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# PHILOSOPHY OF GLOBAL ISSUES

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## PHILOSOPHY FACING WORLD PROBLEMS IN THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY

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*The article is devoted to the philosophical understanding of the current issues of global development and the responsibility of philosophers for the state of affairs in the modern world. The article is based on interviews with three world-renowned and highly influential world-class philosophers who each served as President of the International Federation of Philosophical Societies (FISP) for five years; and now they are Honorary Presidents of this international philosophical organization. The publication of such an article is an extraordinary event, since it presents the most authoritative opinions on current global issues that concern not only philosophers, but also specialists in the field of global studies from various scientific and professional backgrounds.*

**Keywords:** *globalization, philosophy of the global world, global studies, world philosophy, culture, philosophical community, world problems, conference.*

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On October 3–4, 2024, the International Conference ‘Philosophy Facing World Problems in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century’ was held in Ankara. It was organized in connection with the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Philosophical Society of Turkey. The conference was attended by many renowned Turkish and international scholars, as well as a large number of teachers, post-graduate students and undergraduate students from various Turkish universities. The program covered a wide range of issues facing the modern world and was closely aligned with the general theme of the conference, which was essentially the same as the title of the 21<sup>st</sup> World Congress of Philosophy held in Istanbul in 2003: ‘Philosophy Facing World Problems’ (Results of the 21<sup>st</sup> World 2003: 10–92). This almost complete coincidence of the themes of these two international philosophical forums, separated by two decades, was not by chance; it reflected the extreme concern of Turkish and international philosophers about global issues and the growing global challenges that threaten the world community today more than ever before.

In terms of the nature and focus of the issues discussed, it is also important to note that this conference was essentially a continuation of the 25<sup>th</sup> World Philosophical Congress ‘Philosophy across Boundaries’ (25<sup>th</sup> World Congress 2024; Scarantino 2024a; Lazarevich and Saleev 2024), which took place in Rome on August 1–8, 2024, where philosophical understandings of global topics were widely presented in various formats and at various venues. Thus, the conference further highlighted the importance of world philosophy turning to global topics, thereby encouraging philosophers to realize their special role and responsibility for the fate and development prospects of the modern world.

Based on the above and taking into account the fact that three Honorary Presidents of the International Federation of Philosophical Societies (Ioanna Kuchuradi, William L. McBride and Luca Maria Scarantino) delivered plenary reports at the conference in Ankara, Prof. Alexander N. Chumakov approached them with a proposal to answer questions that are of particular interest to both philosophers and a wide range of people who are concerned about global challenges and current problems of world development.

### Interview with Prof. Ioanna Kuçuradi

**A. Chumakov:** *In 2024, the Philosophical Society of Turkey celebrated its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary. You have been its President since 1979. What was the impetus for the establishment of the Philosophical Society of Turkey? What path has Turkish philosophy taken in its development during this period and what features of Turkish philosophy would you like to highlight? Which areas of philosophical thought have been most developed and which are now in the focus of the Turkish philosophers' attention?*

**Ioanna Kuçuradi:** The idea to establish a philosophical society in Turkey first came to me when I entered the huge building where the 15<sup>th</sup> World Congress of Philosophy was held in Varna in the year 1973. Many national societies had a stand there, and our colleagues from these countries helped the philosophers from their countries to find their way around this huge building and provided information about the work done in their respective countries. There I decided to establish the Philosophical Society of Turkey and, when I was back to Ankara, I did it.

The Department of philosophy that I established in the year 1969 was the third philosophy department in Turkey. At present we have 67 philosophy departments in the universities all over Turkey. These departments represent almost all different schools of

Philosophy. My colleagues who studied abroad would usually introduce the approach to philosophy of the departments in which they studied. One original development is the development of Philosophical Anthropology, which starts with Prof. Takiyettin Mengüşoğlu and continues to develop until today in a number of Philosophy Departments all over Turkey. I could name some of my colleagues whose work falls within this field. They are Prof. Betül Çotuksöken, Prof. Harun Tepe, and Prof. Sevgi Şahintürk to name only three of them.

