

CONTEMPORARY EPISTEMOLOGY AND FEMINIST IDEOLOGY

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*Abstract: Mary B. Hesse, professor of philosophy at Cambridge University, felt that it was inappropriate to speak of a "female epistemology" because that would be a contradiction in terms. From a logical and scientific point of view, the analysis of epistemology shows that the development of this domain did not depend on a particular class or subclass of people and that it does not take account of gender, age or nationality. Epistemology is a human science that only takes into account the cultural changes that have taken place over time in our society, and although after the nineteenth century the culture of patriarchal societies has officially opened to acknowledge women's contribution to science, further, epistemology retains a neutral character of development in terms of gender differences.*

*Keywords: epistemology, feminist ideology, the Galileo-Newtonian system, science, social discrimination*

Mary B. Hesse (15 October 1924 - 2 October 2016), professor of philosophy at Cambridge University, felt that it was inappropriate to speak of a "female epistemology" because that would be a contradiction in terms. From a logical and scientific point of view, the analysis of epistemology shows that the development of this domain did not depend on a particular class or subclass of people and that it does not take account of gender, age or nationality. Epistemology is a human science that only takes into account the cultural changes that have taken place over time in our society, and although after the nineteenth century the culture of patriarchal societies has officially opened to acknowledge women's contribution to science, further, epistemology retains a neutral character of development in terms of gender differences. That being said, Mary B. Hesse does not deny that the integration of large-scale women in the sciences has had a major impact on the development of science in general. In this sense, thanks to their contribution, even epistemology has gained because it has succeeded in adopting new linguistic evaluation structures that help us better understand the world we live in. He argues that not everything can be contained within the limits of language and that science still needs to evolve beyond the words that make it understandable, "feminine" point of view, incorporating some flexibility in the rigid logic of departmental sciences and research from the laboratories. "Feminine criticism is not directed against the ontological hypothesis of the existence of structures and laws, but against the belief that the world can be fully known and exposed precisely in language (...) Researching the history of science and the way in which scientific theories are formed in the last half of the twentieth century, many epistemological directions have noted that science is self-developed, but it does not escape from social, economic or cultural influences, that although many tend to objectively, many scientific statements remain partly true. "This view is constructive because it forces science to self-assess the boundaries and always be vigilant by looking at a conclusion at least twice before declaring the truth. Mary B. Hesse also supported three other key arguments to highlight the importance of feminism in the world's sciences (including epistemology), but the question remains the same: to what extent can a feminist epistemology actually be spoken of?

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The first argument is based on past investigations; the situation, often highlighted, of the very limited participation of women in scientific research has emerged. Yet, from an epistemological point of view, it can be seen that women up to the middle of the twentieth century preferred careers especially in the life sciences and social sciences, and less in mathematics, physics, logics and philosophy. "This first argument is not entirely true. Although it is true that in the 11th and 19th centuries women were excluded from the academic sphere and rejected from university studies, they have always been part of cultural life and scientific research within patriarchal societies, while still since ancient times women have been admitted in the fields of medical science, natural philosophy and mathematics. The study of natural philosophy was also open to women in Ancient Greece, and women were still well-regarded in medicine.

