

The *final cause* of Aristotle and the 25th WCP held in Rome

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Конечная причина Аристотеля и состоявшийся в Риме XXV Всемирный философский конгресс Милан ТАСИЧ

In Rome, between the first and the eighth of August 2024, the World Congress of Philosophy was held at the Sapienza University, under the slogan *Philosophy across boundaries*. Organized this time by the International Federation of Philosophical Societies (FISP), and the Philosophical Society of Italy, it was the twenty-fifth conference of this type, starting with the first one in 1900 in Paris – as part of the Universal Exhibition – in which the great men of philosophical, and scientific thought of the 20th century took part: Bertrand Russell, Henri Bergson, Henri Poincaré, Giuseppe Peano, and others.

This time, the work of the Congress took place within the framework of five plenary sessions, ten symposia, i.e. eighty-nine thematic sections, and a significant number of round tables, student sections, etc. The day before the start, the Council for Researching the Importance of Philosophy met to debate the topic: “The boundaries of philosophy between cultures”, and what does it do according to tradition, under a different title, every time the day before holding such meetings.

Two presentations at the plenary sessions of several were titled: “Limits of Artificial Intelligence” and “Vulnerability and Cognition”, and three of them within the symposia: “Ethics and Living Beings”, “Epistemic Injustice, Power and Struggle”, and “Biodiversity and the Environment”. This small number of words from the mentioned titles, along with those from the slogan of the Congress itself, already suggests a certain view of the place and the role of philosophy today from the perspective of the philosophical societies of the world, members of FISP. First of all, it was an opportunity to consider global issues of the widest importance, due to their ideological, economic, cultural, demographic, etc. character, and then to emphasize the urgent demand for an “intercultural dialogue of the bearers of intellectual power” to overcome various contradictions within the imagined forms and patterns of engagement at the global level.

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In this sense, in his welcome speech, Luca Maria Scarantino, president of FISP, invited “leading scholars of diverse backgrounds to discuss pressing ethical, social, and spiritual issues, to challenge rigid disciplinary demarcations and to address urgent public concerns such as inequalities, cultural and gender diversity, sustainability, rights, and political transformations on global scale”.

Emidio Spinelli, president of the Italian Organizing Committee, will say near the same, namely that this time it is about “a powerful and lofty aim: ... to create the conditions for a profound and fruitful exchange between all those who study, practice and are interested in philosophy, by overcoming all barriers, distinctions, differences, and obstacles, and putting aside old and no longer acceptable contrasts between North and South, East and West”.

Further Peter Junkers from the University of Tilburg, Member of the board of directors of FISP, will also testify that the dialogic form of conducting philosophical discussions on the way to the truth is of permanent importance, and in the article entitled: “Philosophical Dialogues about Critical Societal Questions”, published in a special supplement of the newspaper *Avvenire* (on August 1st), says: “Since the time of Plato, a prominent method of philosophical inquiry has been to engage in dialogue with others on fundamental matters, including the nature of human beings, the tension between appearance and reality, the relationship between ideology and truth, human behavior and its connection to the good, the best approaches to societal governance, and other such topics”.

We can mention other eminent names, philosophers, and representatives of power, who have also expressed interest in solving the world’s burning problems in the way of their philosophical rethinking and thus overcoming difficulties on a global level. And yet, only a small number of words from the titles of presentations at plenary sessions, symposia, round tables, lectures by invitation, etc. – of course, of the most eminent representatives in the Congress – evokes just mentioned intentions of the organizers. In addition to the five already mentioned titles, here are a few others of them again to confirm it: “Women in the History of Philosophy”, “Cross-cultural Exchanges in the Ancient World”, “Trust, Truth and Knowledge”, “Emptiness and Experience”, “Temporality and agency” and others.