If we leave aside present-day historical studies, the logical empiricism that was at the center of a number of universities, left its place to Ethics and related disciplines of Philosophy (Kuçuradi 2009, 2016).

**A. Ch.:** *In what way is Turkish philosophy represented within the world philosophical community? Which countries and philosophical communities, philosophical systems have the closest and most productive creative and business relations been established? How many and how often are international conferences and other philosophical events held in Turkey itself, and how actively do Turkish philosophers participate in such scientific events abroad? Do they encounter any problems or difficulties in this respect?*

**I. K.:** Turkish philosophers participate in philosophical meetings organized all over the world. Yet the percentage of those who participate in meetings held in European countries and the USA is much higher than those who participate in meetings held in Asia, Africa, and South America. The main reason for this is that they have made a part of their studies in these countries. It is not easy for most of my colleagues, especially the young ones, to participate in a conference in a long distance country without public support.

**A. Ch.:** *The 21<sup>st</sup> World Congress of Philosophy was held in Istanbul from 10 to 17 August, 2003. You were the Chairman of the Organizing Committee for this congress, and at the same time you were the President of the International Federation of Philosophical Societies. The main theme of the Congress was 'Philosophy Facing World Problems' (Kuçuradi 2007). At that time, many Russian philosophers arrived in Istanbul on the 'Philosophical Ship' and presented the encyclopedia 'Global Studies' (Mazour and Chumakov 2003; Mazour, Chumakov, and Gay 2003). We are grateful to you for your comprehensive and valuable support of this project, which has had a significant impact on the Russian-speaking philosophical community. What were the features of this congress and how, in your opinion, did this congress influence the development of world and, in particular, Turkish philosophy?*

**I. K.:** I remember very well the 'Philosophical Ship' (Chumakov 2024: 73–179). I visited it at your kind invitation. This was not the first time we had witnessed your extraordinary ability to organize rare philosophical meetings. I will never forget the 'Philosophical Train' and our meetings with our colleagues from different universities in Siberia (Chumakov 2024: 229–420).

These meetings and other attempts that I made, as well as other activities that I promoted during my ten years as Secretary-General of the Federation and subsequently as President, gave a new impetus to philosophical studies in non-Western countries and Turkey. This included the proclamation of the World Philosophy Day and Philosophy for (or with) Children (Kuçuradi 2009).

**A. Ch.:** *You have been the Honorary President of the International Federation of Philosophical Societies since 2007 and have been actively involved in the work of this international organization for many years.*

– *How effective is this organization and the World Philosophical Congresses it holds, given the challenges posed to humanity by the twenty-first century?*

– *What are the most important problems and challenges facing world philosophy today? What are the most serious difficulties that modern world philosophy faces, in your opinion?*

– *How would you assess the role and potential of philosophy in solving global problems, and what can and should philosophers specifically do in this regard, given modern realities?*

**I. K.:** One of the things I tried to change in FISP was to expand its areas of work. As the top philosophical organization FISP should not limit itself only to organizing the World Congresses, but must discover and promote every intellectual activity that contributes to ‘humanization of humanity.’ You may recall that one of the mottos after the Second World War was ‘peace and disarmament.’ Today we witness a race to arm and a phenomenon that I would translate into English as ‘primitivity of civilization,’ which is a contradiction in terms.

As I often repeat, a misconception of freedom has led humanity to what is called post-modern age, whose motto, as you know, is ‘anything goes,’ meaning that there is no difference of ethical value in anything we do. But this is not true.

This is why we must give place to the education of ethics, as a form of knowledge and not as a cultural value judgement, and also to clearly conceived human rights at all stages of education, including extracurricular activities (Kuçuradi 1995, 2002, 2018). We should help our children to develop not only their cognitive capacities, as is often the case now, but also their ethical capacities. Children are ‘open’ to this. Children aged 12–15, after they watch an interview made with me about such issues, ask their parents, or their teachers, to take them to me in order to speak with me.

Can we equip our children with an eye that can grasp the ethical or human rights issues in what they see? Because many people are unable to see what they are looking at.

