

PHILOSOPHY AND THE DYNAMICS OF SYMBOLIC UNIVERSE IN THE GLOBALISED WORLD

THE PLAN OF PRESENTATION

- ◉ **The concept of the symbolic universe**
- ◉ **Coherence of the symbolic universe**
- ◉ **The influence of globalization on symbolic universes**
- ◉ **Philosophy and coherence of symbolic universe**
- ◉ **The arbitrariness of philosophy**
- ◉ **The case of rationality**
- ◉ **Conclusion**

THE CONCEPT OF THE SYMBOLIC UNIVERSE

- ◉ “ No longer in a merely physical universe, man lives in a symbolic universe. Language, myth, art and religion are parts of this universe.....He has so enveloped himself in linguistic forms, in artistic images, in mythical symbols or religious rites that he cannot see or know anything except by interposition of this artificial medium” (Cassirer, 1963 :25)
- ◉ “ The symbolic universe is conceived of as a matrix of all socially objectivated and subjectively real meanings; the entire historic society and the entire biography of the individual are seen as events taking place within this universe” (Berger and Luckmann,1967: 96)
- ◉ “The world is *my* world: This manifest in the fact that the limits of *language* (of that language which alone I understand) mean the limits of *my* world” (Wittgenstein 1974, 5.62: 57).

COHERENCE OF THE SYMBOLIC UNIVERSE

- ◉ “This nomic function of the symbolic universe for the individual experience may be described quite simply by saying that it ‘puts everything in its right place’ “(Berger and Luckmann, 1967: 98).
- ◉ The lack of coherence in the symbolic universe means also a social disorder and discomfort in social relations : “the lack of order in society has its beginning in the lack of order in communication” (Duncan, 1968:130)

THE INFLUENCE OF GLOBALIZATION ON SYMBOLIC UNIVERSES

- ◉ The concept of globalization characterizes contemporary civilization
- ◉ Globalization process does not mean unification of the world
- ◉ Globalization has an ambivalent effect on symbolic universes. It opens new potentials in the construction of the symbolic world but at the same time it can radically disrupt coherence of the existing symbolic universes
- ◉ Globalization appeared almost at the same time when the state of our civilization had been described as “postmodern”

PHILOSOPHY AND COHERENCE OF SYMBOLIC UNIVERSE

- Philosophy appears as the most important “repair mechanism” needed to restore coherence of the symbolic universe
- “the need for philosophy comes from a disturbance of the homeostasis of man with respect to nature, and philosophy itself is an artificial instrument, a prosthesis which tries to recover with the help of intellectual means that homeostasis which cannot be recovered by biological ones.” (Kołakowski, 1967 :16)

THE ARBITRARINESS OF PHILOSOPHY

- ◉ The discovery of humans - not always fully conscious - that with the help of arbitrary semantic decisions we can create our world found in philosophy almost perfect realization
- ◉ "The philosopher is absolutely free to point out a direction for his spirit. By imposing a direction on his spirit the philosopher effects purposeful development of thinking and prevents the blind mechanism that would lead thinking toward the unknown." (Fichte, 1971: 392)
- ◉ The role of philosophy as mediator: According to Plato it is mediation between wisdom inaccessible to man and the ignorance from which he seeks to break free (Albert 1991:18)
- ◉ "The philosophical concepts in which Plato and Aristotle present the world pretend to universal validity, therefore they elevate relations that are being justified by them to the position of true reality" (Horkheimer and Adorno, 1988:28)

THE CASE OF RATIONALITY

- ◉ The discovery of the arbitrariness of our present world seems to be the only rescue from the total desperation of contemporary women and men
- ◉ The idea of rationality belongs to the set of those orientation points, which, while increasing human potential for the transformation of the world, created an illusion of controlling this world
- ◉ Only now, in postmodern times, are we able to ask how it is possible that rationality fails to secure not only human solidarity but even human survival
- ◉ The endemic crisis of culture, which has been observed many times throughout history, has its origin, first of all, in our attachment to the idea of rationality, understood, against all evidence, in an objective, Platonic way

CONCLUSION

- ◉ Globalized world appears as a challenge to the human potential for autocreation which again appears as a challenge to philosophy
- ◉ In order to find ourselves in a coherent symbolic universes we need new „orientation points” that would offer a new conceptual framework, which can be created only by arbitrary philosophical decisions