Abstract

This dissertation compares the notions of homo rationalis in Philosophy and homo oeconomicus in Economics. Particularly, in Part I, we claim that both notions are close methodological substitutes. Accordingly, we show that the constraints involved in the notion of economic rationality apply to the philosophical notion of rationality. On these premises, we explore the links between the notions of Kantian and Humean rationality in Philosophy and the constructivist and ecological approaches to rationality in economics, respectively. Particularly, we show that the constraints involved in both approaches to rationality in economics apply to the notions of Kantian and Humean rationality. That is why we introduce the notion of minimal global rationality. In a nutshell, the latter links one's rationality to one's ability to make good use of their cognitive apparatus to process contextual variables.

On this basis, in Part II, we present two empirical tests showing that minimal global rationality is at work in philosophical experiments because systematic manipulations of contextual variables predictably affect philosophical judgment in the Trolley Problem and in some Knobe-like vignettes. In the first case, the manipulation of the information provided to subjects predictably causes inconsistent judgments. More precisely, subjects' response to information shocks predictably causes them to issue inconsistent judgments. Instead, in the second case, our experimental results reveal that the Knobe Effect activates only if the perpetrator of an action is likely to be perceived as evil and unfriendly. Besides, when the Knobe-like vignettes include probabilistic outcomes, the Knobe Effect does not activate or is reduced in magnitude. For these reasons, we maintain that the availability heuristic bias arguably affects one's judgment in Knobe-like experiment settings.

Eventually, in Part III, we survey the general implications of the findings presented in Part II. First and foremost, we show that when manned social media algorithms produce wide-ranging availability cascades, agents predictably respond to those cascades by herding around biased claims. Interestingly, we find that the exposure to similarly redundant online content makes new social groups emerge unhindered. That is why populists and conspiracy theorists obtain such a large follow-up online. Secondly, we find that manned social media algorithms can exploit the flaws of minimal global rationality at a faster pace than humans. Yet, given that latter algorithms cannot do so on their own, we argue that the Turing Test is still an open game. Specifically, we argue so because state-of-the-art

technology can request a service to be supplied (e.g., Google Duplex) but cannot operate direct sales. This constraint of state-of-the-art technology is linked to its inability to exploit the flaws of global minimal rationality as well as humans can. Importantly, we show that if algorithms were able to do so, the involved sociopolitical risk would be high. Therefore, we argue that only some form of regulation over state-of-the-art technology can prevent and reduce such sociopolitical risks.