**A. Ch.:** *In connection with the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Philosophical Society of Turkey, an International Conference was held in Ankara on October 3–4, 2024, which was devoted to the same topic as the congress in Istanbul, but from the perspective of modern realities, namely, ‘Philosophy Facing World Problems in the 21st Century.’ This similarity is obviously not accidental, is it?*

**I. K.:** Of course, this is no coincidence. It was an attempt to put forward the changes of the last twenty years. How successful were we in doing this? You were there, dear Alexander. We would be happy to learn your answer to this question.

**A. Ch.:** *Undoubtedly, both the idea of the conference and the results of its work, as it seems to me, fully justified themselves. I was especially impressed by the wide range of issues discussed, which covered various aspects of contemporary global studies, as evidenced by the very titles of the reports presented by both Turkish and foreign participants of the conference. On the other hand, the level of analysis and discussion of these issues was very high, and what is especially valuable, much attention was paid to the humanitarian aspects of global issues, in particular, to the problems of culture, civilization, human rights, civil society, and ethics. For example, at the opening of the confer-*

ence, you presented the main plenary report: 'Value and Meaning: Two Benchmarks in the Endeavour to Understand our Times.' Why did you choose this topic for your report and what were the main ideas you outlined in your speech?

**I. K.:** The search for meaning in our lives is a human phenomenon. Yet human beings attach meaning to anything in order to live, they attach meaning not only to valuable things, but to anything (Kuçuradi 2004, 2008, 1986). You can think as examples 'the little old man' in Camus's *The Plague*, who opens the window every day after lunch and calls the cats with a mild voice, throwing pieces of white paper; and when some cats, attracted by the white paper, pass under his window the old man spits at them. When one of his spits 'attains its aim,' he smiles. But also you could think of Mother Teresa or Albert Schweitzer.

To put it in one sentence: I tried to hold a mirror to the meaning ascriptions we make and to give examples of the evaluations that underlie them.

**A. Ch.:** *You have gained wide recognition in the world as one of the most authoritative philosophers working in the field of ethics and human rights (Kuçuradi 2011, 2013). How do you assess the state of affairs in the modern world from this point of view? In particular, since each of the world's almost 200 nation-states has its own unique national culture, value system and religious preferences, how can we come to a unity of views on issues of ethics and human rights in such conditions? What are the main problems and difficulties you see on the path to implementing such ideas and principles in practice?*

**I. K.:** One way to break through this apparent impasse is, I think, to clarify the terms we use while looking at what is going on, i.e., to avoid giving the same name to different things and different names to various manifestations of the same thing. In our case, first of all we need to avoid confusing cultural *value judgement systems*, i.e., what a group calls 'good' and 'bad,' with ethical values.

What we as philosophers can do in this respect, is to help people to clarify in their minds value terms and perhaps to give examples of living with knowledge of value and values – of course, carefully distinguished them from so-called 'value judgements.' How can we do that? There is no single way of doing it. We must find the most appropriate approach for each case.

**A. Ch.:** *As the author of a solid creative heritage and having vast experience in organizing philosophical life, what wishes, recommendations or parting words would you like to say to modern philosophers, especially to those who are just starting out?*

**I. K.:** I don't like giving 'advice' or 'recommendation,' but I would like to draw their attention and reflection to the following: in anything we make or do, we should not lose sight of our object of knowledge. In the case of norms, we should not lose sight of their premises, if possible, i.e., not to lose sight of the reason(s) why something should or may be done in the existing conditions, compared with other possibilities of acting in the same conditions. We should do this sincerely.

**A. Ch.:** *Thank you very much for your time, and for the continued support of the Russian philosophers who know you and value you so highly. Thank you also for the remarkable results of your work!*

**Interview with Prof. William L. McBride**

**Alexander Chumakov:** *In 2024, the Philosophical Society of Turkey celebrated its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary. In this regard, an International Conference was held in Ankara on October 3–4, which was devoted to the topic: 'Philosophy Facing World Problems in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.' As the former president of the International Federation of Philosophical Societies (2007–2013), and now the Honorary President of this organization, you were one of the plenary speakers at this conference. The title of your presentation was 'Philosophy and War.' Why did you choose this topic, and what were the main ideas you outlined in your report?*

**William McBride:** Over the past couple of years, wars of a serious and planet-threatening nature have sprung up. At the turn of the century, I think that there was a certain level of optimism about the prospect of a more peaceful time to come. I saw things then as being connected, in some ways, to what I thought of as the task of philosophy worldwide to cultivate and promote the spirit of community among all peoples. This spirit rejects warfare as a means of resolving differences and disagreements (McBride 2003).

