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THE FEMINIZATION OF CARE AND THE DEVALUATION OF FEMALE WORKERS IN THE CURRENT CAPITALIST SCENARIO

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Abstract

The feminization of care has been revealed at the root of the social structure of patriarchy, as a result of the capitalist system that assigns women occupations related to care, entrusting such skills to the purely biological factor of the female sex. The low wages practiced with this population strengthen the inequalities between the genders, in addition to passing through several other forms of discrimination that, cumulatively, segregate women to exercise mostly professions strictly attributed to **caring**, feminizing this dynamic, economically devaluing such jobs, and, at the

same time, keeping constant the maintenance of the capitalist system: the guarantee of the reproduction of the workforce. It is necessary to reinforce and unify the anti-capitalist discourse in the political project of the various feminist social movements, in order to combat gender inequality, and to emancipate the female population in search of the expansion of rights.

Descriptors: Care; Capitalism; Feminization; Gender; Work.

<p>LA FEMINIZACIÓN DEL CUIDADO Y LA DESVALORIZACIÓN DE LAS TRABAJADORAS EN EL ACTUAL ESCENARIO CAPITALISTA</p> <p>Resumen: La feminización del cuidado se ha puesto de manifiesto en la raíz de la estructura social del patriarcado, como resultado del sistema capitalista que asigna a las mujeres ocupaciones relacionadas con el cuidado, confiando dichas competencias al factor puramente biológico del sexo femenino. Los bajos salarios practicados con esta población fortalecen las desigualdades entre los géneros, además de pasar por varias otras formas de discriminación que, acumulativamente, segregan a las mujeres para ejercer mayoritariamente profesiones estrictamente atribuidas al cuidado, feminizando esta dinámica, desvalorizando económicamente dichos trabajos, y, al mismo tiempo, mantener constante el mantenimiento del sistema capitalista: la garantía de la reproducción de la fuerza de trabajo. Es necesario reforzar y unificar el discurso anticapitalista en el proyecto político de los diversos movimientos sociales feministas, para combatir la desigualdad de género, y</p>	<p>A FEMINIZAÇÃO DO CUIDADO E A DESVALORIZAÇÃO DAS TRABALHADORAS NO CENÁRIO CAPITALISTA VIGENTE</p> <p>Resumo: A feminização do cuidado tem se revelado na raiz da estrutura social do patriarcado, como fruto do sistema capitalista que atribui às mulheres ocupações relacionadas ao cuidar, incumbindo tais habilidades ao fator puramente biológico do sexo feminino. As baixas remunerações praticadas com essa população fortalecem as desigualdades entre os gêneros, além de perpassarem por diversas outras formas de discriminação que, cumulativamente, segregam mulheres a exercerem majoritariamente profissões atribuídas estritamente ao cuidar, feminizando essa dinâmica, desvalorizando economicamente tais trabalhos, e, ao mesmo tempo, mantendo constante a manutenção do sistema capitalista: a garantia da reprodução da mão de obra. Faz-se necessário reforçar e unificar o discurso anticapitalista no projeto político dos diversos movimentos sociais feministas, a fim de combater a desigualdade de gênero, e emancipar a população feminina em busca da expansão de direitos.</p>
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<p>emancipar a la población femenina en busca de la ampliación de derechos.</p> <p>Descriptor: Importar; Capitalismo; Feminización; Género; Trabajar.</p>		<p>Descriptor: Cuidar; Capitalismo; Feminização; Género; Trabalho.</p>
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INTRODUCTION

In the context of the current capitalist scenario, there is a reality marked by the feminization of care and, at the same time, by the devaluation of the workers who carry out these essential functions for society. The feminization of care refers to the social attribution of responsibilities related to caring for people, whether in the family or professional sphere, which are predominantly assigned to women, in addition to being gender roles that are tolerated and perpetuated by cultural norms and patriarchal structures.