According to our humble insight, only Jeffrey Sachs, from Columbia University in New York and director of the Center for Sustainable Development at Columbia University, has coherently spoken about the current impasse in international relations, into which our deeply divided world has fallen, possibly on the brink of nuclear war – from the political, ideological, economic and every other point of view. And the unwillingness of world leaders to resist the neocolonialist aspirations of multinational corporations to dominate the natural resources and the living space itself, especially in the world’s underdeveloped countries. They are doing all this under the abundant protection in every way of the

Anglo-Saxons and their striking fists with the military NATO alliance, in the present era of the unipolar world, after the collapse of the Warsaw Pact. Then when the United States of America self-proclaimed its “exceptionalism” toward the UN Charter, and above all existing international agreements and arrangements, replacing them with “rules” at its own will.

It is, therefore, about the stripped-down position of this powerful world power, which, as a winner from the Cold War period, behaved in a neo-colonizing manner about the rest of the world, on the other side of the civilizational, cultural, and moral norms of behavior, which humanity has carefully and painstakingly built for centuries. Namely, this country is trying to restore its imperial dominance over the world in modern conditions, as the Mongols, Romans, British, French, and others did in other historical epochs the same. The current moment of history seems to repeat the outlines of the cyclic sequence of the former powerful empires, which in the era of underdeveloped economies and bad organization of societies, had as their basic “economic” activity the occupation of other people's territories and the plundering of the goods they found – until their collapse at a certain historical moment.

Critically speaking, however, in terms of Aristotle's teaching about the four causes of everything, phenomenon or process in nature and society – which are, as is known: material, formal, efficient, and final cause – we notice this time a distinct absence of mention of the latter of them, would the mentioned enormous collapse of international relations in the world not be overcome. And precisely because it skillfully goes around diagnosing those distant and hidden centers of power in the form of the owners of the accumulated capital of neoliberal capitalism, as a lever of power through which they sovereignly manage processes at the global level, otherwise colloquially labeled as the “deep state”, “rulers from the shadows”, “esoteric circles” and the like, striving by all means, to realize some historically far-reaching ideas about the future of the world, races, and religions of various secret societies.

Namely, the last signs of the truly tragic state in which the world finds itself today, burdened by gender ideology, the possibility of denying biological sex, the promotion of Satanism and mockery of God, etc., how much they help us to potentially reflect the signs of a desirable state in a multipolar world, based on the aforementioned Aristotelian causes? No one is talking about it, or as if no one is talking about it. And precisely each of them is important for all living beings on Earth, and for the very survival of the planet as we know it forever. In the same way that in the past – even if it turned out to be an illusion in the long term – the founders of Marxism placed the revolutionary potential on the workers, that is, on “these who have nothing to lose but their shackles”, pointing out the slogan: “Workers of all countries, unite!” Just having in mind a final cause, that finds an analog also in Marx's 11th thesis on

Feuerbach, where he says: “Philosophers have only interpreted the world in various ways; the point is to change it”.

Instead, they are still served as a formal cause of “democracy”, “human rights”, “non-governmental organizations”, etc., even though we say that democracy in both Plato and Aristotle is an undesirable form of organization of society, this time due to numerous and practically insurmountable obstacles to its realization, in the sense of the term itself, in modern conditions. Some of them are the numerous intelligence services of foreign (enemy) countries, and the overly powerful media, all of which work tirelessly to thwart the authentic interests of those countries.

Or if we get an insight into the 444 pages of the program of this eminent scientific meeting, judging by the titles of contributions of its participants, when it comes to the “tables” of values promoted by the mentioned centers of power, which are, in a wide range, a simple negation of moral and religious heritage on which, for millennia, civilizations and cultures have rested, we find that no one opposes the mockery of God and the promotion of devil, and the hidden desire for the mass sacrifice of human beings in the name of this semblance – as a new “god”, this time of the very rich people on the planet, labeled as the “golden billion” – in the way of the spread of artificial viruses, deadly vaccines, environmental pollution, wars, etc. In contrast to Jesus Christ, for example, who came down to earth to redeem the entire human race from committed sin, so that he would be crucified on the cross after it.

