THE SILENCE of the SOUTHERN SPHERES: EPISTEMIC INJUSTICE within the FRAMEWORK of SUBALTERN THEORY

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Abstract: This study examines the marginalization of the Southern Globe in the historical, cultural and epistemological context within the framework of the concept of subaltern theory and epistemic injustice. In the study, first of all, Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak said, "Can Subaltern speaks?" Based on the question, silence and invisibility attributed to the Southern Globe in global information production were analyzed. The concept of epistemic injustice, the structural foundations of the knowledge between the South-North has been put forward by discussing the witness injustice defined by Miranda Fricker and the forms of Hermeneutic injustice. The permanent effects of colonial heritage on information policies; It is supported by cases how local information systems, cultural narratives and social experiences are systematically excluded in the fields of international academy and policy. The study was embodied through the epistemological marginalization of Latin American indigenous peoples, the postcolonial information construction processes in Africa, and the invisibility problems experienced by the Pacific Islands in environmental information production. The findings show that the Southern Globe is not only economic or political, but also in an epistemological inequality network. As a result, it is emphasized that southern epistemology should be made more visible and effective in the circulation of institutional academy and global knowledge in order to achieve epistemic justice. In this context, it is recommended to establish solidarity -based information networks, to protect local information systems and to encourage multilingual, multicultural academic production models.

Keywords: *Southern Sphere, Subaltern theory, epistemic injustice, postcolonialism, inequality of knowledge.*

Introduction

In global information production and academic discourse, the geographies, which are historically called "Southern Globe, are systematically marginalized, representation opportunities are restricted and epistemologically invisible (Connell, 2007). This is not only a result of economic and political inequalities, but also a manifestation of structural asymmetry rooted in access to information, production and circulation processes (Santos, 2014). Postcolonial thought, especially the subaltern theory, provides a strong theoretical framework to analyze these silence mechanisms. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak's "Can Subaltern speak?" The question is not only a rhetoric inquiry in this context, but also a deep criticism of which sounds can be heard in the global information order, which are suppressed (Spivak, 1988). On the other hand, the concept of epistemic injustice developed by Miranda Fricker reveals the types of witnesses that individuals or communities are exposed to in the production and sharing processes of knowledge and the types of knowledge on the south-north axis by revealing the types of knowledge (Fricker, 2007). In this context, the silence of the Southern Globe means not only to be taken away from the possibility of speaking, but also the conscious narrowing of the epistemic floors that can be understood by the speech (Bhambra, 2021). This study aims to examine the intersection between the historical origins, current reflections of the silence, current reflections and continuity in information policies, and to examine the intersection points between the theory of Subaltern and the theory of epistemic justice. Thus, it is aimed to develop both theoretical and practical proposals in order to make southern epistemology visible and to ensure pluralism in the field of knowledge.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical basis of this study is shaped in the intersection of the concepts of epistemic injustice that emerged in the contemporary philosophical discussions that arose from postcolonial thought. The concept of Subaltern was used to identify social groups in Antonio Gramsci's prison books, which were political and culturally excluded by the Egemen Bloc and cannot access organized representation mechanisms (Gramsci, 1971). Later, this concept gained a new dimension with the work of Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, especially in South Asian studies. Spivak (1988), "Can Subaltern speak?" With the question, he questioned how the sound of marginalized groups in the post-colonial context was suppressed in Western-Central Information Production. According to him, Subaltern is silenced not only in the