According to data from the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics - IBGE¹, on average, women earn around 78% of men's salaries in the country. In a recent decision on July 3, 2023, Law No. 14.611² was enacted, creating rules so that wage inequality between men and women - already prohibited - becomes punishable. However, it is common knowledge that, despite the fight against social inequality, it is still very common for women to be socially influenced to join some professions that are related to care and services in general, while men tend to join professions related to technology, industry and agribusiness - professions that are generally better paid and more valued at the heart of capitalist societies. Even so, according to data from a salary survey carried out by the Inter-Union Department of Statistics and Socio-Economic Studies (DIEESE) in the third quarter of 2022, there is a significant pay gap between men and women in the same jobs:

In domestic services, female workers accounted for around 91% of those employed and their wages were 20% lower than those of men. In the education, health and social services group, they accounted for 75% of those employed and had average earnings 32% lower than those received by men.³⁽³⁾

It is also important to highlight the issue of female political participation in the Brazilian State. Since 1997, Brazilian law 9.504⁴ has stipulated that, among the candidates presented by the parties to compete in the elections, quotas of 30% must be set aside for women, with a much higher number of male political representatives - 70% - which is not in line with the total percentage of the Brazilian population, but this is still an even more positive outlook than before the minimum

percentage was imposed. Women tend to be distanced from issues such as politics from a very young age, and it is not common to witness major social questions about this natural distancing.

In this essay, we will analyze the dynamics of this feminization and discuss the devaluation of female workers in the capitalist conjuncture, based on an exploration of the possible reasons involved in the removal of women from the political arena.

THE EVOLUTION OF DOMINATION IN PATRIARCHY

Throughout history, the female gender has been marked by the stigma of subordination and inferiority to the male gender. The biological characteristics and functions of one differ from those found in the other, and these characteristics can lead to significant differences in the way these subjects are interpellated by society. In addition to the biological and physiological differences, other existing differences between the genders have become socio-cultural constructions of patriarchy, since certain characteristics are reinforced and circumscribed throughout the individual's intellectual construction, supporting their ideologies and corroborating the definition of their **role** in society. For example, the positivist spirit of the Enlightenment played a role in this definition of roles, as the text below illustrates:

The positivist spirit that emerged in the 19th century transformed questions about human differences into scientific questions, so that from being a philosophical object, man became a scientific object. Biology and physics served as explanatory models for human diversity: the idea was born that biological characteristics - biological determinism - or climatic and/or environmental conditions - geographical determinism - would be able to explain the moral, psychological and intellectual differences between different races.⁵⁽²⁰⁾

As the differences in physical and biological aspects were determined, specific categories of activities were consolidated which had to be divided in order to be carried out only by men or only by women. According to Manus:⁶ “Maintaining this mechanism of social submission and dependence is something that goes beyond ideological issues, creating molds to insert women facilitates the control of this population by patriarchy”.⁶⁽⁸⁹⁾

But this was not always the case. Author Regina Navarro Lins,⁷ in her series of books on love,⁷ takes a historical look at how the roles of men and women have changed throughout human history. According to her, historian Riane Eisler⁷ states that the ancestors of the Paleolithic and early Neolithic periods imagined women as magical beings. They understood her power to bleed according to the moon and to produce people as a kind of magic. The sexual power of women would have instilled enormous respect in our ancestors, and despite all this, there is no evidence

that there was any submission of one to the other. From the Neolithic period onwards, women's tasks multiplied:

The period ushered in the beginning of obligations for them, with the advent of agriculture. And it is probable that feelings between people and sexuality became increasingly normalized, and that kidnapping, rape and slavery were born and developed since then.⁷⁽¹⁷⁾

Approximately five thousand years ago, humanity was divided into two different parts: men and women, and these parts were brought into conflict with each other. In this division, there was a determination of what each person's role should be, also dividing “each individual against themselves, because in order to correspond to the masculine or feminine ideal of our culture, each person has to reject a part of themselves, somehow mutilating themselves”.⁴⁽²⁰⁾ Also in the author's material, there is a reference to Reich, when he talks about sexual repression as a weakening of the **self** and how this weakening acts as a form of submission to authority:

