SUMMARY

Social worlds and their legitimations. Symbolism in the literary works of Dante Alighieri

The dissertation's main goal was to find an answer, through the text analysis of the Dante Alighieri literary works, to the following question: What symbolic language was used in Dante Alighieri's literary works?

This dissertation was placed in the subfield of sociology of knowledge that was developed by Alfred Schütz, who partly applied the Husserlian theory of phenomenology to his own scientific goals. Nowadys, the sociologists P. L.Berger and Thomas Luckmann are considered to be widely recognized as the repesentants of the sociology of knowledge.

To achieve this goal, there were additional questions to be addressed. They are as follows:

1. What are the dominat social worlds presented in the literary works of Dante Alighieri?

2. How is the process of legitimation being conducted in the social worlds created by Alighieri's characters?

3. What are the origins of the symbolic universes?

The dissertation consists of eight chapters. The first chapter refers to what can best be described as achievements of sociological phenomenology in outlining the reality of the multitude of social worlds which is a common experience of the most individuals.

In this chapter the phenomenon of intersubjectivity (based upon the work of Alfred Schütz's theory) is being explained as the way through subjective intentions and subjective meanings are transmitted. It analyzes the process of an individual becoming part of the meaningful reality that might be shared with other individuals. It also explains how the

individuals communicate with their fellow-men within the reality of the everyday life (*Lebenswelt*). It clarifies how the fenomenon of subjectivity is being transformed into the space of intersubjectivity. This chapter emphasizes also the role of typification of social interaction and refers to the social knowledge as the diversified system.

The second chapter of the dissertation reflects upon the problem of legitimation. It provides the frameworks for the different types of legitimation as the elements of the sociological theory. It underlines the impact of the religious legitimation as the main factor of the legitimation process in the construcion of the social world. It also describes the legitimation crisis that is taking place in the modern societies.

The third chapter approaches the problem of symbolism and the diversity of interpretation methods. It also refers to the the human production of signs, which do not represent only the verbal and vocal expressions. They manifest themselves in the form of symbols that can be interpreted in different ways. This part of the dissertation explains also the role of symbols in the medieval times of Dante Alighieri.

Then, the fourth chapter desciribes the theoretical perspective used in the dissertation to accomplish the purpose of the presented topic. This chapter contains the reasearch question (the main question and the additional ones). It refers to the the phenomenological sociology, especially in terms of its application to a literary work.

Then, in the fifh chapter I try to portray the life an work of Dante Alighieri as well as the times and circumstances of his lifetime he referred to. All the historical, political and social aspects of the biographical background of the author of the *Divine Comedy* were taken into account.

The sixth chapter deals with the problem of the dominant social worlds in Dante's work and the question of how and where – if at all possible – the boundaries between them might be set. It also refers to some of the social worlds that were categorized, namely: the world of the everyday life, the world of science, the world of dreams and visions (as components of the life-world).

The seventh chapter presents the legitimation process as an act that occurs on several levels of the social reality. It provides the reader – through the text analysis – with the empirical examples of the legitimation practices in Dante Alighieri's works. The criteria for the division provided in this chapter was based upon the categories introduced by Peter L.

Berger and Thomas Luckmann in their book *The Social Construction of Reality. A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge*[1].

In the last, eighth chapter the Dante's symbols were analysed on the basis of the Schütz's theory of analogical apperception. It means the symbols are analysed as objects present in the life-world which can transcendent into another dimension.

The conclusion is that the symbols in Dante's literary works can be analysed within the framework of Schütz's theory and that they are located in different social worlds and sub-worlds of the literary works. The aim of the dissertation was to find the the social context of their expression and existence.

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1   P. L.Berger, T.Luckmann, *The Social Construction of Reality. A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge,* New York 1966.