political arena, but also in the epistemological level; This silence is about the impossibility of representation and the lack of speech. In this respect, the theory of Subaltern allows to analyze the problem of which sounds are heard in the global information order and which ones are considered "no" (Morris, 2010). Epistemic injustice, as Miranda Fricker (2007) conceptualizes, refers to the fact that individuals or groups fall into disadvantaged position due to their identity in the process of production, transmission and evaluation processes. Fricker explains the epistemic injustice in two basic ways: testimony injustice and hermeneutic injustice. Testimony injustice emerges as a result of the systematic assessment of a person's reliability due to prejudices of the social group to which it belongs. Hermeneutic injustice is the fact that social experiences cannot be expressed in the current conceptual frameworks, that is, a disadvantage arising from the unequal distribution of meaning sources (Fricker, 2007). This concept is critical of understanding the inequality of knowledge between South-North; The invisible of local information systems in the international academy is the concrete manifestations of both testimony and hermeneutic injustice (Medina, 2013). With the theory of Subaltern, the concept of epistemic injustice offers two powerful perspectives that complement each other in the criticism of knowledge policies. While the SUBALtern theory focuses on the question of who can speak and heard; Epistemic injustice makes it visible which structural obstacles are present in these speech and understanding processes. Therefore, these two approaches provide a common ground to analyze the silence of the Southern Globe both historically and conceptually (BAMBRA, 2021; Santos, 2014).

Epistemic Injustice in the Southern Globe Context

The Southern sphere is historically located in colonialism, post -colonial dependence relations and unequal structures of global capitalism; This positioning is not limited to economic or political areas, but also reflected in the information production processes in depth (Connell, 2007; Santos, 2014). The domination of the North -centered epistemological norms on information systems has led to the ignorance of the South forms of knowledge, local experiences and cultural worlds to be ignored or pushed into a secondary position. This directly coincides with the concept of epistemic injustice that Miranda Fricker (2007) puts forward. In particular, in the context of witness injustice, it has been systematically low due to the reliability of individuals or communities in the Southern Globe due to their reliability, colonial prejudices and racial/cultural hierarchies (Medina, 2013). Similarly, Hermeneutic injustice emerged as the inability to represent and understand the social, cultural and ecological experiences of the South within the existing global knowledge frames. In this context, epistemic injustice works not only at the individual level, but also at institutional and structural levels. International academic publishing systems, research fund mechanisms and policy -making platforms indirectly limit the information production capacity of Güney on the basis of North - centered epistemological standards (Bhambra, 2021). For example, the ecological information systems of indigenous peoples in Latin America are often reduced to the category of "traditional" or "local information" and placed on the lower steps of scientific knowledge hierarchy; The political and social theories produced in the postcolonial period in Africa have a problem of legitimacy when we are out of the Western-Central Paradigm (Mignolo, 2011).

These processes push the Southern Globe to a "speaking" in the circulation of global knowledge, but often in a "talked about" position. As a result, epistemic injustice in the context of the southern sphere is a bidirectional process that operates both the suppression of sound and the narrowing of the meaning. This process is fed by the legacy of historical colonial relations to the present and creates an inequality structure in the field of knowledge. Therefore, the visible of southern epistemology is not only in terms of providing fair representation, but also in terms of providing a pluralistic, inclusive and fair structure of global information systems.

Silence of Subaltern Locations

The concept of Subaltern was used in the prison books of Antonio Gramsci to identify social groups that are political, cultural and economically excluded by the Egemen Block (Gramsci, 1971). This concept has gained a new dimension at both theoretical and epistemological level with the intervention of Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak in the context of post -colonial studies. Spivak's (1988) "Can Subaltern speak?" The question is a radical question not only on the sound of marginalized groups, but also on information policies that prevent this sound from being heardable. According to him, even if Subaltern often expresses his own experiences, these statements are either represented or heard at all within the dominant frameworks of the global information system. This indicates an epistemological silence beyond the crisis of representation. In the context of the southern sphere, the silence of the subaltern is maintained not only by physical silence or censorship mechanisms, but also with structural information barriers. The pushing of the environmental knowledge of indigenous peoples to the lower steps of the hierarchy of scientific legitimacy with the "local" or "traditional" labels (Mignolo, 2011), the historical narratives of women in Africa and Asia remain invisible except for colonial documents and Western-central research frames (Mohandy, 2003). As Spivak points out, these groups are compressed not only in "speaking", but also to "unhealthy" positions. This silence is closely linked to epistemic injustice. Testimony injustice causes systematic damage to the reliability of the subaltern groups as an information producer; Hermeneutic injustice leads to the lack of meaning of their experiences within the existing global conceptual frameworks (Fricker, 2007). Thus, the position of the Subaltern is a structurally suppressed position not only in political power relations, but also in the production and circulation of knowledge. In order to increase the epistemological visibility of the Southern Globe, to recognize, support and strengthen local information systems and alternative epistemologies in order to break this silence (Santos, 2014).

