women as the students of women's studies departments. Hence, men in other departments did not mention the influence of feminist women on men (as the students of women's studies department) and stated that the rise of feminist men would definitely motivate the change among men. Moreover, Atay expressed that men who support feminism would not be role models for other men but they would affect them as an accumulator and they would help to provoke new ideas among other men, confuse those men's minds.

Furthermore, in order to learn more about men who support feminism, it was asked to the group whether they knew other men that had thoughts similar to theirs; and if they did which environment those men were from. This question was asked because it was rather important to comprehend if these men had contacts with each other that

would transform their relationship into some kind of political activity in the future like the feminist women. Yet, most of the interviewed men replied that they did not have many male colleagues or friends who thought parallel. Most of them stated that the ones they knew were either academics or journalists. Moreover when it was asked, if certain degree of interaction among those men would bring an urge of struggle, they cited different notions on that issue. For instance, Atay stated that it had been early for establishing a men's group in Turkey due to such reasons:

In these conditions [establishing a men's group] would not be very meaningful; when there is a need and conditions request than that would be meaningful. I mean, there can be an organization also in current conditions but it won't be treated seriously or it will be ridiculed. But there are particular times which make that possible, and then an organized movement can show up. But this is too early for Turkey; remember that feminism has been crystallized after 80s. These issues will be discussed, a platform will be established and after that platform makes new interactions, society will acknowledge that this is a problematized area. Don't forget that a journal on "masculinity" has been established, only two years ago. Therefore, at this point a movement like that would be out of fit and that would lead to mockery. But as I told, a platform can be established. Platform is something different than an organized struggle. But that [platform] is not a place for men's rights; a struggle for men's freedom against male power, struggle for women... it is hard to verbalize, but it will find its own identification in time. But describing it today would not mean that much to people, nobody would understand anything from that language.

He stated that men were not ready yet to organize a men's movement who support feminism but he came close to the idea of setting a platform by men in order to struggle against patriarchy. In addition, he warned that such a platform should aim to break men's power rather than support men's rights.

Moreover, student 3 agreed on the idea that men should be organized among themselves and described what could be done through men's organizations as such:

I'm supporting an organization like "leak of dialogues" among men. I mean, I will meet the men who have parallel thoughts as I have and we'll set up a consciousness-raising group. That consciousness-raising group may engage in issues such as "what are we [doing] as men?" and "what are we [doing] as feminists?" Then this group will spread out and start to talk to men who do not think as we do but who are capable of understanding our words, and mostly, we will talk to socialist men, because for me, they are different from us although they recognize women's concerns.

Contrarily, student 2, who was graduated from women's studies program, was not in favor of the idea of organizing a men's group as to support feminism and feminist women. He mentioned that he had already talked over this subject with another friend of him but he was still not sure to organize a men's group. He responded the question as such:

A friend of mine, a man, suggested to come together as men. I have to say that, I don't want such a thing, I mean, to come together as men and do something. Because we have been already formalist, we have been seen out of frame, [as men who support feminism] because we are not too many, therefore the best we can do is to "normalize" ourselves. Actually, I see that it is such a normal thing [for a man to be feminist]. Coming together as men could bring other handicaps. It's more important to come together with women rather than coming together with men because we have much more things to learn from women, do I make myself clear? Since I've been interested in this field, for three or four years, I keep talking and thinking on this issue and I more or less know in what ways men think. But I do have many things to learn.

Moreover, student 1, who was studying in women's studies, took notice to the unseen veins of patriarchy in men and verbalized his hesitations for a potential of men's organization:

Only men..? I think it would lead to something different. If we are establishing an organization without women, it would cause something different. However much we try to release ourselves, we still have that thing in all of us, patriarchal pattern. When I was in the debate society

(discussion group), I had a critical stand on this. We were going to 'debate tournaments', not as a competitor, we attended them as a jury. When we were assembling a committee, the members were mostly men, for instance. There is men's sovereignty there. We were rating the competitors. For instance when we are talking about a man we told that "there is a good guy among them", we don't stress the sexuality. But when there is good woman competitor we stress her sexuality as such: "there is a girl, have you seen her?", as is it is such a frustrating thing [for a woman to be successful in the competition]. ... I don't think such an organization among men would be right [to establish a group of men who support feminism].

