

DOES THE WORLD PHILOSOPHY ENTER A NEW HISTORICAL PERIOD OF “TRANSMODERNISM”?

(The report from the 21st World Congress of Philosophy that took place between 10th–17th of August, 2003 in Istanbul)

The most recent, 21st World Congress of Philosophy that took place in August 2003 in Istanbul, Turkey, ought to be a milestone in the history of world philosophy, first of all because of the definite end of one historical period of world philosophy and the beginning of another which was officially announced; and also in terms of its content—not that it solved the key philosophical problems of the world (which will probably remain unsolved for much longer time), but for its unique symbolism. It was the first philosophical congress in the new century (and millennium) and at the same time, it did not take place on European or American soil (like all the previous congresses), but at the gate to the Asian world—Istanbul, Turkey, that is symbolically in the passage among many different worlds and centers of their *Weltanschauung*. At the same time in the city where stands the Basilica of Hagia Sophia—the only one Temple of the Holy Wisdom in the world—(though it was built not with philosophical, but with religious intentions and later due to the religious outrage it was re-installed and devastated). But only with this congress in Istanbul, philosophy truly demonstrated for the first time that its love for wisdom commands the beginning of the plaiting of the braid of a new transmodern world philosophy not only from the position of Euro-American tradition, previously the only dominant one, but also from other traditional or modern origins of all the different Euro-Asian, African and Latin-American philosophical traditions and their specific forms of today.

Thus, although at the previous congress in Boston and all the nineteen before that, the non-western philosophical traditions had only small unnoticed contributions in the sea of the traditional western philosophical problems and their analyses, expressed by the characteristic western philosophical terminology or the methodological conclusions, this congress brought a great change. Because while previous congresses urged the non-western philosophical representatives to adapt the traditional western philosophical way of expressing (if they wanted to be considered as professional philosophers) and not to try to contradict it; or even to prove that their philosophical traditions and opinions are in fact the same, or very similar and therefore from the metaphysical point of view objectively- or subjectively-idealistic or materialistic, naturalistic etc., or that also their philosophical traditions have the same metaphysical, epistemological, ethical, philosophically-anthropological, phenomenological, existentialist, or many other western philosophical directions, or even the same solution methods, in Istanbul, it all turned at once quite different. And

so, for example, if at the philosophical congress in Boston, the organizers offered the non-European metaphysical opinions only a small section of so called non-substantial philosophy, the recent philosophical congress in Istanbul was loaded every day with many various non-western or at least Euro-Asian or Latin-American comparative philosophical sections, lectures or round tables, self-confidentially presenting the philosophical diversity or previously unknown different non-European this or that philosophical originality. One could say in general that side by side, equally presented, were at least four or five individual foci of world *Weltanschauungs* and their philosophical traditions: proto-Western (or the classic European and North American), Russian, Indian, Chinese, or Far-Eastern and Latin-American.

Truly, the 21st World Congress of Philosophy in Istanbul made an end to the previous pro-Western philosophical “idyll”. Entitled “*Philosophy facing World Problems*”, its organizers, lead by the President of FISP (Federation Internationale des Societes de Philosophie), the Turkish philosopher Ioanna Kuçuradi, placed into the congress programme equal amounts of contributions characteristic of variations from all corners of the world. Thus equally numbered delegations not only from the western Europe and U.S.A, but also from India, China, Japan, Russia, Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan, South Korea, Peru, Mexico, Venezuela, Cuba etc., etc., and of course, from Turkey came to Istanbul.

On the 10th August delegations of all different skin colours and variously clothed began to arrive at the Istanbul Convention and Exhibition Center on the western shore of Bosphorus, where the Twenty-First World Congress of Philosophy took place, representing different philosophical societies of the World and (in the days to come, as a part of a new situation) different forming societies mainly of the comparative philosophies began to apply for membership in FISP, for example the International Society for Asian and Comparative Philosophy or the International Society for Comparative Studies of Chinese and Western Philosophy, etc. Another symbolic component of this congress, taking place in the atmosphere affected by the events of 9/11/2001 or the unfinished war in Iraq, was the scary presence of heavily armed police and army around the congress center. We were checked in the x-rays and detectors, controlling all that the delegations were carrying. Although the formal reason of it that day was the presence of the Turkish President, Mr. Ahmet Necdet Sezer, the strict police security, though less visible, and the entrance through the detectors remained everyday routine for all the following days of the congress.