Case Analysis

In this section, the concrete appearances of epistemic injustice and subaltern silence in the Southern Globe are examined through three regional examples: Latin American indigenous peoples, Postcolonial Information Construction in Africa and Environmental Information Systems of the Pacific Islands. These case analyzes aim to make the structural inequalities in the global information order visible by revealing the concrete reflections of the theoretical framework in different geographies.

Latin American Indigenous Peoples: Latin American indigenous communities have been marginalized by colonial administration and modern state policies for centuries and have been largely excluded from their roles in knowledge production

(Santos, 2014). Local knowledge in the fields of agriculture, ecology and health have been reduced to the category of "traditional" category within the Western -centered science understanding, which weakened their scientific status of authority (Walsh, 2018). For example, the information of local communities in the Amazon basin was often patented in bioprospection processes, but there was no academic or economic feedback on information holders (Shiva, 1997). This is a typical example of both testimony and hermeneutic injustice.

Postcolonial Information Construction in Africa: Information production processes in the African continent were directed by the epistemological frames based in the post - colonialist period (Bhambra, 2021). The fact that local thinkers and historical experiences cannot find enough place in the university curriculum, social sciences and humanities in human sciences, creates Hermeneutic gaps (Hountondji, 1997). This has led to the development of postcolonial information production in Africa, often disconnected from its historical context and dependent on external references. Although academic reforms in the post - apartheid period in South Africa try to re -integrate local information systems into the academic curriculum, the pressure of adaptation with the international academy limits this process (Mamdani, 2016).

Pacific Islands and Environmental Information Systems: Societies in the Pacific Islands are often positioned as "affected communities ında in global debates on climate change, but their environmental information systems and adaptation strategies are not sufficiently considered (Farrellly & Nabobo, 2014). Century - based observations on local maritime knowledge, ocean currents and wind directions are not integrated with modern climatic models; This reduces Pacific societies to the data provider position (Teaiwa, 2001). This is a clear indication of how the epistemic injustice, as well as how Subaltern positions are silenced in global environmental policies.

These three cases reveal how epistemic injustice is reproduced in different social and geographical contexts in the Southern Globe. The valuation of biocultural knowledge in Latin America, the colonial heritage of the academic paradigm in Africa and the ignorance of local environmental information in the Pacific Islands, are the manifestations of rooted inequalities in global information order, but interconnected manifestations.

Epistemic Resistance and Alternative Knowledge Production

Strategies developed against epistemic injustice in the Southern Sphere should be considered not only as reaction to the inequalities in the field of knowledge, but also as conscious efforts for the construction of alternative epistemologies (Santos, 2014). In this context, the concept of "epistemic resistance ,, as José Medina (2013) states, covers the efforts to make new forms of knowledge, discourses and methods visible by opposing the dominant knowledge regimes. Epistemic resistance may occur both at an individual and collective level; However, the most effective situations are the organizations of local communities to protect, develop and share their own information systems. Alternative information production is possible not only by the protection of local epistemologies, but also by recognizing it as a legitimate source of information on global academic and political platforms (Sousa Santos, 2018). For example, the establishment of domestic universities in Latin America, the execution of the language of

education with local languages and the determination of research priorities according to community needs are taking important steps both in the fight against Hermeneutic injustice and in overcoming the injustice of testimony (Walsh, 2018). Similarly, "decolonized" curriculum in Africa aims to gain a central position in university education (Mamdani, 2016). In the Pacific Islands, the use of Talanoa and similar local communication and research methods in academic researches enables both the protection of cultural originality in information production and that communities become an active participant in the research process (Farrellly & Nabobo-Baba, 2014). Such methods strengthen epistemic resistance not only at the content level but also at the methodological level. It is possible for the epistemic resistance to be effective not only by the defense of southern epistemology, but also as equal actors in international knowledge circulation. For this purpose, multilingual academic publishing, adoption of open access policies in information sharing, local research funds should be increased and north-south academic partnerships should be built on egalitarian foundations (BAMBRA, 2021). These strategies will contribute to the breakage of one -way hierarchies in global information order and the formation of a more inclusive, pluralistic epistemological field.