Instead, the organizers of the World Congress, at one of the ceremonies, “affirmed” a musician with horns (thus Lucifer, Satan), another one with a beak, etc., just like Jesus Christ, at the Olympic Games in Paris, “brought” the figure of a transvestite man in the guise of a woman. But did any of the more than 4000 participants of the meeting, from more than 100 countries of the world, express themselves in defense of the aforementioned millennial tradition of Christianity, on whom rests our almost total cultural heritage? We dare say it isn’t.

It is, therefore, about a foreboding of a diluvial evil, which as evil has always been recognizable as such, just as good has always been recognizable. But, for example, Joseph Cohen, from the University of Dublin, in an article entitled “From the singularity of Evil in History to the Promise of Justice for History”, published in the newspaper *Avvenire*, on the occasion of the Congress, will argue rather for the relativization of this concept, asking: “... how and why the occurrence of evil in History is always and already singular, unique and incomparable? That is: in which sense are we to rethink the occurrence of evil in History through the idea of its always exceptional singularity?”

The author of the text “*Philosophia capax Dei? Humility, Morphology of Thought*”, Patricia Manganaro, rather as defeatist, in the spirit of denying the basic (and not only) ancient virtues, will say, quoting S. Weil: “Humility is the only permissible form of self-love. All virtues without humility are finite. Only humility makes them infinite”.

Even though it is a term subject to philosophical discourse and its analysis as such, in what we have evoked so far from the Congress, we reliably recognize the defeatism in the perception of the goal as a necessary final cause: therefore no addresses to a man of healthy body and spirit and his not small natural and acquired powers – including those to enter into organizational forms with other beings – to resist the tragic temptations of life, but rather (after all) to fruitless philosophical discussions on a multitude of academic topics and problems from the abundance of natural and social sciences, and all this at a time of threatening catastrophes of a global scale: nuclear and ecological, epidemic and climatic, demographic and religious and not only they.

Those processes of massification, universal leveling, and one-dimensional human thinking and action, promoted by the self-proclaimed elites of the world as such, widely supported through the powerful mass media, unrefined but sophisticated fables and refined means of oppression and dumbing down, left far behind the primordial, as fundamental, ethno-ethical relations of healthy communities of people, which were traditionally formed around the concept of *humanitas*, in addition to an otherwise ecologically untouched environment of fertile plains, forests and rivers ... A concept that immediately “liberates” a whole range of other, equally desirable concepts from the point of view of an integral man, once and for all given as such, such as: philanthropy, generosity, goodness, nobility, justice, moral purity, etc. And which, especially in the era of the French Enlightenment, have marked centuries of European science and culture, at the end of the medieval darkness of thought.

Then the most diverse conditions, and countless external circumstances – such as the current world – would not change such a man, but he would “from the center of himself, like the center of a circle during rotation, change and control the circumstances”. Namely, Cicero still said that violence cannot be done against a man who is characterized by the firmness of character, similar to what we find in the Bhagavad Gita: “A sword cannot pierce him, fire cannot burn him, water cannot wet him”, etc.

Therefore, for such a reason, Nikolai Berdyaev will conclude that the progress of humanity can be achieved rather on the way to the past, and not to the future, where the threatened values of the integral man can be exposed, from his primary relationship between spirit and body, material and spiritual, Earth and Heaven, which otherwise also contain the Latin words *pontifex* and *religo*.

Therefore, this short note primarily aims to affirm Aristotle's *final cause*, from the perspective of our participation at the Congress, in everything that is created by man and human beings in general, starting from the unity of the material and spiritual world, otherwise hierarchically organized, in which the parts have (admittedly) relative autonomy in action, but which must be subject to the requirements of the whole, which governs them. And which knows its *final causes*.

So a rebellious man – read “the people” – on the way to building a world order, which would reaffirm the millennial efforts of human beings to preserve what has been achieved on the side of humane living, would first have to diagnose the hotspots of powerful forces of aggression and neo-colonialist subjugation of the poor population in the world, to the level that they are intended to feed on bugs, etc., and to find means of struggle for their permanent neutralization or elimination.