This student, like the previous man, hesitated to organize a men's group in order to support feminism. While the men who had studied at women's studies programs in the interviewed group were hesitant to organize men's group a student who studied on men and masculinities stated his doubts like the previous expressions of men. Student 8 expressed that although coming together as men is theoretically agreeable, he was not sure the use of that group in practice. He responded the question as such:

Theoretically yes [organizing men's group would contribute to men and women]. It seems that it is possible to organize but when I think of my friends in my environment; they are quite different, in quotations, from the general male image in society. They are aware of this issue but they are not a kind that would transform it into a movement or something else. In addition I'm not sure men would support the concern's of women as good as women can.

As seen above most of the men had doubts to form a men's group to reinforce the struggle against patriarchy and instead, some stated that what was necessary for men was to join women to confront patriarchy. Because, as one of the students signified, men more or less had already known about other men, what they needed was to learn more from women. This consideration coincides with Hearn's understanding that men's relation to women should be established and defended (Hearn, 2004). In addition, M. Ecevit pointed out similar hesitations on the idea of setting up men's group to support feminist women as such:

Nevertheless, I think the effect of those studies over the consciousness of patriarchy in society is congruent [with feminism]. I think hearing from men and men's groups that patriarchy is an unequal system is good for understanding culture and society and also would provide a platform for feminism. But I can't stop thinking and saying that everything that is made [by men in this field]; culture, environment or knowledge should be analyzed, straightened or watched by –however you call it– feminist perspective or by women if it's possible. Because my mind always takes me to the origin of this and that is feminism. Everything that is made for feminism should be analyzed by feminism.

Like M. Ecevit remarked above, it is necessary to interact men and their attempts to support feminism with feminist women. Like Atay stated the necessity of a men's group in Turkey hadn't been enough to organize men, but the need for men's platform (as an alternative to men's group) had been increasing through time. However, it's quite remarkable to see that the studies of men on the issues of feminist theory, gender and studies on men and masculinities seem to be increasing for the last couple of years compared with 1990s. Therefore, the men in the interviewed group were asked whether they agreed with the fact that today more men were being interested in this field comparing to the past years. In addition, if they do agree with the idea, how do they explain this increase? Some men in the group attached this rise to the expansion of feminism in Turkey. For instance one of students, student 5, who had studied on men and masculinities expressed his thoughts on the rise of feminism as such:

The society hasn't gone worse, there was and still is male sovereignty. The change is maybe the rising voice of women and we, as men, start to consider what women are saying.

These words of the student were the same with Seidler's and Messner's articulations that men started to give their attention to what women say (Seidler, 1991; Messner,

1998). Moreover, Atay stated that this increase in men's interest in feminist issues did not go parallel with their political attempts; he stated his words as such:

Yes, [there is an increase in the number of men who are interested in feminist issues] but they are not seriously or politically interested in. When they are talking on this issue it means 'capital' for most of them [due to its popularity], everybody tries to take from that capital. I mean it [this capital] can occur in daily dialogues, chats, in newspaper articles, in academic environment or schools. Now, here in Turkey the same process [of this increase] is working same like in the West. Women's concerns, women's movement for emancipation and than the problem of masculinity and struggle against it, I mean a struggle against masculinity for the struggle against patriarchy. Thus, the same road is followed here. Therefore, feminism initially has shown itself and it was discussed. When you have opened up something to society, there would be some feedbacks. Actually, masculinity studies is a feedback actually, we have to think as such. Turkey has witnessed many things in twenty years, in a concentrated way. Everything has been developing depending on other western or center countries in Turkey. In this context, the increase of men and masculinity studies is a feedback of feminist and gender studies. For that reason men say "do not forget me" while you are analyzing [the problem of gender relations]. By saying that, it [masculinity studies as a subject] reminds itself as the disregarded. And it [masculinity studies] tries to analyze it from a theoretical frame, opens its experiences to share. This is a feedback and it's at a right time.