[...] because the person, having to constantly invest energy in preventing the expression of their sexual desires, deprives themselves of part of their potential. He concludes that the aim of sexual repression is to manufacture individuals to adapt to authoritarian society, submitting to it and trembling at their freedom, despite all the suffering and humiliation they suffer.⁷⁽³¹⁹⁾

In medieval times, women already played a central role in caring for children and the family, as well as being responsible for all domestic work. In this period, they had to comply with the protocols stipulated by men, they had no freedom over their bodies, and it was their duty to exercise motherhood, as well as having no right to choose. One of the first forms of expression of male domination over women was the exploitation of their sexuality. Women, who once had magical characteristics, were now seen as **bargaining** chips, with fathers selling their daughters to men interested in marrying them, taking them home to the man who could pay the highest price. They were enslaved and sexually exploited for the pleasure of their possessor and for reproduction, their children being the property of their tormentor. According to Aronovich: “slavery began with men enslaving women and that a common and universal history of the enslavement of women involves rape”.⁸²³

The Enlightenment project of the 17th century, focused on building philosophical knowledge with man as its main object and subject, brought a novelty that was based on “observing man in his multiple *facets and differences* as a living being (biology), who works (economics) thinks (psychology) and speaks (linguistics)”.^{5(emphasis added)} The Enlightenment developed the tools responsible for classifying human groups based on their physical and cultural characteristics.⁵ This gave rise to the philosophical-anthropological distinction between the civilized and the savage,

which in the following century gave way to the distinction between the civilized and the primitive. In the historical process of humanity, we can see that this movement caused a process of destruction and death in civilizations that were seen as savage, primitive, and that ended up being colonized by those who saw themselves as civilized and, consequently, superior. This whole movement also began to take place in relation to men who had, and still have, a view of superiority over women.

This scenario of domination was perpetuated over time, building the basis for the formation of a patriarchal structure, with its main tools being indoctrination (religious and gender-based), the deprivation of education, the division of women into **respectability** classes, the limited access to economic resources of their own, *etc.*, thus making women themselves collaborators in the construction of a society in which they are seen as less favored figures, placed in a position of servitude and dependence, as Simone de Beauvoir⁹⁽⁸²⁾ concluded “the oppressor would not be so strong if he did not have accomplices among the oppressed themselves”.

For millennia, women have participated in the process of their own subordination because they are psychologically shaped to internalize the idea of their own inferiority. The lack of awareness of their own history of struggle and conquest is one of the main ways of keeping women subordinate.⁸⁽²⁶⁸⁾

Associating Simone de Beauvoir's conclusion⁹ with Marxist literature, we find in Carnut's text¹⁰ some characteristics of fascist movements, and among these characteristics, one of the most important is popular support. When we talk about fascism, we are talking about violence, and in this sense the social pressure for women to always be in care sectors has violent characteristics, which are stimulated by society as a whole, by men who benefit in some way from this functioning, and by women who, oppressed, end up spreading oppression. This type of violence and segregation tends to have a strong appeal among important segments of the marginalized masses, who, without access to the possibility of a liberating education, capable of providing reflection, intensified by a precarious education system, as well as the absence of political, party and social group organizations, perpetuate this discourse, strengthening inequality.

Based on this premise, it can be seen that the structure of society carries sexism and patriarchy that are ingrained and calcified in its origins, reproducing and perpetuating practices and behaviors that generate inequality between the genders and maintain this differentiation even in current times, even though this dynamic often occurs in a veiled and furtive way to the eyes of those who do not pay attention to details. The contradiction can be seen, for example, in Brazil's current political situation, where a law has been passed that punishes gender pay discrimination,

while at the same time there are no initiatives to encourage the equal presence of women in technology and politics.