The opening ceremony with the Turkish President as well as with the famous Turkish Duo, pianists Ferhan & Ferzan Önders was truly imposing, and after the speeches of the other different Turkish and international high political representatives (all expressing their hopes that the presence of us all at the congress would be a great contribution to the philosophical solution of such modern world problems as human rights, globalization, cultural identity, aggression, morality, poverty, etc., and that the congress will cast light on many serious problems of all humans presently living on the Earth), the speech was pronounced by the President of FISP, the Turkish philosopher Ioanna Kuçuradi, who expressed that facing the global problems of today, it is no longer enough that the world philosophy (previously oriented mainly to the West) only descriptively analyses the different traditional or new philosophical systems, but through comparing truly all the world

philosophies (that means including also the non-European or non-pro-western opinions and traditions), it has to seek syncretistically an explanation of many main factors or the most serious problems of the World and to determine its correct diagnosis and a possibility of their change. Because examining the same situation from different points of view of truly all the different cultures of the World and their practical wisdom and traditions with the assistance of the different disciplines of science and philosophy can lead to the syncretistical comprehension of reality from all its views, and also to the correct philosophical diagnosis of its symptoms. And today, when most human beings on the world are much poorer than fifty years ago and when the technical development of humankind brings no global growth of its wealth but makes the problems of poverty and the environment even worse, it is necessary that the philosophical reflection fully devotes to the service of preserving life on Earth and to help humankind change the critical situation. Because, as Mrs. Ioanna Kuçuradi remarked at the end, she did not think that the “world problems we are facing are uncontrollable. We only need to find the right philosophical reflection and afterwards, along with politicians and structures of power, to achieve its necessary reform”.

The only time after that, when the congress hall was full, was the next day, on Monday 11th August, when the giant plenary session named *The Role of Philosophy: Enlightenment, Postmodern Thought and Other Perspectives*, with the biggest magnet not only for the participants of the congress, but also for a large number of journalists and TV crews, Jürgen Habermas. He presented his lecture *Transition to a Postnational Constellation: Dispute on the Future of International Law* as a true broadcasting star of philosophy facing many cameras flashing, cameras rolling and several dictaphones recording. However, as a victim of his popularity, he did not attend any of the following events of the congress as a normal participant, not even the lectures concerning his own philosophy (maybe he came to the closing banquet of the congress, but that one, on the contrary, I was not able to attend). His lecture was the official closing of the previous age of post-modernism and announcement of a new age to come, the age of transmodernism, which was based upon the vision of the future post-national worldwide society, following international laws. This vision, in his opinion, will not be easy in practice to fulfill, however well it would be elaborated from the philosophical point of view. In his contribution, Habermas tried to offer the means to eliminate all its obstacles. However, his lecture had a tiny hitch, as it completely ignored the process of the destructive environmental changes on the globe and the consequences of its effects on the behaviour of humankind and its mutual aggressiveness and thus the lecture failed to deal with any constructive suggestions to mobilize the population of the Earth towards the new relationship to Nature and the willingness of people to realize and finance the significant worldwide projects that would prevent its further devastation. That means Jürgen Habermas did not see as an alarming problem environmental degradation and its effects on the behaviour of humankind cause the worsening of the psychics of the mutual relationships from the view of the worldwide perspectives of the global population, despite the main idea of the congress was *Philosophy Facing World Problems*, because he did not add it into his philosophical conception of the future post-national constellation of the world. Neither did the following speaker, Professor Dianni Vattino from Italy, in his lecture *The End of Philosophy in the Age of Democracy*,