Therefore, Atay expressed that the time and the development was like it had been in the West and the increase of men within this field for the last few years had been at an estimated time in Turkey. Hence, Atay acknowledged it as a normal process in Turkey. However, when the same question [of whether the number of men in this field had been increased] was asked to the students not all men agreed with Atay. For instance student 1 replied the question as such:

Maybe the number [of men] hasn't increased. Secondly, maybe the reason is military [why more people are related with patriarchy today]. Thirdly, Turkey has lived very difficult times after 1980s. Masculinity has changed after 1980s. ... It was realized that men in that country could also be abused, tortured and masculinity was not powerful.

This student's words remind Kaufman who expressed that [patriarchy] seemed to give power to men but actually was abusing men in another way (Kaufman, 1994). Another student said that there was an increase among men who are interested in the field due to some reasons:

Maybe that [increase] is due to the current agenda of women's concerns which made people learn more about it. For instance, the feminist literature is growing and the number of researchers and writers who contribute to that literature are expanding. These issues are in the agenda and obviously they would make an inevitable impact. When a problem turns into another way that can be irresistible to ignore then it is the only solution to understand it. I think in that context the number of men [related to these issues] has been increased. I think there has been a real increase in the number of men who are sensitive to these issues.

The student stated above that the women's issues came to the point which is inevitable to disregard. Moreover, student 1 questioned that more men were related with these issues either because they were really interested or because the issue became really popular. He told his opinion on this issue as such:

More men are related to this field due to their interest or the popularity of the subject. In the West, such studies such kinds which are under the postmodern studies have become popular. In my opinion, a man who is from Middle East [countries] has more chance to get his article printed if the subject is on women. If I was in an editorial board of journal with an orientalist perspective towards Turkey, then I would say "look somebody wrote on gender", because if that men had written an article on democracy [or citizenship] then it wouldn't take [attention] that much, but because he did write on women's situation in Turkey then his chance to get his article printed is more. I don't think that is an interest over women's issues [or patriarchy]; it's another kind of consciousness. That's not an interest towards women's concerns. Those men who teach courses on women's concerns; are they aware of their scientific style or the way that they explain the lesson? Is there any change in their style of talking to women students in the class? It's not a think that we can measure... so the number rise cannot mean a real change in manners.

Another student, student 6, stated that the increase in the number not always meant the real interest in feminism. He continued as such:

It's necessary to look at the graduate thesis at this concern. Although they have been written at women's studies departments, not all of them can be considered feminist. This is valid for both women and men [students] here. I'm not sure whether more men are interested in women's issue but it's possible to mention that there would be an influence of fashion for this increase.

M. Ecevit expressed parallel thoughts with the student stating that the increase in number did not signify a real change of society or a real struggle against patriarchy because those new studies were not all feminist attempts. He stated his thoughts as such:

They don't contribute to the struggle against patriarchy because those are feminist studies. It's a big burden of ours [society]. Everybody is talking about giving education to women, economic development of women but these are not enough. They are patching every work related to women into feminism. I suspect every man who calls himself feminist at this concern, because they really don't know feminism.

As seen above, most of the men in the interviewed group expressed that they had noticed the increase in the number of men who are related with this field. Two men in the interviewed group accepted that the rise in the number of men and moreover, the rise of publications within this field is a positive evidence and may contribute to the struggle against patriarchy. Nevertheless, some men in the group had stated that increase had not always been due to real interest in women's issues or political stand as to struggle against patriarchy; it's also caused by the current popularity of the issue. However, it has seen that all these developments, either within the number of men who are interested in this field or the rise of publications on feminist theory,

gender studies and men and masculinity studies, are crucial to consider although they are not enough to reinforce the struggle against patriarchy. Therefore, as a last question, it was asked to the interviewees in the group what they thought about empowering the struggle against patriarchy. In other words, what these men can do more, as men or together with women, in order to enhance the consciousness about patriarchy and reduce the influence of male domination. As to start with one of the scholars, Atay replied that it was time for men to make consciousness-raising meetings and to establish men's studies programs in the academia in order to develop the studies towards patriarchy. He uttered as such:

Consciousness-raising meetings can be organized. And also, it is time for establishing men's studies departments. It shouldn't be separated from other studies, I think. It can be within gender studies or women's studies programs. Furthermore, there may be gay and lesbian studies in Turkey soon, masculinity studies may also be established. These are possible, these are crucial for producing more sources. ... These will occur, they are inevitable in post-industrial culture. These are possible degenerations [due to post-industrial culture] but on the other hand, it would enable a path for serious studies on the subject. Maybe the social organizations which issue violence against women will start to issue situation of men. These are possibly going to happen.

Student 2 told his opinions as such to express what can be done to reinforce struggle against patriarchy as men:

First of all, we [as men] have to make a confession and apologize [from women]. We have to come face to face with the problem between women and men. First of all we have to stop women's harassment. ... Something has to change with men and women together because the problem is not personal; it is social, therefore we can solve it when we come together. If we describe masculinity as such [apart from women] that would be wrong I guess; for instance men go and solve their problems in another room and then they come back and make politics together with women. This is wrong because men's interaction to women is unlimited. How can we solve this? Do I make myself clear, if we try to solve a common problem separately how can we come together again?

As seen in the articulation of the student he stressed that the action must be taken by all sexes. Student 6, again from women's studies department, replied that education and legal rights are very important to achieve at institutional level. He expressed his thought as such:

Education programs are really essential. At an institutional level for instance non-governmental organizations should get in touch with ministry of education and, for instance, new courses including relations between women and men or women's concerns in the curriculum should be implemented. These are very important. Moreover, shelters for women are very important for the women who have been abused. It would also contribute to them I think; because women cannot divorce their partners which would preserve patriarchy. In my opinion, women's demands for alternative personal and institutional rights would contribute them.

This student has expressed that institutional legitimacy is a crucial attempt for women to ask and defend their rights. Another student, student 8 agreed with the student above on legitimate contributions which they thought should be built with non governmental organizations.

There are various ways to defend a thought, to talk over that thought with others and express that thought. NGOs, associations, foundations... In some way, establishing an institution can also be considered as defending that thought within civil society. That is important, I think. Nevertheless, a woman is more motivated when compared to man on this subject. I don't know if there are NGOs established by men to struggle against patriarchy in other countries. There aren't any yet here in Turkey but there will be such kind of organizations.

Apart from institutional developments another student articulated the expanding capacity to criticize patriarchy which would empower the opposition. According to

that man who had graduated from women's studies program, one of the strongest ways to stand against patriarchy was:

In my opinion, the history moves as such: the examples have shown as such. As the attempts to criticize patriarchal structure expand, developing the potential for action increases. For instance, the 68 events were due to those expanding critiques. ... First of all we can start to write with social consciousness. Common discourses can be organized and then turned into common writings. After a while those can be collected in a journal. On the other hand, such an organization can be observed I think as such: there has been an action within feminist women so let's come and talk how we can, in which way [as men] take part among those women. Because only women are talking these issues: "how can men take part among us?" Men can also state their perspective and think about "how we can join" and start a dialog with women in different platforms.

This student stated the importance of intellectual studies which would also contribute to enhance the ability of people to criticize. Furthermore, he uttered another significant argument by expressing that the time was coming for men to discuss in which way they could join women, because since the beginning of the interviews majority of the men in the interviewed group expressed the need for platforms where women and men come closer and work together. On the other hand, there were also some men in the interviewed group, who told that the future of these attempts within academia is not promising due to the low prim of this field in Turkey; one of those students stated that:

These studies do not make high prim. You can study really hard on these issues and make important contributions. After a time when you decide to continue for doctoral studies, they will ask you what you have done so far and "gender studies" would not satisfy them I guess. They would say "great" or etc. but in their mind, they would think differently. In order to make them understand that these issues are important, the perspective of the academia should change a bit in Turkey. I cannot influence it right now because I am not at the same level they are; I'm not a professor or associate professor and I cannot change the curriculum or confront them.