The notion of a patriarchal society is one that revolves around the interests of the male figure, subordinating female interests to the power conferred on men by this social structure. According to Manus⁶⁽¹⁸⁾: “the word ‘patriarch’ is defined by the Houaiss dictionary as ‘the head of the family’”^{6(18, author's emphasis)}, as we know, the head of the family was historically a man, however, this is not the reality experienced in 21st century Brazil. According to data collected by Dieese³ in the third quarter of 2022, but released in March 2023, the majority of the country's 75 million households are headed by women:

The majority of households in Brazil are headed by women. Of the 75 million households, 50.8% were headed by women, corresponding to 38.1 million families. Male-headed households totaled 36.9 million. Black women headed 21.5 million households (56.5%) and non-black women 16.6 million (43.5%) in the third quarter of 2022.³⁽⁶⁾

Even in the face of research and the new positions and social roles taken on by women, the patriarchal structure still survives and is established in the current formation of capitalist society, being reinforced by conservative political speeches, proving that sexism is present in everyday life, negatively affecting the lives of men and women who are hostages to this system of rules and doctrines that are so cruel, they serve the interests of those who feed an archaic and obsolete society, stuck in a dark past.

PATRIARCHY AND CAPITALISM

The discriminatory and oppressive culture of the female gender took shape with the emergence of private property and capitalism. In a patriarchal hierarchical society, men assumed positions of power and leadership, clearly defining the role of women in society. According to Lerner: “For men, class was and is based on their relationship to the means of production: those who owned the means of production could dominate those who did not.”⁸⁽²⁶⁴⁾ In this scenario, men began to write history from their own gender perspective. They also dictated what was expected of a woman and how she should be and act in society. The author goes on to outline:

We have seen how the same gender metaphors expressed man as the norm and woman as deviant; man as complete and powerful, woman as unfinished, mutilated and lacking autonomy. On the basis of such symbolic constructs integrated into Greek philosophy, Judeo-Christian theologies and the legal tradition on which Western civilization is built, men have explained the world in

their own terms and defined the important issues in such a way as to place themselves at the center of the discourse.⁸⁽²⁷⁰⁾

In this way, women's role in society has always been limited and subjugated to domestic duties, restricted to caring for the home, children, husband, and even relatives (in-laws, brothers-in-law, sick people, etc.). The feminization of **caring** has taken shape and become naturalized over time in such a way that it is now possible to see that professions directly linked to caring (teachers, nurses, psychologists, caregivers for the elderly, *etc.*) are mostly carried out by women. The culturally and socially created perspective that women were born to take care of people limits their critical vision, subjecting the female population to accept the socially imposed role as a way of perpetuating what is **natural**. Considering this proposition, it is possible to draw a parallel, in the course of capitalism, to the issue of the salaries of Brazilian women workers who sell their labor power (linked to essential care) and, as compensation, receive low pay compared to the average salaries of professions considered to be mostly male, which in turn are strictly linked to positions of power and prestige (doctors, lawyers, executives, *etc.*).

It is important to stress that this issue must be analyzed within a context where it is necessary to point out that these inequalities are revealed even more clearly when the individuals in question are black, poor and peripheral women. Inequality infiltrates the entire female population, but it is experienced differently depending on the particular characteristics of each fraction of this group. The risk arises when this heterogeneity is ignored and the differences are superimposed, hiding them. It is therefore necessary to observe the different forms of oppression and domination, so that the struggle for equality can build unity in the various feminist social movements, with a single anti-capitalist discursive structure.