enrich philosophical thinking for the new quality of the human wisdom from the view of the behaviour of humankind to its natural environment. His reflection about the end of the philosophy in the age of democracy was only a good-to-listen-to eclectic contemplation about different threats of the mass culture in the new age of supranational financial, economical and power-motivated world giants that in the era of globalization will probably more and more manipulate the worldwide public taste and its social, political and cultural interests and how we should face them. At the end of the plenary council, though in front of an obviously smaller audience (after the previous lectures of the two generally respected philosophical authorities, almost one third of the spectators left, along with the journalists and TV crews), a modestly looking older philosopher from Ghana, Mr. Kwasi Wiredu presented his lecture, really worth the title of the congress, *Philosophy Facing World Problems*. Its theme was *The Role of Philosophy in Intercultural Dialogue: An African Perspective* and at the beginning, he made a statement about the unity with nature and the knowledge of its processes and laws, that the African ethnics disposed before the arrival of the western civilization on their continent. The West, however, began in an inhuman manner to follow its economic interests and act like a very cruel colonizer that considers the natives to be an uncivilized natural community that needs to be educated and cultured by the western way and thus to be introduced to a new style of life, which is, naturally, the western style. Even today, the West keeps promoting itself as a world benefactor that by its own development reached the most optimal level and thus still thrusts its approach to life upon all other world nations and cultures. At the same time, the West suggests itself that it holds an equivalent dialogue with the rest of the world, but as Kwasi Wiredu remarked: “what the West holds is no dialogue, but dictation. Because when you in fact consider us your uncultured younger brothers who need to be taught how to think and how to live according to your standards, turning our traditional world upside down and causing chaos in our world that you subsequently cannot face, it is no dialogue, it is a fatal miscomprehension of the African life style and its natural life orientations. If you thrust upon us your consuming life philosophy and its immoral values, allowing no fair discussion with us, or even the willingness to understand our philosophical optics and our orientations of opinion, there can be no talking about mutually beneficial dialogue between us. Before the arrival of Europeans to the African continent, the population of Africa lived in the harmonic symbiosis with nature and even until today, a part of its population still follows its own tried and tested wisdom. For example, that living beings are not only the people representing the physical world of being, but also the invisible souls of the posthumous ones as well as the equally living and life-bringing natural and spiritual forces or another postmortem spirits that still exist and a man should communicate with them and dwell with them in a synergistic useful co-existence, and so respect them and count on their help. The specific co-operation of the living humans with the postmortem spirits of their ancestors, friends or many other giant human individualities that still co-create the life on Earth and actively influence it, is for you, the rationalistic Westerners only a silly thing that doesn't need to be concerned by a philosopher,” and thus, as the Ghanaian philosopher Kwasi Wiredu continued, “it is no dialogue, if the opinions proved by the African tradition are undervalued and a priori ridiculed by western philosophy. Yes, the West still says that it wants to hold a philosophical dialogue

with the other representatives of the World, but still constantly thrusts upon all of them only its own way of thinking, only its own philosophical ideas and only its own system of values, or only its own philosophical categories of naming the essential substances that are abstracted away only from the Western philosophical ontological roots and the related epistemological approaches towards the theory of knowing the world and its being, or towards the theory about the human and the social organization of the world, ergo its axiological value priorities. However, the non-western-oriented philosophers, just like many ethnic Africans, approach the world differently and their different truths about the being bring many better conclusions for another being of the world and ergo should not be ignored just like they are. That means, if we really want to face the world's problems, we need to understand them from the different points of view not just from the western one. We need to learn how to listen to one another in the mutual dialogue and comprehend those opinions that put the truth about life well and let them inspire us positively. And let it be a mandatory challenge also for the western philosophers in this new age of transmodernism!" Unfortunately, after the lecture was over, there was no more time for the audience to ask questions not only to this particular Ghanaian philosopher, but both Habermas and Vattimo. And so, the rest of the audience that remained in the congress hall until the end cheerfully welcomed the end of the plenary session without demanding a discussion.

From the opening of the congress on Sunday 10th August, until the following Sunday, the blocks of all 49 originally planned congress sections ran simultaneously in the halls of the Istanbul Convention and Exhibition Center, as well as in the three representative halls of the neighboring Military Museum and the nearby Hilton, Elit and Dorint Plaza hotels. Alongside that, there were also plenary sessions or different symposiums as well as the round tables and invited sessions of many world philosophical societies etc. What was absolutely unique in the history of the world congresses of philosophy was the forming of the new tradition of solely student discussion sections. Due to that, many university students of philosophy from all the corners of the world attended this congress and apart from the student sessions, they had, of course, free entrance to all the other congress events, which allowed them also to ask questions in their discussions. Therefore the congress was full of the youngest philosophical novices, who, as the last president of FISP, Ioanna Kuçuradi remarked at the opening ceremony, "give us hope that the philosophy will play an important role also in the co-creation of the world in the future."