Contrary to this student the other respondent, student 6, stated that the change should not come from the above, not from the structures or institutions, he emphasized the importance of personal attempts to struggle against patriarchy rather than institutional or intellectual attempts:

We have to look at what we are doing today. Screaming in squares is not effective I think because, as you know, this is one of the problems of feminism; feminist theory is still insufficient and in addition there is the feeling of exhaustion as if there is nothing left to study. People can easily say that the women's studies come to an end. On the one hand, people are talking that there is the feeling of being exhausted, on the other hand feminist theory does not provide you with conceptual or practical tools. You try to change something in your life and it is much more important than protesting in the street. Streets are not effective tools as to change something, it's a part of something. For instance, press releases are not even published in the media but on the other hand a soap opera like "Don't let children hear!" [Çocuklar duymasın] can be at the top in the most watched programs. For instance when we saw a program like that why we, as feminist women and feminist men, give reactions, why we do not call and say "how there can be such a program?" And try to make the producers give up, why are we not opposing them? We have to use these ways of protesting for ourselves. We shouldn't say that nobody is listening and give up. As you asked before, when we come together as men we can do nothing due to being alone as men. We have to come together with feminist women rather than building coalitions only as men. Because there will be ghettos of feminist women and ghettos of feminist men. Instead, we need a feminist movement neither women nor men just the feminist movement.

This man emphasized the importance of non-governmental or non-institutional attempts to protest the patriarchal structure. In addition, like the other respondents who had studied at women's studies programs emphasized before, this respondent also emphasized the importance of joining feminist women to protest and expand the opposition towards patriarchy. Although the men who had studied on men and masculinities stated the importance of joining feminist women to struggle against patriarchy, their statement for further actions is rather different from women's

studies program students. For instance, majority of the women's studies students expressed that men and women should come and work together to state their opposition. That was also the argument of the anthropologist who had studied on men and masculinities. On the other hand, four men who had studied in other social science departments expressed their opinion for further attempts without stating a joined attempt with women's movement although they had stressed that, feminist women should accept men within their groups. This is probably related to the conscious and feminist perspective that women's studies program has been emphasizing throughout education.

This chapter was concerned with men's struggle against patriarchy. In the first part men stated their reasons to struggle against patriarchy and explained their perspective about what they can do as men to fight back against patriarchy. In the second part of the chapter, they declared their opinion whether they think it is necessary to join women to confront patriarchy. And finally, third part cited the current relation of these men with each other who study within the field of feminist theory, gender studies or men and masculinities. As a consequence, their suggestions for men's future attempts to struggle against patriarchy have also been questioned.

CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSION

CAN MEN REALLY ALLY THEMSELVES WITH FEMINIST WOMEN?

Alice Jardine: “By their [men’s] general discursive strategies which indicate that they have heard our [feminist] demands but haven’t adequately read our [feminist] work.”

Rosi Braidotti: “It just goes to prove, Alice that our struggles are far from being over—in fact, they are just beginning for real...”

---from Alice Jardine, Men in Feminism (1987)

“With each strand of the patriarchal gender knot that we help to unravel, we don’t act simply for ourselves. We join a process of creative resistance to oppression that’s been unfolding for thousand of years. We become part of the long tradition of people who have dared to make difference—to look at the things as they are, to imagine something better, and to plant seeds of change in themselves, in others, and in the world”

--- from Allan G. Johnson, Unraveling the Gender Knot (1997)

This study has been an attempt to talk about men and their practices of confronting patriarchy. To look at it in another way, the study tries to investigate to what extent men understand the works and words of feminist women. Following these brings the famous and arguable question into one’s mind whether or not men can really ally themselves with feminist women and reinforce the struggle against patriarchy. Instead of a direct ‘yes’ or ‘no’ this study detaches itself from the two strict stances

of being naïvely optimistic or stubbornly pessimistic. Accordingly, rather than giving a certain answer, it is more crucial to recognize the *change in men* and *change of men's practices* in relation to women. Particularly in the last three decades or since the emergence of the second wave feminist movement, feminists have opened the path to analyze male domination and patriarchy. Although there is an enhancement of critical works on patriarchy, the existence of male hegemony continues to be a significant fact and seems stable in terms of gender relations. However, even if the system of patriarchy persists, it would not be accurate to declare that it has been unchanged. Patriarchy transforms itself through time and depending on altering social conditions. Therefore, rather than asserting that men have not changed at all, this study acknowledges that men have been changing since the second wave feminism and it aims to trace the change in men within the feminist context.

