

PHILOSOPHY OF HISTORY
/SUMMARY OF THE HOMONYMOUS BOOK/**GEORGI MARKOV**

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ABSTRACT: THE PRESENTED MATERIAL IS A SUMMARY OF THE FAMOUS AUTHOR'S SCIENTIFIC PAPER TITLED "PHILOSOPHY OF HISTORY." IN IT HE ARGUES THAT THE HISTORY IS MEMORY OF ONLY A PART OF THE PAST, WIDER OR SMALLER DEPENDING ON THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE ERA WHICH DESERVES TO BE REMEMBERED AND PRESERVED FOR THE FUTURE GENERATIONS. THEREFORE PAST IS NOT EQUAL TO HISTORY AND THE KNOWLEDGE ABOUT THE PAST GOES FAR BEYOND THE RANGE OF THE HISTORY TEXTBOOKS.

KEY WORDS: HISTORY, PHILOSOPHY, KNOWLEDGE, CIVILIZATIONS, HISTORIOSOPHY, PHILOSOPHICAL HISTORY

HISTORY is worth studying at least for the fact that it exceeds the short span of the present and probably the long future. Coincident as they may seem in public perceptions History and past are not the same. History is memory of only a part of the past, wider or smaller depending on the significance of the era which deserves to be remembered and preserved for the future generations. Therefore past is not equal to History and the knowledge about the past goes far beyond the range of the history textbooks.

THE historical science recreates selectively the past calling it importantly "History" and interprets what has happened before the time of those who repeatedly "re-write" it instead of interpreting it with the confidence that this is the moral duty of each generation. The viewpoints about one and the same past as well about one and the same personality are sometimes different despite the same sources and facts they lie on. Fortunately, history studies never have their "last say" which is a prerequisite for the development of historiography and the evaluation of the historical experience which may help to explain the present and even dip into the future. The past is living imperceptibly in each of us connecting us to our predecessors while our present time is just one more bridge towards those who will come after. What has not been remembered or written down seems to have never happened and is irrevocably lost for the mankind. All is past but not all is History.

NUMEROUS histories of civilizations, continents and peoples have been written in the world but still they are less than the history of the mankind which is not equal to the sum of its component parts. Mankind has many fatherlands and each of them creates and writes its own history, often denying the other histories. The usual "how" predominates over the more difficult "why" while the details threaten to "drown" History. History needs a deep understanding and search of the sense of the past in the present and in the future. It is exactly here that history and philosophy can merge fruitfully into historiosophy or philosophical history.

THE theory of history requires a solid foundation of historical knowledge the philosophical rationalizing of which draws us closer to the dream of the "most genuine History". In order to understand the past it is necessary to be also familiar with it otherwise the theory would remain groundless. It is true that before turning over one more page of history it is necessary to read it but first of all it should have been written "the way it was". The trial of History is harder than the history examination. History helps the one who knows it and understands it "from the inside". People should know history and the historians should understand it and explain it to them. To know and to understand are two different matters.

THE three layers of the historical process are inextricably bound up. The present is built up over the past while the future "lies down" on the present. There is no present without past and no future without present. When the future becomes present the present has already become past. Nobody can "remove" the past from the future because it is an unbreakable part of its existence within us ourselves and follows us constantly as a shadow. History is a significant part of the realized past without which one nation would get poorer in the future unless it preserves it.

THE past can not come back but it should be investigated and "revived" as History. Revealing the historical process is hard and long because it is not enough to only learn the results but also to establish the reasons which are usually more than one. The historian can not check his conclusions in laboratory and needs to think them over well before saying them. Once made the mistake is accepted "on trust" by the next generations of historians and gradually becomes a "half-truth" which is insidious and therefore more dangerous than the lie. The variety of the historical process suggests that all peoples are moving "forward" and in one direction but are situated in different position: "above", "below" or "in the middle". At the same time "forward" does not necessarily mean "up" because "climbing down" is also moving "forward". "To jump over" historical epochs hides expected risks which sooner or later may interrupt the line of progress. "Climbing up" the steps of historical development is on a stair which under certain circumstances may lead "down". Usually when one nation is "above" another is "below" after which they might change places. Being "at the top" is the shortest feeling of triumph - once you get there and you already start falling down. History never repeats itself, it rather "comes back" "resembling" itself.