My main point in that talk was that Western philosophers in the past had mostly taken it for granted that war was as ineluctable a part of human nature, if you will, as food, passions, and death itself. I suggested that it might, and should, be possible to work gradually to eliminate that assumption and that reality from the coming generations of human beings. This does not seem to me to be an impossibility (McBride 2001).

**A. Ch.:** *How do you assess the level of the conference and, in particular, what areas of philosophical thought of Turkish philosophers attracted your special attention?*

**W. Mc.:** I thought that the level of discussion at the conference was quite high. Turkish philosophers are generally very well-schooled in the history of Western philosophy, at least, and have a wonderful record of holding conferences on important issues that affect the world and a wonderful record of publications coming from these conferences.

**A. Ch.:** *You are well aware of the state of contemporary world philosophy and are well acquainted with the philosophical systems of different countries. Could you highlight some features of the Turkish philosophy?*

**W. Mc.:** To continue my answer to the previous question, I see Turkish philosophy as being exceptionally open to philosophy in the rest of the world, especially Western thought, and hence very global in scope. They (the Turkish philosophers whom I know and have met) really care and really reach out. The last 50 years have been very impressive. I should mention not only the numerous conferences that they have held and the World Congress of Philosophy in Istanbul in 2003, but also Turkey's prominent role in developing the International Philosophy Olympiad, which is now flourishing.

**A. Ch.:** *Since 2007, you have been the Honorary President of the International Federation of Philosophical Societies and have been actively involved in the work of this international organization for many years. How long have you known the Honorary President of the International Federation of Philosophical Societies and the President of the Turkish Philosophical Society Professor Ioanna Kucuradi, and how would you assess the years of your cooperation and her role in the FISP?*

**W. Mc.:** I do not recall when I first met Ioanna Kucuradi, but I came to know her well on the occasion of the World Congress of Philosophy in Boston in 1998, when I was elected to the FISP Steering Committee. However, I am sure that I interacted with her at the previous World Congress, in Moscow, in 1993. She played a very important role in the FISP for many years, made more important by the fact that, after being Secretary General of the organization leading up to Moscow, she was effectively the main contact with the American Philosophical Association (for which I served as liaison with the Congress organizers in Boston) during the years 1993–1998, because the individual who was technically the President was more or less inactive. She then served as actual President during the following five years, leading up to the highly successful Congress in Istanbul. I always found her to be on top of everything, extremely cooperative, above all a very, very competent organizer.

**A. Ch.:** *You participated in the 25<sup>th</sup> World Congress of Philosophy, which was held in Rome, on August 1–8, 2024 under the general theme ‘Philosophy across Boundaries.’ Unfortunately, many Russian philosophers were unable to take part in this congress for objective reasons, as in previous years. Therefore, your opinion and assessment of the forum will be especially interesting for our readers.*

*– What are your overall impressions of the congress and what were its distinctive features? What topics and philosophical problems attracted the greatest attention and discussion from congress participants? What place did the topic of global research, globalization and global challenges to the world community occupy in the congress program?*

**W. Mc.:** The Rome Congress was extremely well attended, and it is most unfortunate that the objective circumstances to which you refer prevented most Russian philosophers who would have attended from attending. The range of topics covered was extremely wide, and issues of globalization certainly occupied a number of sessions, although certainly not a majority. For ecological reasons, the Congress organizers decided not to print any programs, but to rely on the electronic versions of the program, which, I believe, was a mistake. The university campus on which the Congress was held was quite large, with several buildings spread out over the grounds, so that it was quite possible for some participants not to see each other during the entire period. In any case, the enthusiasm for philosophy was considerable, with advertisements even on the backs of city buses.

