

Epistemic stained-glass

“Economics’ epistemic territory constitutes a base for surveying the cognitive complex guarded by logical-mathematical conventions, and a bridgehead for incursions into the labyrinth of understanding offered by the studying of human behaviour.”

Economics is being structured under the influence of two essential fronts, one originating from the placental space of rational knowledge and the other coming from the direction of dynamics of societal experience. Economics thus benefits from the sufficient condition for accessing the citadel of rational knowledge and it also has serious possibilities for circulating ideas in the capricious area of inductive thinking and inspired gesture.

The methodological trajectory taken by the economic sciences is composite, somewhat right at the confluence of the formalized, intentionally built universe with the contingent universe, the spontaneous result of intersubjectivity. Economics’ epistemic territory constitutes a base for surveying the cognitive complex guarded by logical-mathematical conventions, and a bridgehead for incursions into the labyrinth of understanding offered by the studying of human behaviour.

The limits of the rationality space are therefore as fluid as they are personalized. The paradoxical epistemic constitution of Economics is translated as the confirmation of the failure of the mathematical propensity and as the refutation of the material determinism of Psychology. The object of interest for Economics is sufficiently individualized for it to certify the originality of the cognitive approach, but also general enough in order to appeal to the segmented knowledge.

In a particular fashion, Economics insures for itself the advantage of the metamathematical cognitive means in a lean enough manner to avoid becoming entirely an art which values the intentional conjunctures. The recourse to the tools of formalization probably came about in this way.

The emerging problem is whether Economics can be sure of the mathematical consistency of its object, it being circumscribed to a perimeter of a reality in which the determinants of the model of Kantian intellectual knowledge have subjectual substantiation. It is certain that the methodological registry of the mechanics is inadequate, even though it is the universe utilized by economists.

The economic sense of the ideas of space, time and causality is completely different from the one originating from the cognitive approach of Physics. Their rationalization decisively signifies the cancelation of Economics’ specific object. It may be that, in part, the failed solutions to the eternal economic woes of existence may arise from this falsification. Frankly, economic cognition is disinterested in defining the specificity of the terms belonging to the intellectual model of knowledge.

From this point of view it does much less than Durkheimian Sociology in defining the specificity, because its epistemic fixations are prevalently of a deductive nature, but it does more than behaviourist Psychology by accepting the indeterminist option in explaining the agglomeration of unintentional consequences.

The intellectual model of economic knowledge draws its content by being observant of the motivation of cognitive reporting, and of the stratification of the typology relating to the answer to motivation. The cognitive interval is bordered, according to the Akerloffian vision, by economic motivations and rational answers, on one end, and by non-economic motivations and irrational answers, at the other end. The combination formulas are somewhat limited, but the possibility for their justification is opened.

Yet the explicative horizon configured by each combination blurs the Kantian model of knowledge. The truth is that, from the economic literature, we understand too little about the meaning of the reality founded on non-economic motivations and rational answers, or the one founded on economic motivations and irrational answers, or about any other combination different from the one situated on the left end of the possibilities interval. For instance, the recharging of a model of intellectual knowledge derived from the motivations and answers of the second end of the cognitive interval exceeds, plain and simple, the rationalist theoretical experience.

The non-economic motivation and the irrational answers from the Akerloffian grid constitute the gate through which Economics exits the mathematized universe and enters the human universe, where everything becomes relative. The model of intellectual knowledge specific to Economics operates with the space of utility – which contains as parameters both the existential given as well as the creativity of the interests of needs and wants, with the subjective time – which cannot be rationalized very much, and with the asymmetrical causality – in the sense suggested by the theory of determinist chaos.

The epistemic positioning of Economics is removed from the one of Physics. The matter which it studies both has and doesn't have substantialization, the examined phenomena are and are not objective, the finality is and isn't rational. When Economics continues to imitate Physics it only invites Mathematics to overcome its abstract conventionalism and to give up on the reduction to the absurd. In this way it touches on the impossible. When pretending to be autonomous it again resorts to something which defies the norms: adjusting the acquisitions of Sociology with the breakthroughs of experimental Psychology.

In conclusion, the conceptual body of Economics reveals the epistemic stigmata in the light filtered by the stained-glass of all sciences. We are left to get used to this truth!

Marin Dinu

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Subscriptions distribution:

Mircea Dinu

Tel./Fax: 021/210.73.10; 021/210.63.07
021/210.63.08

Data base indexation:

EconLit

<http://www.aeaweb.org>

Research Papers in Economics (RePEc)

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<http://www.cabells.com>

CNCSIS B+

www.economieteoreticasiaplicata.ro; www.ectap.ro

Reception of texts: economia.ta@edeconomica.com

ISSN 1841-8678 (Print)

ISSN 1844-0029 (Online)