HISTORY is the DNA of the peoples which makes them different. Each nation has something unique to identify itself. The choice between the past and the present makes no sense because it is the present that is the starting point. The desire to take possession and subdue the past to the present through changing it beyond recognition or through deleting it "in the name of the future" tells whom the History disturbs in the present era of globalization. The everyday history can not replace the history of the big events but can only supplement it. The gift to feel the exact time when the History is "being made" in order to "enter" it through the main door is not given to everyone. One may anticipate or miss the "star moment". Reason should have the leading role in making History but this does not mean to underestimate intuition or the so called "sixth feeling" which may suggest how the present will develop into a past. When there are no evident signs of the possible future the contemporary is trying hard to comprehend the "course" of History. The sudden events fall out of the blue to be subsequently explained by those who have lost control over them with the "mere chance" and the fatal inevitability.

THE accidental and natural phenomena are ruled by the historical necessity which in fact actuates History without taking into consideration the whims of the personalities who appear and disappear by its stringent laws. Indispensable events "happen" in due historical time headed by the historical figures according to their powers. "All in good time" - the right time comes for war or peace, for revolutions or restorations, but the second event can never precede the first one. The feeling of historicism should suggest whether one "move" in History is a necessity so that it should be as good as to advance the next "moves" in the future.

HISTORY is "pregnant" with events and it "gives birth" to them at different intervals. Comparison and juxtaposition of the epochs brings the feeling of "rarefying" or "compressing" the History. There are ages in which changes drag by very slowly as if unnoticeably. Others are full of fateful months, weeks, even hours pushing forward the historical process for decades and centuries ahead. This distinguishes the astronomical from the historical time which is different for the separate civilizations and peoples whose accumulated energy is used for "leaps" in the future.

THE gifted historian has the valuable advantage of living more than one life because he exists in the present investigating the past with a view in the future. He "transfers himself in other epochs the heroes of which "resurrect" from the past in order to help those living today by lessons and patterns to follow in quite different conditions. If we try to "turn our back" to the past one day it will reach us and even surpass us in order to live it again in another way. History is a part of the past but the achievements of historical science make it contemporary. Each generation "writes" the history for itself and its own way and sometimes it remains not understood by the next generations.

THE events are "arranged" in the course of time by the historical process itself. In fact historians are trying to recreate as far as possible the entire and clear picture of any event by the means of historical thinking and to find its "place" in the complex cause and effect range. History does not allow for the events to be disarranged and reshaped to the extent that even the participants could not recognize them. It should be written and read with widely open eyes in order to sweep with a glance its high stage as fully as possible.

AT present the historian casts bridges from the past to the future. He is neither a prosecutor nor an advocate before the Court of History and not in the least a judge. Time is the sole judge who leaves or deletes, who does not forgive anything or anyone and his verdict is final and there is no appeal. The historian is rather a responsible jurymen who passes his sentence of "guilty" or "not guilty" despite the desire of the public.

EACH history has its pre-history. History puts the beginning but it never ends. History does not "pull us backward" but gives us initial velocity as long as we know the right direction. Historical experience is a priceless resource because it offers already "tested" decisions made under different circumstances which are taken and applied by men. The clever man learns by his own mistakes while the wise one — by those of the others as well.

HISTORY should be written the way it has happened. Truth is the unattainable dream and the guiding star of every historian but even being one and only the view points to it are different. If it is not possible to achieve it the historian is obliged at least to come closer to it. Going deep into the facts is enough to tell a story but not to explain the historical process. History should not be "re-written" out of political considerations, it should be rationalized and re-rationalized with a view to the benefits for the present and for the future.

THE historian turns the past into an inextricable part of the future however the roots in the past should not be a hamper for flight in the future. Men and peoples must know where they come from in order to understand where they are going to. The "insight of mind" can penetrate the future perceiving it as a continuation of what has happened before but with different actors taking part in the next "move of History". As long as History is "The Teacher of Life" let us take advantage of its century long wisdom and come to our senses on time by the bequeathed lessons in the name of a better future. The past is alive in the present and it gives birth to the future.

FOR THE SCRIPTING OF THE BOOK, THE AUTHOR HAS USED OVER 120 REFERENCES AS THE MOST IMPORTANT OF THEM ARE:

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