[...] one of the great problems experienced in a society permeated by class, race and sexual conflicts and antagonisms is how to make inequality compatible with cultural parameters based on universalist, cosmopolitan ideologies and, therefore, politically impersonal, neutral and guided by formal equality.⁵⁽²⁰⁾

WAGE INEQUALITY

According to Sílvia Almeida⁵ we can see different types of discrimination, direct and indirect. In direct discrimination, there is an overt rejection of individuals or groups, a behavior that we can currently observe in groups called *redpills*, which share tips for men on relationships with women, always placing women in a situation of object, with explicit classifications such as the evaluation of a **woman's sexual value**. In indirect discrimination, there is a process in which

the situation of certain groups is ignored, or rules of neutrality are imposed, ignoring the great historical impact of social differences that have been imposed for years. According to the author:⁵

The consequence of direct and indirect discrimination practices over time leads to social stratification, an intergenerational phenomenon in which the life course of all members of a social group - which includes the chances of social advancement, recognition and material support - is affected.⁵⁽¹⁹⁾

In this sense, discrimination practices, be they in relation to sex, race, religion or nationality, end up occurring as a result of the social structure itself and are considered **normal**, or, when there is blame or punishment, these practices are preferably referred to as pathologies of certain individuals and are no longer seen as a social pathology of something that has been crystallized and has become structural to the functioning of society. It is forgotten that individual behaviors and institutional processes are reflections of society as a whole. With regard to the pay gap between men and women, this indirect discrimination happens stealthily and has been naturalized since women entered the labour market. Low pay occurs under the guise of different justifications that seek to normalize this practice and, despite the existence of legislation that prohibits such practices, mechanisms that evaluate their effectiveness are still minimal.

In fact, wage inequality has its roots in various cultural and social aspects that structure its conception, especially with regard to the values associated with different types of occupations, also considering the incorporation of a gender bias in the definition of remuneration for each type of work: men are associated with providing for the household, while women are rarely associated with this, which contradicts the data from surveys already presented which show that the majority of households in Brazil are headed by women. This allegation makes clear the contradiction of market practices in the capitalist system, which still acts based on cultural and patriarchal perceptions, reserving women the private space of the home, and in return privileging mostly male positions.

In Latin America, an event in Argentina has given rise to a sense of relief and hope in the face of women's economic inequality. Recently, decree 475/2021¹⁵ determined that mothers will be entitled to a pension for caring for their children, which means that the Argentine government now considers maternal care to be a job, a paradigm shift. According to the website of the Central Única dos Trabalhadores - CUT:

Women will be able to add to their social security contribution time in the following cases: one year of contribution for each child, as a general rule; two years per child, in the case of adoption of a child or adolescent under the age of two years if it is a disabled child and three years if they have received the AUH

[*Asignación Universal por Hijo*] for 12 months, consecutive or not. The AUH is a monthly benefit for parents or guardians who are unemployed or on a low income.^{11(1 page/screen)}

Classifying childcare as a job is important, not only for women, but for children and society in general, since the initial care of an individual is extremely important for the generation of bonds of affection and forms of self-understanding as a biopsychosocial being. Some European countries, for example, adopt maternity leave periods of up to 59 weeks (Bulgaria), while in Brazil we have an average of only 17 weeks¹⁶. Much progress still needs to be made towards recognizing these perspectives, especially, and returning to the focus of this essay, considering that maternity leave should be called parental leave, with responsibilities divided between mothers and fathers, since caring should not be exclusive to mothers.

MARXISM AND FEMINISM

According to Galvão,¹² there is no fully developed and articulated Marxist theory of social movements - what we have available are various fragments of his vast work, which, taken together, have the potential to help understand social movements from a Marxist perspective. It is necessary to consider that the definitions of social class and class struggle, within the Marxist perspective, do not only refer to questions of income or occupation, but involve a multifactorial analysis that takes into account - in addition to these factors - political, economic and ideological relations. Position in the economic structure does not automatically determine the political behavior of a class, without the influence of the other factors mentioned above. That said, social movements tend to have participants from different classes, in other words, they are multi-class.

