

The Decline of Modernity

“The paradigm of rationalized materialism, as an expression formaking progress economical which has reached the stage where the increase of wealth is pursued at any cost, has depleted its consistency; the global crisis representing the point of collapse of the economic systems which were generated by the first modernity.”

The pervading feeling today, especially among economists, is that the direction taken by scientific research is a debatable one. The voluntary restraining of thematic fields to the mainstream theory's sphere of significance, in order to insure guarantees when certifying relevance, and the creation of exclusive circuits for presenting the results of research, in order to obtain acceptance in the field of information, are the practices most suspected of negative consequences. Associating these means with the one for recognizing the performance of various careers, as it happens in academic education, complicates even more the negative perception, despite a certain voluntary conformation. This is because, even though sociologically argued, that which is considered the right of a scientific community to standardize understanding and to validate explicative models has become a mean for supporting the exclusivism of a theory or of a trend in research.

The situation as such pertains to a true paradox of the infancy of the knowledge society, which manifests itself in discordance with the thematic openness and the emancipation from the ideologizing authorities which ruled thought, especially in the Dark Ages. Frankly speaking though, fixating the defining references of cognitive performance into reductionist institutional constructions, such as the monopoly over the criteria for establishing the factor of influence, represents a handicap in the birth of a new cycle of modernity. And this is because, essentially, the system can be manipulated because its rules are exclusive.

The extension is also manifestly forced for the cycle of the second modernity of the evolutional path of the content and form of Baconian scientific knowledge, blocking its specificity. The sense of the method of knowledge continues to be parsimony. The cognitive context is still structured on materialism, heterodox instrumentation is marginalized, while holistic perspective is avoided. In other words, knowledge continues to be trapped in the deviant vortex of non-anthropocentric, physicalist empirism, with the societal being the proving ground for the projections of mechanical determinism and for the extrapolation-justified imaginary. The resulting situation resembles one where the child's level of intelligence is explained in accordance with the epistemic proficiency of the parent.

In fact, a drastic limitation of the initiative and of freedom of thought occurs. There even takes place a blocking of the intuition, as the motor of ideaistic breakthroughs. Undoubtedly this is a reduction of diversity as a reason for the force of scientific knowledge to not close itself, to not become a postmodern scholastic. The conceptual rarefaction, sold as a deepening of knowledge, wrapped in the dogma of quantitative testing and promoted as a standard for recognizing the merits of research is also evident, despite the material logistics for imposing the calculation of the factor of influence as principle of quality testing for instance, while the practice of granting conditional access to articles is in effect.

What happens with the validation of research performance is not all too different from the goings-on in the field of risk evaluation on the global economy by the rating and auditing companies who have created an oligopoly predisposed to forgery and fraud in certifying real value, in order to insure their own profit.

Economic research is firmly established on the path treaded before it by the experimental sciences. The peremptory proof is the setting of the recourse to knowledge models based on measurement and calculus as a rule for certifying the right to recognize professional performance. This is how the themes centered on microeconomic functionalism and the formulas for dissecting reality derived from a managerial perspective of the economy came to be employed with prevalence. Most of studies focus on the disfunctionalities of efficiency mechanisms and compete in suggesting solutions for correcting the failures.

What seems to lie outside the area of interest is the evaluation of the state of energy depletion of certain mechanisms, and even of certain formulas for building economic systems. From this point of view, economic research shows an autistic behavior in relation with the example set forth by the experimental sciences, which are predisposed to periodically test the consistency of their fundamentals and to question their mainstream theories. It looks like Economics, by seeking to consolidate its epistemic status, has fallen prey to a dangerous assumption: to safeguard the image of a self-confident science it has eliminated the competition of ideas – the confrontation of theoretical perspectives - from its conceptual universe

The most critical aspect is the lack of interrogation of the human action fundamentals of an efficiency type and the neglecting of the understanding of the dynamic in the area of conceptualization. Somewhat significant for the confusion of the epistemic moment in which Economics lingers is the restraint shown by theoreticians in evaluating the degree of maturity as a science, by rechecking the cognitive valences of the concepts considered to be fundamental, and of the basic hypotheses of Economics.

One evidence of this strange attitude is the almost zero chance of acceptance, by the top-notch editorial network for Economics research, of a text describing the results in analyzing the fundamentals of the theory; sometimes even Economics works of logic are refused. Of course that, in essence, even the form for the communication of research becomes a constraint. The standardization of the presentation is, in the end, an exaggeration of the normalization of correctitude to the detriment of content and a reduction of innovation potential.

The uncertainty of exiting the present crisis is itself a symptom of a spiritual disease in the shape of the conceptual fixation in the sphere of significances of a model of understanding and of explanation specific to the old cycle of modernity. The acute deficit of understanding and of explanation for what happens in reality belongs to this malady which has struck Economics. The failed series of advanced solutions is justified by the inappropriate origin of the cognitive initiative – the use of mental constructions specific to a way of structuring reality which is not relevant today.

The paradigm of rationalized materialism, as an expression for making progress economical which has reached the stage where the increase of wealth is pursued at any cost, has depleted its consistency; the global crisis representing the point of collapse of the economic systems which were generated by the first modernity. To correct these systems is to stay in perpetual crisis.

The path is for the trends of inclusiveness to be encouraged, as a signal for the emergence of other economic systems, belonging to second modernity generation, permissive to the principle of the equality of chances with regard to the access to wealth and with a propensity for internalizing the costs of wealth. In this perspective, economic research must follow the path of making itself socially responsible, breaking the shackles of the networks for controlling the content and the means for exposition and public certification of its performance.

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