Argument

The findings of this study reveal both the historical and current dimensions of the structural disadvantages of the Southern Globe in the intersection of the theory of SUBALtern theory and the theory of epistemic justice. Spivak's (1988) "Can Subaltern speak?" The question indicates not only the suppression of sound, but also the deliberate narrowing of epistemic floors where this sound can be heard. Fricker's (2007) epistemic approach conceptualizing this silence in two ways: testimony injustice, systematic damage to the reliability of subaltern knowledge producers; Hermeneutic injustice explains the inability of their experiences in the framework of existing knowledge. When these two perspectives are evaluated together, the marginalization of the Southern Globe in the field of knowledge is not only a heritage of historical colonial relations, but a phenomenon that is reproduced in today's academic, political and economic knowledge regimes (Bambra, 2021; Santos, 2014). Case analyzes clearly show the reflections of this theoretical framework in the field. The biocultural information of indigenous peoples in Latin America reveals that the postcolonial academic paradigm in Africa's dependence on Western -centered references, and the ignorance of environmental information systems in the Pacific Islands, reveal that similar structural mechanisms in different contexts work. These mechanisms constantly reproduce the epistemic injustice not only in the process of information production, but also in the process of attributing information, information circulation and value of information (Medina, 2013; Mignolo, 2011). However, examples of epistemic resistance and alternative information production show that these silence and injustice structures are not absolute. The establishment of domestic universities, decolonized curriculum movements, legitimization of multi -lingual academic publishing and local research methods are strong against the unidirectional hierarchies in the field of information (Walsh, 2018). However, it is possible for these initiatives to be effective not only at the local level but also in the fields of global academy and policy. As a result, the provision of epistemic justice in the Southern Globe requires not only marginalized sounds to be "speaking, but also the inclusive epistemic environments in which these sounds can be heard, meaningful and value. This necessitates

both the problem of representation of the theory of subaltern and a multi -layered approach that takes into account the structural inequality criticism of the theory of epistemic justice.

Conclusion

This study analyzed the silence of the Southern Globe in global information production in the intersection of the concepts of subaltern theory and epistemic injustice in its historical and current dimensions. The findings show that the marginalization of the information systems in the Southern Globe is reproduced in today's academic, political and economic knowledge regimes, beyond being a remnant of the colonial past (Bambrara, 2021; Santos, 2014). Spivak's (1988) subaltern theory explains the position of unrepinable and unhearded groups; The concept of epistemic injustice of Fricker (2007) conceptualizes how this silence is structurally maintained. Case analyzes have revealed the existence of similar structural inequality mechanisms in different geographies from Latin America to Africa and the Pacific Islands. Another important finding revealed by the study is that epistemic resistance and alternative information production models are not absolute. The establishment of domestic universities, decolonized curriculum movements, multilingual academic publishing, methodological legitimization of local information systems and strengthening of solidarity -based information networks have the potential to transform hierarchy in the field of information (Medina, 2013; Walsh, 2018). In the light of these findings, three levels of suggestions are presented in the study:

Policy Level: International organizations and governments should develop egalitarian funds and project mechanisms that will enable the recognition of southern epistemology in knowledge production. Open access policies should be expanded in access to information and active participation of local communities in research processes should be guaranteed.

Academic Level: Universities and Research Institutions should decolapize their curriculum and carry local information systems to the central position; Multi -lingual publishing should be supported and studies produced in local languages should be made visible in international citation systems.

Social Level: Local communities should develop strategies that will transfer to future generations through documents, archives and digital platforms; Projects where local information carriers will be located as equal partners with the academy should be implemented.

As a result, the provision of epistemic justice is possible not only by making marginalized groups speak, but also by the construction of a multilingual, multi -culture and pluralistic epistemic environment in which the knowledge they produce can be heard, understood and valued. This requires a multi -layered and long -term transformation process, which takes into account the problem of representation of the subaltern theory and the critique of structural inequality of epistemic justice theory.

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