Every one of the eight days of congress consisted of four or five simultaneous events running in two-hours slots from nine o'clock in the morning to eight o'clock in the evening. Among those were the sections, symposiums and the round tables, dealing with practically all the different philosophical problems of today. That is: from ethics, aesthetics and the philosophy of art, through applied ethics, bioethics or medical ethics, commercial ethics, comparative philosophies of Europe and Asia or the East and West, as well as the philosophy of human rights, philosophical symbolism, logics, metaphysics and ontology, epistemology, phenomenology, philosophical anthropology, hermeneutics, the philosophy of cognitive sciences, the philosophy of informatics and modern communication, economy, environmental philosophy, futurology, child philosophy, the philosophy of sexual orientations, African philosophy, Asian philosophy or the philosophy of Latin America,

philosophy of culture, education, law, mathematics, natural sciences or the philosophy of Nature as the same, the philosophy of religion, social sciences, axiology and political science up to the history of philosophy from ancient philosophy, through medieval philosophy to modern philosophy, even having an independent section of a present transmodern world philosophy, they all represented the themes of the programme of the Congress, equipped with an excellent sound technology and, in the case of plenary councils, with the simultaneous English and Turkish translation.

However, what was surprising thing, comparing to the previous congresses, was the minimum focus on the traditional great personalities of the world philosophy. There were no sections dealing exclusively with Kantian philosophy or Hegelianism, or with Aristotle or Heidegger etc, and out of all personalities, the only ones to deserve such an attention was Jaspers (because there was a simultaneous 5th Annual International Jaspers Conference in Hilton hotel which, logically, brought many significant experts on Jaspers to Istanbul); Sartre (for the similar reason, the annual gathering of the Sartre's North American Philosophical Society); the work *Poetics* of Aristotle (which was conducted in Spanish by the Mexican literature scientists and philosophers, and apparently it was meant only for themselves); Mahatma Gandhi (whom the present Indians still needed to present as their great moral authority, unappreciated by the rest of the world), György Lukacs (whom the Lukacs's Philosophical Society from Szeged endeavoured to present) and, of course, some Turkish philosophical personalities, whom Turkey as an organizing country did not miss out on the opportunity to present. Philosophical opinions of the rest of the great philosophers of the world were appeared only occasionally in the individual lectures of various different sections as the examples of solving particular philosophical problems.

Another unusual phenomenon of this Congress, despite the generally declared globalization and transmodern interconnection of the philosophical world of today, was a separation or rivalry, reaching even the heights of as if an antipathy of some philosophical centers of the world. Obvious it was, when in certain sections were taking place simultaneously several individual programmes, and though they were different in language, still there was no translation to some common language. I realized this for the first time, when I began to attend the section of the philosophy of religion and philosophy of culture. One day, the meeting of the philosophy of religion was taking place in the Military Museum (which was, apparently, the centre of the most Chinese and Russian events) and it was held only in Russian. Naturally, the speakers and the audience were mostly Russians, but there were also two Poles and I, one Slovak, and the lectures (neither at this meeting, nor all other Russian meetings taking place there also under the different philosophical sections) were not translated into English. Naturally, the non-Russian audience avoided these lectures and already in the entrance, you could hear: "Do not go there, it's only in Russian!" The next day, the section of the philosophy of religion took place in the Istanbul Convention and Exhibition Center and that in contrast meant that it was going to be held in English and obviously it was to have a different content. Because whilst in the Russian section the lectures were held from the position of the Russian ecumenical religion or from the position of atheist perspective of traditional Marxism-Leninism, (still philosophically developed by its advocates), on the contrary