In Ancient Egypt we can give Merit-Ptah (the oldest known woman in this field), and in Greece we can remember Agamede and Agnodike (4th century AD, Agnodike practiced law in Athens). In the field of natural philosophy, in Greece there were Aglaonike (able to predict the eclipses), Theano (female physician and mathematician) who studied at the Crotona school under the direction of Pythagoras, along with several women, and let us not forget by Hypathia of Alexandria, who was the first mathematician, philosopher and Greek astronomer who lived in Roman Egypt. Other women, at that time, were also renowned for their knowledge in the fields of chemistry and alchemy, a clear example being Maria Prophetissima who wrote alchemy treatises ever since the first century in Christ's time and which is said to be he was the professor of the Democrat philosopher with whom he had met in Egypt. In the Middle Ages again, educated women were especially present in monasteries and nunnery groups where they were allowed to read and write, but also to be part of scholarly research when the opportunity arose. Maria Theresa and benedictine abbess Hildegard von Bingen who studied philosophy, botany, natural history and medicine are just two of many famous examples. In the 11th century, although most universities opposed the emancipation of women, in Italy at the University of Bologna they were accepted to take part in lectures and conferences. In that century in Italy, women were even allowed to hold medical offices; the female doctor Trotula di Ruggiero was one of the examples. She taught in this context a group of women who were known as "ladies of Salerno" and wrote treatises on obstetrics and gynecology. Apart from her, another famous case at that time was Dorotea Bucca (she held a title at the University of Bologna for 40 years in 1390), and despite all the prejudices and social discrimination that occurred, have maintained over the centuries against women, many names of women have been noted in the fields of science despite all the obstacles: Abella, Jacobina Felicia, Alessandra Giliani, Rebecca de Guarna, Margarita, Mercuriade (Constance Calenda, Calrice di Durisio (15th century), Constanza, Maria Incarnata and Thomasia de Mattio. Later, the scientist and Italian woman Laura Bassi will also be one of the most illustrious 18th century intellectuals. The examples can continue indefinitely because there have always been women who have been in the field of science for many centuries, and in this sense, it would probably be incorrect to support Mary B. Hesse's point of view that says that women did not have an authentic scientific interest in the idea that they preferred human sciences more than the real ones of mathematics, physics and logic. This view is false according to history that shows us that women have a real scientific interest in all fields of science; (1885-1847), Clara Schumann (1819-1896), Ethel Smyth (1858-1944), Rebecca Clarke 1886-1979) being just a few of hundreds of examples.

Women have participated in this way over time in all scientific fields while making their contribution in the most meaningful way possible. Let's say that they were not affirmed until the nineteenth century, it would be not only a social error but also an injustice because it

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would mean victimizing them. They were indeed oppressed and limited, but they were not stopped from striving against the sexist and biased trends of the collective mentality dominated by the patriarchal supremacy. They have always been present in the intellectual sphere, and if only now we attribute a special merit, this is because only a part of the sexist culture in the patriarchate's estate has succumbed to its abusive power. "Explaining in terms of Mircea Florian's conception, we believe that the phenomenon of recessivity is manifested here, women playing the role of" outsiders "that assail the academic philosophical community. There is also a predominant tendency towards affirmation of marginalized oppressed classes or groups. Women who present their fruit of philosophical research are considered victims of ideological prejudices, justifying their determination to build a "female epistemology." Contrary to what is stated in this paragraph, suppose that we can speak of feminist elements in the field of epistemology, in instead of "victimization" that women would propose to overcome by their contribution in this area, it would be best to talk about the "glorification" of the feminine sex that they managed to establish as a result of their effort to balance the balance of power in society through all the contributions they have ever shown. The second argument Mary B. Hesse says that women have managed to impose a "feminist viewpoint" that has led to some reforms in scientific institutes, magazines, and universities. In this sense, the phrase "feminist point of view" is very likely to betray sex masculinity of men to women because when women express their views, they do not necessarily do so to combat the predetermined order of a mentality masculine or "androcentric" style of argumentation. Moreover, this "feminist viewpoint" could betray equally well a masculine sexism of women towards men, hostility and sexual discrimination. The formulation itself has nothing wrong but the implications it supports are not positive anyway in terms of its association with any field of science.

In the third argument, Mary B. Hesse, with some reproach, mentions that women have not made the necessary contribution to creating an alternative successor science that should best represent the contribution of the entire female species in the fields of science as they have made men over time creating modern "Galileo-Newtonian" science.

The Galileo-Newtonian system first helped to form modern astronomy and laid the foundations for modern science. Galileo, who taught at the mathematics department in Pisa, studied the movement and founded a study of the dynamics. His contributions led to the development of a theory of gravity and movement that contradicted Aristotle. When he studied the Moon with the help of a personal telescope, he noticed Aristotle, who claimed that the surface of the moon was right-as the moon had a rough and rough surface. At the same time, he managed to determine the height of the mountains by calculating the length of their shadows with the help of geometry, and also managed to detect the moon borrowing from the light reflected by Terra. Another discovery he made showed how Jupiter has four satellites that rotate around the planet, always moving its position just as the moon rotates around the Earth. He identified the phases of Venus, saying that they were the same as those of the moon, and thus imposed the heliocentric model of the solar system. Detected the sunspots, determined that the Milky Way galaxy is a conglomerate of stars and managed to locate many stars that are invisible to the naked eye. Experimenting the movement, when he let two objects fall at the same time, he saw that once they were moved, those objects remained motionless without the need for another force (inertia) and then created three fundamental laws of motion: 1. any material object retains its state of inertia in a straight line of motion if it does not act upon it with an external force; 2. the acceleration of an object is directly proportional to the net force applied to that object, takes place in the direction of the net force and is inversely proportional to the weight of the object; 3. At any time when an

