

Epistemic authority and *epistemic injustice*. A gendered and philosophical approach

Introduction

My proposal want to explore the keys of the authority of subjects of knowledge, using the concept of epistemic injustice in relation to the eviction of women from the practices of co-production of meanings that shape our culture. Philosophical understanding of these narratives, myths, values, new meanings and statements claiming the status of truth in the world of techno, and especially cyberspace, requires the gender perspective and constant criticism. And action is needed to promote the presence of women and pluralistic values in the privileged space of the construction of the maps that guide our steps in knowledge construction and guide our projects. Women must be active and authorized co-producers of the meanings that shape our culture.

I'll have a look to the special case of the "exodus", as it is termed, in the field of computing. It is interpreted (by dominant discourses) as the result of free elections of women, who now have other preferences, tastes and interests. The reality is that more than a half of the women working in the fields and computer professions leaves pressed and forced by a male work environment, high isolation and extreme working pressures. This loss of the number of women in the core of computing is creating a great loss not only talent but an eviction from the core of the creation of knowledge, meanings, artifacts and representations. Technological imagination opens new and unexpected cultural and democratic possibilities, and women must not suffer from epistemic injustice.

Disavowal of epistemic and symbolic practices of women.

Many studies have addressed the key institutional and sociological use of technologies (digital divide) and the shaping of professions: *hierarchical and territorial discrimination* and the *glass ceiling* or *leaky pipeline* (classical concepts applied to the academy) the *vanish box* and other mechanisms are also identified like *trapdoors* in the practice of the technology industry. They

explain the dynamics and gender asymmetries in career paths of women and men in ICT professions.

Miranda Fricker concepts could explain well these mechanisms of exclusion, reaching the border area of epistemology and ethics. Epistemic activity evaluated, not in ideal and abstract terms, but considering that it is carried out by individuals socially situated, in the highly relevant context in shaping our technoculture such as education and ICT profession. Inequalities and power issues associated with market dynamics form a highly competitive world displacing subjects defined as different: women and others

There are two basic epistemic practices that we consider to address Miranda Fricker's proposal. First: transmitting knowledge to others and secondly: to make sense of our own social experiences. Both types of epistemic practices involve social and discursive interactions so must be situated in the field of policies and ethics of epistemic practices.

I'll argue that these mechanisms or types of epistemic injustice are at the root of the dynamics of exclusion of women from the center of shaping our current technological culture and industry, which produces, transmits and reiterates narratives of the "authorized" subject and make invisible that of the subjects that are different. The myths and images that structure our visions of technology continue to transmit the image of men as authorized agents of technological development and women as subjects not interested in it.

The challenge, therefore, is not only bringing more women to the field of information and technology industry to generate symbolic content of our culture, but the challenge is to gain insight into how meanings of new technologies are structured, reproduced, recreated, etc, and the ultimate goal is to be able to participate on an equal conditions and consciously in the act of designing ethically and socially responsible technoculture (Balsamo, 2011, 49), being co-participants, men and women, in this task.

The use of technological imagination in spotting or looking for new more democratic cultural possibilities is a new horizon of feminist epistemology. And education in the technological imagination is not the work of engineers and

computer scientists and information technology, is an eminently humanistic question of the humanities involved with digital technologies, both for developing theoretical analysis and deeper understanding of our current technoculture, and to imagine new possibilities of expression, representation of the world. The imaginative creation of new narratives and representations requires the participation of people aware of the importance of this process. It is this line of thought which is set in recent years as truly promising.

Posthumanist future.

Is this a critical view that explores and give more insight to the vision and commitment of cyberfeminism, in partnership with posthumanism critical discourse that authors as Rosi Braidotti are drawing. Is this a different feminism playing with a posthuman future world in which the nomadic situated subjects design a new symbolic world of alternative narratives but committed to political transformative action. Braidotti believes the posthuman subjectivity can be used as a liberating force of the limitations and relationships of domination in which was inserted the subject of modernity, reinvent human beings, re-humanize them, freeing them from the omnipotence of a suffocating culture in the hands of corporations that have the technology power, leaving their cultural mark on the contemporary imagination, without leaving room for other cultural alternatives. It is necessary an articulation of new figurations that subvert the dominant codes, conscious and critical participation in the construction process of technoculture.

I'll conclude that the humanist understanding of narratives, myths, values, new meanings and statements claiming their space in the world of techno and especially cyberspace requires the gender category and constant philosophical criticism to fight against the dynamics of exclusion of women and other values in the privileged space for the construction of the maps that guide our steps, guide our projects and define the space of knowledge and imagination in current societies.

References:

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