in the English section of the philosophy of religion lectures were held mostly by Irish and American lecturers (with an exception of Dagmar Demjancukova, the Czech religionist, speaking about cultural pluralism and the specifics of the religious language) and their lectures were focusing either strictly at pro-catholic/theological matters or the pluralistic/ecumenical matters, even anti-dogmatically/pantheistical ones. From my point of view the most interesting lecture there was that one of professor Bruce Matthews from USA concerning a truly original theme of the philosophy of religion. It was named *Wittgenstein, Religion and Lebensform: Or Why Wittgenstein is not a Wittgensteinian Fideist*. Through logical philosophical analysis, professor Matthews quite spectacularly examined, from the view of Wittgenstein's theory of language games, the absolute impossibility to define God ontologically, so to confirm an evidence of his existence. Because, due to Wittgenstein, as the definition of God cannot be formulated by any logically possible elementary sentence and therefore the existence of God can be comprehended only by religious faith and not by logic, from the philosophical viewpoint it can be considered only as a human "addiction" and not as the truly existing metaphysical "state" of a godly being. We can call "the God" only what we depend on, because it gives us our "meaning of life", but from the philosophical view it is inadequate logically state that it really "is". And as no "language game" nor logical combination of words can change this reality, Wittgenstein, being true to his philosophical honesty, simply could not remain a believer, because the true philosophical thinking, as Wittgenstein's way of the thought progress can be called, "is not thought by religionists", as being quoted by professor Matthews at the end. Contrarily, the Irish catholic theologian Thomas A. F. Kella, didn't meet any Wittgensteinian difficulties in his argument of God's existence neither with logics, nor metaphysics. In his lecture *Being what it is to be: Some new Reflections on Asserting God's Existence*, without difficulties he subordinated philosophy to the "thinking of a believer" and from his own point of view he justified with no scruples all the arguments about God's existence that he pronounced, using the very contrary nature of philosophical consideration about religion of the Russian blocks of Philosophy of Religion section held in the Military Museum.

Instantly on the first day of Congress, another so-called initiatory section caught my attention, called *Natural and Human Sciences: Is Integration Possible?* Only three lecturers spoke, two Russians and one German professors: Vladislav Lektorsky, V. Stepin and Hans Lenk. Professor Lektorsky pronounced the opening lecture *Can Human Sciences be Naturalized?* in which he stated that the existence of human sciences passed in modern times a significant transformation in frame of which one begins now already rationally to think, as he quoted, also "about ghosts" and the non-material life processes of being, ergo about an existence of the non-physical realities of being. At the same time, money transformed human interpersonal relationships into "the impersonal" and thus caused a giant social alienation of people, which initiated amongst them also the process of significantly growing criminality as well as a state of an absurdly alienated sexuality, and it forces philosophy to map and seek a way out from this situation. At the same time the so-called holistic-organic model of a vivid process of being becomes a component of the modern scientific view at the being, and its functional structures begin to be imitated also by the human sciences. Mostly the Prigogin's elaboration of the theory of the thermodynamically non-

equilibrium and irreversible systems caused the so called meta-theory of self-operated dynamic processes as well as the repudiation of traditional Newton's mechanics not only in the natural, but also in human sciences, and the multidisciplinary approaches to solving the general theories became the basic structure of our knowledge not only in natural-scientific, but also in the human-scientific area. Therefore, in the last three decades the natural and the human sciences strive for the common meta-disciplinary approach to solving their scientific and philosophical problems as well as they approach the methodology of the integration of different scientific disciplines in so-called "reactivation of skin", which means a constructive conscription about dynamical activations and reactivations of the structural entities in many different disciplines and taking their scientific theories literally "into the common skin", *ergo* "into the one body"! So-called "skin-makers" form theories of the constructive conscriptions about the dynamic activations and reactivations of many different processes of being in still bigger common scientific areas, building such blocks of cognition while at the same time try to deduce more abstract structures of our internal models of interpretations by the rule common for them all and based on this defined structural entities. So they build generally valid blocks of cognition that are commonly valid for all the structures of being, connected "in one skin". At the same time, the interpretation of the inner model of every single meta-disciplinary structure, connected in one skin, needs the scientific interpretations (to make it comprehensible) on different levels, however, the science and the philosophy of today are forced to map individual active processes of being in their dynamical processional interactions rather than to define them only as a statically valid states. Similar fusion of the human and natural sciences was the topic of the lecture *The Origin of Human Sciences from Natural Ones* by Professor Stepin, stating at the same time that adding the new sciences about the theory of chaos and the theory of dynamic mathematical systems among the scientific disciplines, the human sciences cannot already extricate from these bifurcational dynamic structures of constantly vital processes of changes. The same theme was confirmed and elaborated by another lecturer of this section, titled *Toward a Methodological Integration of Sciences from an Interpretationist Perspective* of German professor Hans Lenk. All three were metaphorically 'speaking from my mind' and I remembered myself being criticized few years ago for daring to support my sinological proofs of the significance of the classical Chinese philosophy for the modern world by such natural-scientific confirmations of its ontological truth about the dynamically-dialectic essence of an endless and everlasting processuality of being, referring to the newest knowledge of such philosophical authorities as are I. Prigogin, A. C. Wilson, R. W. Sussman, Stephen W. Hawking, James Gleick, etc. In the first evening of the congress, the section of comparative philosophy also began. It was the section I was most interested in, not only because I was to give a lecture, but mostly because it was simply concerned with comparing European philosophy with the non-European philosophical solution of the equal or similar problems. Its first block, dedicated to partial philosophical analyses, was opened by the Indian representative John Vattanky with a lecture about one specific system of the classic Indian logics compared with the logics of Aristotle, followed by the Japanese representative, comparing Aristotle's definition of the essence of the individuality and its influence on the modern Japanese philosopher Hajime Tanabe; another two