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object exerts a force on another object, the second object upon which it was acted will exercise an equal and opposite force on the first object. He has also advanced the principle of relativity: "the laws of physics are the same in any system of uniform rectilinear motion, no matter its speed or direction. So, there is no absolute movement or absolute rest. "All these laws will later lead to the creation of the laws of motion designed by Isaac Newton. Starting from the model of Galileo's laws, Newton will introduce some new concepts and will be able to revolutionize the whole of science. One of Newton's laws was formulated in relation to gravity: "In 1590 Galileo Galilei demonstrated that objects with different weights fall on Earth with the same acceleration.

Less than a century later, in 1666, Isaac Newton analyzed the movements of several cosmic objects and formulated the law of universal gravitation: each body in the Universe exerts a force of attraction (gravity) on all other bodies, which vary according to the masses bodies and dysfunction between them. This law applies today. "Thanks to these two geniuses, the sciences of mechanics, physics, mathematics, and astronomy could progress to the point where the universe became less scary and more fascinating than ever. Between the 18th and 19th centuries, extraordinary scientific revolutions took place, but not all can be attributed to men. If we look closely, we will see countless women who have been active in the sciences during this prolific period for humanity, and it would not be right to say that women have gained recognition and have been widely accepted socially because science has evolved both so long it was finally needed for more work. "This vision disappears in the twentieth century; now the scientist becomes the man who devotes most of his scientific activity; "Perspiration" takes the place of revelation, the scientist being urged to be concerned about what can be derived from his work. That is why the time separating a laboratory breakthrough from its technical and social application is considerably shorter because the means available to the scientist for his work have multiplied according to the hopes governments and enterprises put in the results of scientific research. Thus, working teams are being set up, requiring an increasing number of technical and administrative staff: laborers, assistants, engineers, etc. This is how the first way of penetrating women into the scientific research activity is realized."

First of all, if we assert that only now, with the development of technology and the demands of science, women have been able to enter the social sphere for work, research and academic activity at large scale, that would mean ignoring centuries in which women have contributed to the development of science just outside the field of officially recognized cadres. What is to be admired about women as a minority in their power to gain public recognition over time is that they have always been involved in the development of science and as passionate as men in what is their affirmation in this plan. They have even contributed from the sphere of anonymity or incognito sphere to the cultural and intellectual progress of society and have never considered themselves intellectually inferior.

Everything that science means today also carries the seal or imprint of the women of antiquity, from the classical age, from the Middle Ages, to the Renaissance until today.

We can not talk about an "epistemology with profoundly feminist echoes" when women are the ones who inspired the geniuses and who were themselves geniuses for so many centuries. Moreover, the implementation of a succession science is irrelevant.

In a patriarchal society in which most of the male geniuses are obviously mentioned and promoted, the contributions and merits of women as exceptional scientists will always fall second, yet this does not diminish their importance, and in no case do they underestimate the value. Why? For the simple fact that women have been dared to assert themselves regardless of the prohibitions that limited their knowledge. They have found ways to make

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them indispensable. Science did not "make room" on the world research platform, but it finally recognized that it was needed, and if this was not seen before, it is only because the chauvinist mentality feared them as rival and did not want competition on the intellectual level. After all, it is quite difficult when men confront each other for the reputation of the Nobel Prize. Imagine what it would have been if she had studied with peer women. Now the problem remains the same. Competition is the same gift nowadays, only profit matters. Men have chosen to cooperate with women and to study and research together officially because only so everyone will have more to gain. Today's science means money, fame, power, gain, all things that people who are thirsty for power can profit. Science-based businesses are also very profitable.

Now women are no longer a danger, everyone can enjoy the same honor as long as it brings the most satisfying profit.

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