Adding concepts from some scholars of Marxist theory, we can add definitions that, in their sum, can come close to a more complete Marxist view of social movements. In 1991, Castells¹²⁽¹¹⁾ defined urban social movements as “systems of contradictory social practices that challenge the established order based on the specific contradictions of urban problems”, while in 1981, Lojkin¹²⁽¹⁰⁾ defined a social movement as the capacity of a group to differentiate itself from roles and functions pre-established by the dominant class. Also in this rich contribution, the authors Laclau and Mouffe¹²⁽²¹⁾ bring up the new social contradictions of capitalism as something that cannot be reduced to the concept of class struggle and interests alone - enemies can also present themselves in relation to the power derived from a capitalist, sexist, patriarchal and racist

social organization, emphasizing the need to build and develop an anti-capitalist potential of social movements based on a pre-established and structured political project.¹²

With regard to the issue of the feminization of care, it is important to point out that, in the context of the Marxist vision, no type of oppression is independent of the capitalist logic: all oppression is intrinsically connected to this logic. Therefore, the imposition of care on women is directly related to the reproduction and maintenance of the capitalist system. These tasks are essential for ensuring the reproduction of labor and for the functioning of the system as a whole. However, still at the heart of this logic, these are occupations that do not generate **profits**, so it makes no sense for them to be well paid. It is possible to validate this conception through some positions, especially those of public figures in the political sector, such as the speech by former president Jair Bolsonaro who, in 2015, said in an interview:

But I feel sorry for the entrepreneur in Brazil, because it's a disgrace for you to be an employer in our country, with so many labor rights. Between a man and a young woman, what does the businessman think? Well, this woman has a ring on her finger, she's going to get pregnant soon, six months maternity leave... Who's going to foot the bill? The employer. At the end of the day, he'll have to pay INSS, but he'll have broken the rhythm of work. When she comes back, she'll have another month's vacation, which means she's worked five months in a year.^{13(page/screen)}

There are four schematic characteristics of social movements, according to Galvão:¹²⁽¹¹⁵⁾

[...] specific demands on the state, the struggle for reforms, changes in social practices and values and the anti-systemic struggle. Latin American movements combine several of these characteristics and share an anti-neoliberal ideology. In the following paragraphs, we will explain a little about each of these characteristics, relating each of them to the struggle of feminism.

- **Specific demands on the state:** this refers to mobilizations aimed at putting pressure on the state to meet the demands of the social movement in question. For example, the movements of the **homeless** (homeless, landless, *etc.*) who demand subsidies or public policies that meet their immediate needs. The feminist movement makes demands on the state in search of gender equality and the expansion of women's rights - demands related to combating domestic violence, equal pay, access to health services, among many others.
- **Struggles for reforms:** these involve the pursuit of economic, political or social reforms. This can include struggles for equal income distribution and/or the expansion of social rights. The feminist movement has strived to bring about changes in laws relating to reproductive health (decriminalization of abortion), to raise public awareness about **menstrual dignity**, to introduce, for example, the distribution of

disposable pads in schools, as well as reforms regarding gender discrimination, as well as a reformatting of representation in political office. In recent decades, the feminist movement has achieved public policies that promote gender equality, but there are still many changes to be made.

- **Changes in social practices and values:** this refers to movements that seek to transform social practices and values that are crystallized in the structure of society, with the aim of altering certain collective norms and behaviours. One of the aims of feminism is this renewal, challenging gender stereotypes, promoting inclusion and diversity, and seeking to change society's stationary perception of women.

- **Anti-systemic struggle:** this includes mobilizations that question the foundations of capitalist society and propose forms of social emancipation. These movements seek deeper structural transformations, not just changes within the current capitalist system. One of the main struggles of feminism is to build a new society based on equality and justice, which is comprehensive and expansive for all the individuals who make it up.

Given the above, it is possible to agree with the author Galvão¹² when she states that social movements are seen as expressions of class contradictions, at the same time as they contribute to the formation of classes through struggle, they emerge as forms of contestation against the various forms of exploitation and domination present in capitalism.

WOMEN'S POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

Although this essay focuses on the feminization of care, it would be impossible to talk about feminism and Marxism and not mention the extreme importance of women holding political office. Without the direct participation of women in politics, it is not even possible to start a debate on these issues, since a caucus made up only of men (mostly white, heterosexual, cis) will not bring to the ballot issues that meet the urgent demands of the female population, as well as the expansion of their rights, and which could - in their view - reduce their privileges.