American sinologists were comparing the definition of “evil” in the Chinese and the European tradition of ethics and the similar partial comparing analyses were on the programme of the following morning as well. Very interesting was the statement of the Japanese chairman Professor Tomonoba, saying that the history of comparative philosophical research began only in the 20th century, but otherwise, especially after hearing the two following Chinese contributions, I had unwillingly to admit that the today’s Chinese philosophers often understand the European philosophy much more than their own Taoist tradition with its progressive dialectical idea of being as an everlasting process of continuously dynamic and organic changes of being. The following day, the partial analyses were the topic of this section too: two representatives of the present Turkish philosophy pronounced some very interesting theories comparing Sufism and Existentialism and Kant and Iqbal, the Polish representative Marzenna Jakubczak dealt with the different understanding of “self-consciousness” in the Western and the Indian philosophical tradition and the Russian Marietta Stepaniansova presented a remarkable contemplation about the “golden middle way” that can be traced within many different world cultural contexts. Only in the last block of this section, in the last two contributions we tried to define already syncretistically an importance of the enriching synthesis of many different opposite philosophical influences on the farther development of philosophy, firstly me in the contribution *Chinese Philosophy Through a Prism of its Classical Ontological Conceptions in the Future Global Context* and afterwards in the very end also a Kazakh philosopher Nagima Baitenova in her contribution called *East—West: The Basic Tendencies of World Philosophy*. Both contributions had a very good response in the full auditorium and were followed by rich discussion. (Since I gained an agreement from Mrs. Baitenova to publish her contribution in Slovakia, I will not analyze it in detail in this treatise, hoping that I will be able to publish several contributions from the 21st World Philosophy Congress in some of the following issues of Slovak journal *Filozofia*.¹)

The following day, the new-forming or recently formed philosophical societies had their chance to introduce their ideas. I was truly surprised by the existence of the Radical Philosophers Association (RPA) that was presenting its opinions on the ethics of terrorism, war and the political violence, but at the same time the International Society for Comparison of the Asian and European Philosophy was conferring and I preferred that the latter rather than the former. Also with their own independent programme there presented: the International Society for Value Inquiry, The World Institute for Advanced Phenomenological Research and Learning, as well as the International Association of Jaspers Societies, whose sessions were included in the congress programme, however they were taking place individually in the neighboring hotels Hilton and Elit. (The similar situation was with the Sartre Society of North America, which sessions took place in Military Museum.)

On the third day of the congress, just in the programme of the symposium of the World Institute for Advanced Phenomenological Research and Learning, another Slovak representative, Jozef Sivak, delivered his lecture, named *Husserl comme un philosophe engagé: A la Lumière de sa Correspondance*, but as this symposium was

¹ They are published in *Filozofia* 59, 75–99, 2004.

taking place in hotel Elit, I was not able to attend this lecture. It was his second lecture: *Le philosophie dans la cite* on penultimate day of the congress in one of the auditoriums of the main congress center in the Istanbul Convention and Exhibition Center which I attended and I have to admit that he represented Slovakia very well. Speaking good French and using an interesting rhetorical address, he appealed to the moral mission of a philosopher in the modern world as well as to his political responsibility for the state of the world, which was his partial contribution to the really respectable conclusion of the 21st World Congress of Philosophy. Two other interesting contributions were heard in this section, *Überlegungen zum Rasismus in der Türkei* from Turkish philosopher Sinan Özbek and a lecture of a Chinese representative Wei Xiaoping entitled *China's Historical Transition and the Globalisation*, but as I managed to gain the copies of these contributions with the authors' approval, I will not be dealing with them here, hoping that they would be published in *Filozofia* in the future too.