Findings of this research acknowledge that men have been influenced by feminism in various ways. All men in the research group come across feminism depending on their age; either by witnessing women's activism in 1980s or by reading about it from the texts of the courses after feminism is dragged into academia. This interaction with feminism has made them think about patriarchy and to question their own positions. According to their articulations, feminism has not only provided a basis for them to understand women's subordination, but also helped them criticize their gender roles of masculinity.

It is rather striking that, even though all men in the research group stated that feminism had contributed to them extensively and helped them take a position against patriarchy, all of them (except Atay and M. Ecevit) hesitation to identify themselves as feminists. This is an important finding because their hesitation is not related to being unready for feminism; instead they stated that their hesitance was due to the reactions of feminist women. It is obviously not easy to decide whether

such a hesitation on man's part is beneficial for feminism or not. On the one side, it acknowledges that men have been acknowledging the importance of women's struggle and do not want to endanger women's collectivity. On the other side, this hesitation can impede men's further motivation to support feminism because they would not find any place for themselves within. Certainly, that would not be good for feminism to set a bar in front of its own expansion. Notwithstanding, the two scholars easily identified themselves as feminists, and that was probably due to their previous experiences and intellectual endeavors to confront patriarchy.

Considering the majority of the young men's hesitation in calling themselves "feminist", the concept of "profeminism" has been asserted as an alternative for men's ambiguous place to feminism. This concept has been asserted after masculinity studies emerged and it simply implies men's support to feminism. It is worth mentioning here that the stances of the interviewees divided into two groups at this point; men who studied feminist theory at women's studies programs and men who engaged in masculinity studies at anthropology departments. Men who have been familiar with masculinity literature were more in the manner of accepting "profeminism" as a standpoint. Unlike them, the rest of the research group either did not know the meaning of *profeminism* or most of them did not welcome the concept even after learning it. It gives the impression that men in academia, who support feminism, are more inclined to identifying themselves as feminists.

As mentioned at the very beginning of this study, the lack of women's experience has been an obstacle for men to engage with feminism since the early years of the feminist movement. Nevertheless, it has been signified in the research group that men should not always need to experience oppression in order to understand women; it is assumed that men can comprehend women's subordination by closely witnessing women's lives in their environment. Yet, as some men mentioned in the research group, witnessing women's oppression can stay as an insufficient

instrument for understanding and analyzing gender inequality. Men should do more to support feminism and reinforce the struggle against patriarchy. First of all, they should change their personal relation with patriarchy both in the public and private sphere which means re-formulation of men's practices. The research group displays that there is an obvious change in men due to the influence of feminism; for instance, most of those men said that they endeavor to alter the traditional understanding of gender roles and participate in labor within the household. Moreover, men should re-formulate their relation not only with women but also with other men. In other words, men's attempts to reinforce the struggle against patriarchy are not merely limited to cooperating with feminist women; men's struggle against other men who are gender blind is also valuable. Besides, "men's initiatives for alternative masculinities should be acknowledged and used for advocacy to increase gender sensitivities as well as in forging new alliances" (Ertürk, 2004: 17). Men can also analyze and criticize their own experiences of masculinities in the system of patriarchy within the studies on men and masculinities. Nonetheless, there is a risk for men's studying of masculinities as Hearn (2004) and M. Ecevit have mentioned. Although the main aim of those studies are to analyze and criticize the unequal division of power in society, studying masculinities and the practices of men can easily turn into the opposite and re-center men's positioning in society without referencing gender inequality. Therefore, men should give attention to analyzing men's practices and masculinities with their connection to women's oppression in order to unveil the unequal power divisions which reproduce gender inequality.