**A. Ch.:** *What are the most important problems and challenges facing world philosophy today, and what are the most serious difficulties, in your opinion, that modern world philosophy faces?*

**W. Mc.:** As is well known, there are challenges to the very existence of philosophy as an activity. I think that these challenges can be met. As always, there is the threat of dogmatism and a fear of critical thinking on the part of political and other authorities. However, perhaps the greatest danger, on which there is considerable agreement, comes from the increasing dominance of new technologies, especially those that go by the collective name of ‘Artificial Intelligence’ (a topic of much discussion at the World Congress), that threaten to impose single ways of thinking, single patterns of thought, on humanity via all-pervasive media.

**A. Ch.:** *How would you assess the role and effectiveness of the International Federation of Philosophical Societies and the World Philosophical Congresses it holds, taking into account the challenges that the 21<sup>st</sup> century poses for humanity?*

**W. Mc.:** The World Congresses are very effective. The popularity of the Rome Congress proves that this can be the case. But they occur only every five years. (The most recent one was postponed for a year because of the COVID crisis.) As for the International Federation of Philosophical Societies itself, on the other hand, I have reservations. It has failed to be as involved as it should be, in my opinion, with member societies. It has had the opportunity to call attention to global issues through its website, but it has failed to do so very much in the past few years. It is in need of revitalization.

**A. Ch.:** *How would you assess the role and opportunities of philosophy to contribute to solving global problems? What can and should philosophers specifically do in this regard, taking into account modern realities?*

**W. Mc.:** I believe that philosophers should take greater part in the so-called ‘global forum’ of ideas. Of course they will not always agree with one another in all details, but I believe that the consensus exists among philosophers on the importance of global community, on the importance of working together to oppose the severe threats that we all know humanity faces (McBride 1994, 1999). As I indicated in my talk, annihilation of our race, which would be self-annihilation, is by no means an impossibility today. We philosophers can be a positive force in calling attention to this to the world at large, and in engaging in dialogue to prevent it.

**A. Ch.:** *As a representative of modern American philosophy and having extensive philosophical connections throughout the world, do you see any significant differences in the content and organization of philosophical life in the United States compared to other countries, for example, in Russia, China, India, and Turkey?*

**W. Mc.:** We all have our national and regional philosophical organizations, and all of the countries you mention have universities with often sizable philosophy departments. That is why a phenomenon like the recent World Congress is possible: a century ago, participants in such Congresses came from only a few Western countries. I myself have worked a good deal especially with visiting scholars from China and remain impressed with their levels of knowledge and interest. So my overall answer to this question is that the differences in content and organization are not as great as the similarities.

**A. Ch.:** *Given your solid creative legacy and having a wealth of experience in organizing philosophical life, what wishes, recommendations or advice would you like to say to contemporary philosophers, especially to those who are just starting on this path of knowledge?*

**W. Mc.:** Be convinced of the importance of your calling. Be willing to take and defend positions that challenge what may be the orthodoxy of your time and place. If philosophers do not strive to defend the dignity and value of humanity, then no one will (McBride 1977).

**A. Ch.:** *Thank you very much for this valuable interview, which, I hope, will be received with interest and gratitude by the philosophical community and the readers of this journal.*



**Interview with Prof. Luca Maria Scarantino**

**A. Chumakov:** *In 2024, the Philosophical Society of Turkey celebrated its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary. In this regard, an International Conference was held in Ankara on October 3–4, which was devoted to the topic: ‘Philosophy Facing World Problems in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.’ As the President of the International Federation of Philosophical Societies, you were one of the plenary speakers at this conference. The title of your presentation was: ‘The Roles and Tasks of Philosophers in a Multipolar World.’ Why did you choose this topic and what main ideas did you outline in your report?*

**L. Scarantino:** One priority in today's world is to redefine the social and cultural role of philosophers, and of scholars at large. While we witness a growing number of conflicts, and we sense that the overall order of the world is about to change utterly, my feeling is that we, as scholars and particularly as philosophers, are called on to assume a historic function – the function of securing permanent scholarly exchanges across political boundaries, of building wide-ranging academic networks, and essentially of making sure that cultural systems, and human civilizations, remain mutually permeable (Scarantino 2011, 2024b).