According to “Exame” magazine, in an article written by lawyer Gabriela Araujo,¹¹ data released by the *Inter-Parliamentary Union* (IPU) show that the global average for women's participation in parliaments is only 26.4%. In Brazil, only 91 women were elected in the 2022 elections, which corresponds to just 17.7% of the total seats available, and this figure is an

improvement compared to 2018, when the number corresponded to just 15% of the seats. Within the states, the data is very similar, with an average of 18% of the seats and in some states this figure is below 10%. Only two states are currently governed by women. In the Americas as a whole, the participation rate is 34.7% on average, but Brazil has pulled this rate down for various reasons: resistance from parties to invest in women's candidacies, fraud, violence and harassment suffered by women who try to run for office - once again, the same logic applies here as the capitalist who hesitates to hire women or insists on lower salaries, for fear that this is **irrational** since the market won't hire or will end up paying less.

Most women in the West only gained the right to political participation in the first decades of the 20th century. In Brazil, women's right to vote was only won in 1932, and while the male vote was compulsory, the female vote was optional.¹⁷ The right to work without the husband's express permission was only obtained in 1962 with the amendment of the Brazilian Civil Code,¹⁸ which gradually gave women more opportunities to study and have autonomy. The most impressive piece of information regarding women's political rights is that it is only since the 1988 Constitution¹⁹ that women have been seen as **equal to men**. In 2006, the Maria da Penha Law,²⁰ to combat violence against women, was passed, and in 2015 the Feminicide Law was enacted.²¹ Before each of these achievements, it was important for the patriarchy to maintain that women were kept away from the political arena, from education, from the workplace in general, and involved in the violence they suffered (and still suffer), without even having the possibility of understanding the dynamics of this violence, because it was socially accepted behavior. These changes are now happening more frequently than in previous years, and more and more women are expanding their rights, thanks to social movements and the greater political participation of this population, which is promoting visibility and meeting their demands.

Political representation has important effects in the fight against discrimination, providing a space for women to have their demands heard and discussed, as well as breaking down the narratives that place them in a subordinate position. The presence of elected women in the political arena does not directly mean that sexism has been eliminated, but rather that the struggle is producing results on a concrete level, and reaching a space that was previously reserved only for men.⁵ The recent example of the misogynistic comments made about President Dilma makes it very clear that the fact that there are women in power does not mean the end of sexist practices, but this presence is still important and should be encouraged and expanded, so that more and more

women can represent the diversity that exists within the feminist group itself and its various strands.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

This essay set out to analyze the dynamics of the feminization of care and the devaluation of women workers who carry out occupations which, while necessary for maintaining the reproduction of labour (the care of individuals), are seen as **unprofitable** labour for capital and therefore do not offer good pay for those who do it. This is the result of the patriarchal structure of capitalist society, which attributes a naturalization of caring to women, basing this conception on a purely biological logic, structured in a perceptive social dynamic, which divides individuals into men and women, giving both different social roles, depreciating one in relation to the other, assigning women the functions of the private sphere of the home (caring for children and domestic chores), and men the positions of prestige in the public sphere of society.

It is necessary to emphasize the need for society to move beyond laws that punish unequal pay, as well as many other forms of discrimination: women need to be encouraged to enter fields such as technology, medicine and other areas previously seen as exclusively male. In the same way, occupations related to care (and caregivers) must undergo a deconstruction of their perception by the labor market, starting to have decent pay and a prestigious position, after all, it is one of the most important social roles: that of caring. With proper remuneration and appreciation, it is possible that there will be a greater diversity of participants in the professions, with more men entering these roles.

Despite this, it is essential to highlight the important role of feminist social movements in the fight against gender inequality, as well as the need to build a unique element into their political projects: the anti-capitalist discourse.

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