Slovakia had yet another representative on the 21st World Congress of Philosophy, Vasil Gluchman from the University of Prešov. He caught the audience's attention in the section of General Ethics with his truly original theory of a value of the human dignity in the ethical model of the non-utilitary consequentialism, recently published in USA, provoking a remarkable discussion.

During the congress I noticed a very interesting phenomenon that is really hard to comment: the representatives of some world powers, mostly China, Russia (along with the states of the former Soviet Union) and France, tried to demonstrate their peculiarity with the meetings that was hard to attend unless you were a participant partly due to the language barriers and also because these events were located outside the congress center of Istanbul Convention and Exhibition Center: Russians in the Military Museum (by the way Russian delegation came to the congress on a ship called "The Ship of Philosophers" which was a symbolic response to that one from 1922, which the communists used to deport many Russian intellectuals 80 years ago. On the last day of the congress "The Ship of Philosophers" returned to Novorossiysk symbolizing a returning home of those deported Russian intellectuals continental Chinese in Dorint Plaza Hotel and French in the hotels Hilton and Elit, all of them surrounded with their own characteristic environment. I have experienced this on some events which I managed to attend. Though mostly on the Chinese representatives, one could observe some kind of differentiation of communication: the American and the Hong Kong-based representatives of the present Chinese philosophy were one homogeneous group which organized its sessions with only a few foreign attendants that ordinarily did not even ask questions. Also Taiwanese were partly separated for appearance's sake from continental Chinese. Yet backstage, nevertheless, they were really well interconnected and China had finally become a fundamental pointer on the scales that decided the future untraditional aim of the future World Congress of Philosophy. Since, in Istanbul the selection session of the delegates of FISP located the next 22nd World Congress of Philosophy, from two possible places, not to Athens in Greece but to South Korea's Seoul. The opinion was that Athens would be chosen, not only as the birthplace of Socrates but also as the "birthplace" of the whole of philosophy as well, due to the western traditional ideas. The poll result confronted all the present philosophical world with a new reality: with the assistance of Chinese, disposing of two more votes, Seoul won by

these two votes and despite the general respect towards Socrates, another supreme philosophical gathering in the new millennium will be situated not only at the gate of the outer-European and outer-Western world, but truly in the very heart of the opposite philosophical tradition, in Seoul in the far East. That means, considering the geographical distance, that the biggest representation of the delegates will be probably Chinese (whether continental, Hong Kong-based, Taiwanese, as well as American) and South Korean, Japanese and Indian that will probably affect the character of the most contributions presented there.

However, if the World Congress of Philosophy in Istanbul, with its symbolism of two half-moons stuck together, opposing one another in colour, manifestly acknowledged the metaphysical tradition of bipolar opposed dialectical process of the transformations of being, ergo to the new metaphysical opinions of humankind (that is *ergo* not the previous philosophical idea of the constant substantial states of being), this new geographical tension of the selection of the location of the next congress is not coincidental. Its supreme world event will be situated on the place where such metaphysical interpretations of the being and their philosophical conclusions have much longer tradition than those in the West.

The world, in the history of its philosophy, forever visibly tends toward the mutual coequality and a symbolical intertwining of many thoughts and ideas into philosophical plaits of many different world philosophical traditions. But as we know from physics, only such intertwined rope can become sufficiently strong to bear the complete load of the world problems, saving it from falling into an abyss.

So from the point of the "love for wisdom", I'm sure that neither Socrates', Plato's, nor Aristotle's spirit consider the loss of Athens as a misfortune, but consider it as a pleasant fact that the relay of the following philosophical solution of the world is moving to the heart of Confucius', Laozi's and Buddha's philosophical traditions, ergo to one of the places of a new philosophical contribution to the future syncretic way of formulating the global metaphilosophy of humankind, built not only upon the Western way of "love for wisdom", but as the true "love for wisdom" respecting the solution of the problems with the help of other world's inspirations. Thus the 21st World Philosophy Congress in Istanbul, facing world problems, fulfilled wisely its mission, passing the baton of the whole "yet unsolved" philosophical solutions not to Athens, but to the Far East, to the South Korean Seoul.

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