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SOCIAL IMAGINARIES OF WESTERN CIVILIZATION IN CHARLES TAYLOR'S THOUGHT

SUMMARY OF THE DISSERTATION

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Keywords: Charles Taylor (1931-), communitarianism, Taylor's social thought, Western Civilization, the Great Chain of Being, social changes, transformation of imaginaries, modern social imaginaries, pillars of Western Civilization, economy, public sphere, democratic self-rule, Western modernity.

Charles Taylor is a living, influential, modern, an outstanding representative of social science. Canadian scholar's scientific activity is related to communitarian perspective. The scientist has a wide range of research interests. Modern social imaginaries, their changes and its consequences for Western Civilization are part of them.

Dissertation includes Charles Taylor's thought with regard to the modern social imaginaries that are connected with the following problematic aspects: humans' religiousness in the West, relations between the religion and the state, communal and individual identity, historical preconditions of changes in the West, formation of socio-moral and political order, transformation of community-based life, modern problems in the Western societies and social *malaises*, community existence in democratic conditions. From this point of view, social imaginaries are understood as the pillars of modern states in the broadly understood Western Civilization. Their changes determine social and political attitude among the people. In this research Taylor's thought was under hermeneutical examination. Scientific inspirations were found and primary sources of the modern social imaginaries concept were analyzed.

The objectives of the dissertation are reconstruction and hermeneutical analysis of the modern social imaginaries concept along with the research into the scholar's broad and diverse sources of inspiration. The range of the research includes works of various authors, who influenced Taylor's thought within described concept. Among them are modern authors such as Benedict Anderson, Jurgen Habermas, Michael Warner and Pierre Rosanvallon, as well as earlier ones: Niccolò Machiavelli, Thomas Hobbes, Descartes (René Descartes), John Locke, Jean-

Jacques Rousseau, Adam Smith, Arthur Schopenhauer, Ludwig Feuerbach, Edmund Husserl, Arthur O. Lovejoy, Max Scheler etc..

During the research following methods were used: content analysis, description, historical analysis, comparison and synthesis. They allowed to make a reconstruction, hermeneutics and description within holistic approach to Taylor's concept of social imaginaries. It was found that within Taylor's thought, transformation of the West is a dynamic, diverse process that covers different aspects of human existence.

Dissertation consists of the following parts: introduction, four chapters, conclusion, bibliography, list of schemes.

First chapter acquaints a reader with the intellectual surroundings of Charles Taylor and clarifies the basic differences between the communitarianism and liberalism. The analysis refers to the postulates as well as the argumentations within the debate between the members of the movements. In this chapter fundamental problems were investigated. They included: justice, liberty, autonomy, individual identity, community in society and the matter of social and moral orders. There is also an outline of communitarian criticisms and Taylor's posture toward the debate. The problem of Taylor's modern social imaginaries scientific exploration was described in the context of ongoing changes in the Western Civilization.

In the second chapter fundamental issues of Taylor's vision within social imaginaries were analyzed. The range of hermeneutics contains problems of mentality, social ideals along with an advancement of the reinterpretation process of individual thinking within Western cultural horizon. Chapter also focuses on Taylor's research approach to transformation of socio-culture reality under the influence of naturalism together with the rise of modernity. The significance of transformation of the *self* as well as the change of the normative order in Western Civilization was emphasized.

Chapter three devoted to Taylor's approach to the transformation process of the modern social imaginaries. Under scientific investigation was scholar's historical narration that contained problems connected to meaning of the historical events that were contributed to the rise of Western modernity. In this field of study, hermeneutics of Taylor's approach showed that modernity in the West was formed under the influence of intellectual achievements made by following authors: Arthur Schopenhauer, Ludwig Feuerbach, Sigmund Freud, Edmund Husserl, Max Weber, Max Scheler and others. This chapter also carries out the research on modern reality crystallization issues, where the premodern imaginaries merged with the modern thinking.

In the fourth chapter there is a hermeneutics of modern social imaginaries in context of Taylor's thought. The reconstruction of the scholar's thought within modern social imaginaries concept was based on the available sources. Hermeneutics include factors and postulates of different groups of thinkers, who paved the way for a development of modern social, economic and political solutions and expanded the boundaries of thinking among the individuals. Further examination included spheres that are also the pillars of Western societies: economy, public sphere and democratic self-rule.

In the final part of the research there are findings and conclusions. The goals of this dissertation were achieved based on works written in English and Polish languages. This allowed to investigate problems of Taylor's modern social imaginaries concept through the objective perspective and to make proper analysis of this subject matter.