Secondly, in order to reinforce the struggle against patriarchy men need to do more than individual attempts because changing personal practices of men (for instance reformulating the division of labor within the household), criticizing male practices or looking for alternative masculinities is not sufficient to alter the whole system of patriarchy. Patriarchy has a structural character as much as it intersects with

capitalism and class. Therefore, in order to change patriarchy political struggle should be given through structures, institutions, cultures...etc, where symbolic and material dimensions of power are sustained (White, 1997). Nevertheless, during the interviews, only few men emphasized that the struggle should be given through those structures. Men during the interviews mostly highlighted military and government as the main institutions that they should struggle against. It designates that although the change in men since the emergence of feminist movement is beyond doubt, the structural attempts of men to change masculinities and patriarchy are at its early stage. It is worth mentioning here, like it was mentioned in the introduction, this study approached the concept of patriarchy as an ideology through gender relations. Therefore, it would be beneficial if this study were to be developed further analyzing patriarchy through its structural character and intersection with class and capitalism. That new study would additionally consider institutions (such as state, family...etc.) where capitalism is determining factor as much as gender relations in the reproduction of patriarchy.

To come back to the main points of this study, approaching patriarchy towards its ideological character and acknowledging the influence of feminism over men, one may ask how the motivation of change in men's practices can be reinforced. As a commencing point, like the research group mostly asserted, women who had been oppressed by the system were not the 'other' women; they were their wives, sisters, mothers, lovers or friends. And besides, men's endeavor to confront male hegemony is not merely for the sake of women; men are also badly injured from the system of patriarchy. Critical studies on men and masculinities have been signifying the *dehumanizing* practices of masculinities which *alienate* men from their humanly practices. To say it differently, the contradictory experiences of power, for instance the attempt of controlling and holding power, like Kaufman asserted in the previous chapters, give pain to men rather than it gives power. It is crucial for men to realize that patriarchy is also against them. Thus acknowledging all these features of

patriarchy, men would realize the *dehumanizing* influences over men and women which adversely affect the relation between the sexes.

Notwithstanding, it is a question whether men do leave their institutionalized privileges due to the burdens of patriarchy over all sexes. Even though they are painfully affected from patriarchy, some institutional privileges have been provided for them. Hence, although it is possible for men to declare the need to *change* their masculine discourse, it seems much more difficult to change their practices. M. Ecevit, during the interview, asserted that it is almost impossible for men who are middle class and intellectual, to criticize their own positioning within patriarchy. On the contrary they make critiques about other men's practices and patriarchy. A majority of the men in the research group agreed with the idea that it is a thorny process for men to detect their own masculine hegemony, and even if they can to some extent, it is far more difficult to deny those patriarchal privileges actual practice.

Certainly, men's intention to change can be strengthened with external incidents. For instance, it can be reinforced with the demands of feminist women for gender equality. Men have declared that they would not have realized or verbalized patriarchy if feminists had not pointed them out. Therefore, it becomes more obvious for men to realize the need and urgency of *change* if feminists request more from men. This argument was also expressed by the research group. It is worth to consider, like Segal declares, not all women have the same power to demand from men. Moreover, she believes that socialist feminists know the difficulty of changing men is actually the difficulty of changing political and economical structures of society, because that is the reason which reproduces the division between women and men (Segal, 1990) .

In conclusion, it is an observation that the number of men who study and criticize patriarchy and *masculinities* has increased over the last couple of years. That increase has been emerged with the establishment of women's studies, but recently, it is also related with the emergence of masculinity studies where men find themselves more comfortable to deal with these issues. However, those men who are studying *masculinities* and male practices do not have much interaction with feminism; either theoretically or practically. Therefore, it would be more appropriate to establish mixed feminist groups that are constituted by both women and men in order to have mutual dialogue and contribution. These mixed groups of women and men can enrich the platform for further dialogues of collective and political action. Even tough, Turkey has not witnessed this kind of a significant organization yet, it is hoped that for the subsequent organizations ahead, feminist women and men should spend more time to working than they have done before.

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