In my view, this critical task is going to define one of our key responsibilities in the long-term. It also gives a new and possibly broader sense, to our academic work: why would we strive to strengthen and expand international networks, to multiply visiting professorships, to create opportunities for exchange, if not for affirming our institutions as effective drives of cultural and human communication? In my view, this is not a time to exclude, to divide, or sever intellectual and academic bonds, nor is it a time to distance or isolate ourselves from our colleagues. It is rather a time when we shall play a connecting function and help bridge intellectual communities across political and cultural boundaries.

**A. Ch.:** *How do you assess the level of the conference and, in particular, what are as of philosophical thought of Turkish philosophers attracted your special attention? You have a good idea of the state of contemporary world philosophy and are well acquainted with the philosophical systems of various countries. Could you highlight some features of Turkish philosophy?*

**L. S.:** The conference in Ankara was very interesting and provided a lively outlook of the current concerns and debates of philosophy in Türkiye. There is a steady interest in philosophy seen as a springboard to address global concerns of cultural, social, and political nature. This is largely due to the active role played by Ioanna Kuçuradi over the last decades – and it is soothing to observe how it has become a steady approach within Turkish philosophy. In addition, the younger generations seem eager to commit themselves to a scholarly practice that is oriented towards the world, rather than exclusively focused on purely academic concerns. Turkish philosophers seem to experience a continuity in this regard, although of course there are different nuances, concerns, even methodologies that are currently explored. This is a clear sign of liveliness though.

**A. Ch.:** *Within the International Federation of Philosophical Societies, you, in cooperation with the Honorary Presidents and members of the Executive Committee of this organization, play a key role in organizing the World Congresses of Philosophy and in developing the philosophical community at the international level. Which countries are most active in the philosophical life of the modern world? How long have you known the Honorary President of the International Federation of Philosophical Socie-*

*ties and the President of the Turkish Philosophical Society Professor I. Kucuradi, and how would you rate the years of your cooperation and her role in the FISP?*

**L. S.:** It does not belong to me to assess the role of Ioanna Kuçuradi in FISP. She has been a great Secretary-general and a very influential President, and all I can say is that I am honored of having been one of her successors. What should be emphasized though is that FISP has taken a clear commitment to strengthen cross-cultural approaches in philosophy. This turn has probably started when Professor Evandro Agazzi presided over FISP, and has been steadily pursued by his successors, including of course Professor Kuçuradi. During my term as President, I tried my best to explicitly affirm this need for an extension of the philosophical canon to non-Western traditions – something that has been increasingly visible in the last World Congress: Athens, then Beijing, and lately Rome. Philosophy is a much wider endeavour than a single tradition can realistically encompass – as a deeply human activity, it shall take into account the diverse ways human civilizations have thought of their place in the world, their missions, their own cultures (Scarantino 2018). We should also say, though, that this approach has been increasingly shared by scholarly communities worldwide. The East-West center in Manoa, for instance, has done an exceptional pioneering work in this domain, and should probably be recognized as one of the most significant endeavours of the twentieth-century philosophy. Today, among others, the group for intercultural philosophy in Hildesheim is doing a wonderful work, but we should also be grateful to scholars who have brought and keep bringing a plurality of traditions in the international geography of philosophy: I may think of Miguel León-Portilla and his classic works on Nahuatl philosophy, of countless studies on Ubuntu (Beregovaya and Erokhin 2024), on Azanian culture, on Inca philosophy, and more recently on Pasifika philosophy which I find a very interesting tradition. This not to mention non-Western philosophical traditions that have already been acknowledged as part of an enlarged canon of philosophy, such as Chinese, Japanese, and Indian philosophies. FISP has played a role in this evolution, but its work would not be as effective had it not been part of a much larger and long-lasting scholarly trend. My feeling is that this enlargement is irreversible. Younger generations of scholars already hardly conceive their work in philosophy as limited to a single tradition. In addition, the academic geography of philosophy has evolved, and the major role played by non-Western universities in global debates has substantially contributed to this growing openness.

**A. Ch.:** *Since 2018, you are the President of the International Federation of Philosophical Societies and headed the Organizing Committee of the 25<sup>th</sup> World Congress of Philosophy, which was held in Rome, August 1–8 2024 under the general theme ‘Philosophy across Boundaries.’ What are the general results of the past congress and what were its distinctive features? What topics and what philosophical problems attracted the greatest attention and discussions of the congress participants. What place in the congress program did the topic of global research, globalization and global challenges to the world community occupy?*

**L. S.:** The 25<sup>th</sup> World Congress of Philosophy, held in Rome from August 1–8, 2024, was strongly focused on concerns of social and intercultural nature. Plenary sessions included topics such as artificial intelligence, environmental concerns, conflicts, public communication and information, epistemic injustice, and biodiversity. Gender issues were also strongly present in the programme, to an extent that had never been

reached before. Globalization was somehow underlying the entire programme as most of these concerns could only be meaningfully addressed on a global scale. Complexity, a key feature of philosophy, is here to be seen as a mixture of diverse cultural, social, environmental, and political concerns (Scarantino 2012). It was clear to most participants in Rome that philosophy can only be conceived as a global endeavour, which should be able to take into account a plurality of cultures and traditions when defining its scholarly agenda, corpora, and methods.

**A. Ch.:** *What influence, in your opinion, can this congress have on the development of world philosophy?*

**L. S.:** Since 1900, World Congresses have diversely impacted on scholarship in philosophy. Some Congresses have marked turning points in philosophical research: we may think of the Descartes Congress in 1937, for the scientific approach it put forward, or of the Beijing Congress in 2018 for its clear intercultural claim. The Moscow Congress (1993) was also a watershed in the global dynamics of philosophical communities as it considerably expanded the scope and reach of philosophical debates. In fact, the Moscow Congress could be considered as the event that inaugurated the ‘global’ era of World Congresses, prompting a renewed influence of World Congresses as global philosophical forums. The Congress in Rome was part of this same trend, and I certainly hope that it will be recognized as a landmark in acknowledging cross-cultural inclusivity as an established aspect of contemporary philosophy. The large participation in the Congress, with over 4,900 participants coming from 115 countries, shows a widely shared desire to exchange ideas and experiences, to build scholarly and intellectual networks, and altogether to learn from colleagues from other philosophical traditions. This is all the more significant that the climate and the environmental conditions in Rome were not easy; yet colleagues from all over the world invested time, energy, and resources to make the trip. I find this admirable.

**A. Ch.:** *We would be grateful for your authoritative opinion on why there were practically no Russian philosophers among the invited speakers and heads of sections, symposia, round tables and other events of the congress held in Rome? What needs to be done to change this situation at the next congress? And, by the way, when and where will the next World Philosophical Congress be held?*

**L. S.:** Russian participation in the Rome Congress was not marginal at all. It is still early to have a detailed breakdown by nationalities of the participants, but several panels included scholars from Russia, and I distinctly recall round tables and even Invited sessions proposed and organized by Russian philosophers. Concerning the next World Congress, which will take place in Tokyo, Japan, in 2028, the task of designing its programme will fall upon the next Steering Committee of FISP, of course in partnership with the Japanese Organizing Committee.

**A. Ch.:** *How would you assess the role and effectiveness of the International Federation of Philosophical Societies and the World Philosophical Congresses it holds, taking into account the challenges that the 21st century poses to humanity?*

**L. S.:** FISP has played a growing role in addressing global challenges through philosophical exchanges, cooperation, and international networking. The Federation has progressively enlarged its constituency, which is no longer centered on Western academia but includes societies, associations, and research centers from all continents. Philosophy, much alike other intellectual activities, has become a global endeavour – aca-

demically as well as scholarly (Scarantino 2007). It therefore requires large international bodies to connect academic centers, to bring scholars from diverse continents together, and to foster a larger view of philosophical canon that it has been the case across the last few centuries. FISP is one of these bodies – certainly not the only one (think of international foundations, for instance), but by its structure the largest formed exclusively by scholars and scholarly members. In the last years, it has steadily advocated the role of philosophy for today's societies, defended philosophy departments and programs where they were threatened, supported national communities of philosophy in their struggle to maintain teaching of philosophy at national level, promoted larger participation in the International Philosophy Olympiads, and altogether made all we could to make all philosophical communities in the world feel that they had a place in the world geography of our discipline.

**A. Ch.:** *What are the most important problems and challenges facing world philosophy today, and what are the most serious difficulties, in your opinion, that modern world philosophy faces?*

**L. S.:** It is very hard to establish an objective hierarchy of philosophical concerns, especially on a global scale. Scholarly communities and their respective societies are too diverse, and too many, to identify common intellectual concerns. We observe nonetheless several dimensions of philosophical activity that seem to be drawing growing attention across a plurality of philosophical families. Among them, and in very broad terms, we may certainly mention a set of diverse yet mutually related concerns for gender issues, distinctively addressed across the various cultures and social systems; a concern for a cross-cultural style in philosophy; a growing interest for the logic of public communication; and a significant amount of work devoted to rethink the fundamental categories of political thought, in the West and beyond. I should emphasize, though, that these thematic domains reflect my own philosophical interests (Scarantino 2008); philosophers with a different background might very well mention a wholly different set of concerns (e.g., a theory of emotions, or the problem of agency, and so on).

**A. Ch.:** *In your opinion, what is the role and potential of philosophy in facilitating the solution of world problems, and what specifically can and should philosophers do in this regard, taking into account modern realities?*

**L. S.:** My feeling is that philosophers as scholars are really called upon bridging scholarly communities across political boundaries. Academia has a critical role to play in maintaining underground channels of dialogue among intellectuals belonging to countries and areas of the world that are divided by conflicts, tensions, or harsh competition. Philosophy as a field of study helps, especially as we consider its inherent universal reach, its diversity, and its potential influence on political actors. But this is not just about discussing philosophical issues – it is rather about using the dialogical potential of philosophy to keep exchanges alive. In addition, philosophy may help find ways to solve conflicts and controversies in a peaceful way, although paradoxically I believe that this is not its main task at this stage of history. Bringing scholars together, keeping specific channels of communication open – this seems to me our key role as philosophers. This is why the World Congress of Philosophy, as an open tribunal for scholars from all areas of the world, all faiths, religions, languages, and nationalities, is so important today – where else would scholars from so many different places meet in person and for an extensive period of time?

**A. Ch.:** *As a representative of modern Italian (European) philosophy and having extensive philosophical connections throughout the world, do you see any significant differences in the content and organization of philosophical life in different countries, for example, in European countries, the USA, Russia, China, India, and the Islamic world?*

**L. S.:** There are several models of academic organization that can be observed across today's world. For instance, a system mainly based on private education and research is fundamentally different from a system largely based on public resources – facilities, access, educational styles and patterns may considerably vary from place to place. In addition, some systems seem more reluctant than others to invest significant resources in philosophy, and possibly in the humanities at large. More than specific differences, though, what matters in my opinion is the possibility for scholars and students from different areas to come together, to develop exchange programs, joint conferences, and research program across the diverse regions of the earth. Internationalization, as we sometimes call it, is key in this regard. Differences between systems exist and will keep existing; what matters is exchange of ideas, joint training programs at both undergraduate and graduate level, increasingly international scholarly conferences and enhanced programmes of visiting professorship.

**A. Ch.:** *As the author of a solid creative legacy and having a wealth of experience in organizing philosophical life, what wishes, recommendations or advice would you like to say to contemporary philosophers, especially to those who are just starting on this path of knowledge?*

**L. S.:** Think global. Whatever tradition you belong to, do not forget that it is just one among many others that have made human civilization as we know it. They all have their own philosophical heritage. We will not be able to assess the value of our tradition unless we widen our gaze to the complex tangle of human civilizations from the antiquity to today. This is also why our time is philosophically so exciting – we are indeed facing a historic opportunity to reassess the sense, the scope, and the boundaries of philosophy as a distinct and unique discipline.

**A. Ch.:** *In conclusion, I would like to express my deep gratitude to you for this conversation and very informative answers. I wish you continued success in your creative endeavors and the implementation of interesting projects!*

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