

Patočka and the “Disenchantment of the World”

Linking Patočka to the Contemporary Discussions of Religion and Secularism

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Abstract: This working paper deals with the term “disenchantment of the world” which was originally introduced by the German sociologist Max Weber (1864–1920) in the lecture Science as a Vocation (1917). More precisely, my main aim is to ask whether the contemporary discussions on religion, modernity, and secularisation developed around Weber’s term could be linked to the work of the Czech philosopher Jan Patočka (1907–1977). In order to achieve this aim, the paper outlines three main goals: (I.) to introduce Weber’s original formulation of the problem of “disenchantment of the world” as well as its contemporary reading within the discussions on “secularisation”; (II.) to discuss the existing philosophical interpretations of Patočka’s concept of religion, with an emphasis on the role of Christianity, and (III.) to outline my own reading of Patočka’s work; pointing out the links to classical sociology, which can be most notably found in his writing Supercivilization and Its Inner Conflict (1950s) and subsequently followed in the Heretical Essays in the Philosophy of History (1975). In this way, the paper outlines an interpretation of Patočka’s work which highlights its potential to contribute to the contemporary reception of the distinction between “disenchantment”, on the one hand, and “secularisation”, on the other.

“Today, however, we have the religion of everyday life. The many old gods, disenchanting and hence assuming the form of impersonal powers, rise up out of their graves, reach out for power over our lives and begin their eternal struggle among themselves again. But what is so difficult for modern man in particular, and hardest of all for the youth, is to be able to cope with an everyday life like this. All the chasing after ‘experience’ stems from this weakness. And weakness it is; it is the inability to face up to the fate of the age in all its gravity.”[1]

Max Weber, *Science as a Vocation* (1917/1919)

The main aim of this working paper is to outline a link between the two *IWM Research Focuses*: “religion and secularism”, [3] on the one hand, and “the philosophical work of Jan Patočka”, [4] on the other. For that reason, I turn our attention to the words of the German sociologist Max Weber, because – and that is my main argument – it is especially Max Weber’s work that links Patočka to contemporary discussions of religion, secularisation, disenchantment, etc.

In order to achieve this goal, my paper is divided into three parts: (I.) Firstly, I would like to introduce Max Weber’s term “disenchantment of the world”, with an emphasis on Charles Taylor’s and Miloš Havelka’s interpretations, pointing out the distinction between “disenchantment” and “secularisation”. (II.) Secondly, the paper will briefly introduce the selected interpretations of Patočka’s understanding of religion, which are mostly concerned with the rethinking of the Christian heritage; more precisely, I will point to Jacques Derrida’s, Ludger Hagedorn’s, and Ivan Chvatík’s attempts to elaborate Patočka’s idea of rethinking the Christianity “right through”. (III.) Finally, the aim of the third part of the paper is to provide an alternative reading of Patočka’s conception of religion, with an emphasis on the distinction “rational/super-rational” introduced in the study on “supercivilization” from the 1950s, and, thus, highlight the links to the previously mentioned discussions on “disenchantment”.

I. Weber’s Term “Disenchantment of the World” and Discussions of Secularization (Taylor, Havelka)

The term “disenchantment of the world” (Entzauberung der Welt) is most notably mentioned in Max Weber’s lecture *Science as a Vocation* (Wissenschaft als Beruf), which originally took place in Munich in 1917. [5] In brief, Weber’s “disenchantment of the world” refers to the fact that the modern world of “rationalization” and “intellectualization” has gotten rid of all the “mysterious unpredictable forces” and has replaced them with the idea that all things can be “controlled through calculation” – in Weber’s words: “No longer, like the savage, who believed that such forces existed, do we have to resort to magical means to gain control over or pray to the spirits. Technical means and calculation work for us instead.” The lecture is thus set in the broader framework of Weber’s *Sociology of Religion*, [7] which is concerned with the rise of “Western rationalism” and its “certain cultural phenomena”. [8] Speaking about the genesis of Western modernity, one of Weber’s most famous theses is presented in his work *Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* (Die protestantische Ethik und der Geist des Kapitalismus, 1904/1905), in which he shows that the world of modern economics, originally created by religious asceticism, now, after the “escape” of the religious spirit, turned into a mere “iron cage” (stahlhartes Gehäuse). [9] In the lecture *Science as a Vocation* – i.e., circa thirteen years after the publication of the work on the “Protestant ethic” – Weber similarly reflects that “precisely the ultimate and most sublime values have faded from public life, entering either the obscure realm of mystical life or the fraternal feelings of direct relationships among individuals”; [10] nevertheless, he no longer interprets this situation as an “iron cage”. Instead, opposing attempts to fulfil the

human need for faith up with new religions, faiths, and cults,[11] Weber understands the “disenchantment of the world” as the “fate of our age”, which represents a challenge for those who do not want to “sacrifice” their “intellect”. [12]

Despite the fact that Weber’s lecture took place almost one hundred years ago, it is still of relevance to contemporary discussions on religion and secularisation. [13] One of the most famous interpretations of the term “disenchantment” is probably that of the French philosopher and historian Marcel Gauchet; [14] nevertheless, in this paper, we focus on two other authors – the American philosopher Charles Taylor and the Czech sociologist Miloš Havelka [15] – because especially their works provide an interpretation that can be linked to Patočka’s concept of religion.

Charles Taylor, referring to Weber, uses the term “disenchantment” in his book *A Secular Age* (2007) in order to describe the historical transformation of religion and its conditions: a transition from an era of an “enchanted” framework of “religious life” – in which “religious life was more ‘embodied’, where the presence of the sacred could be enacted in ritual, or seen, felt, touched, walked towards (in pilgrimage)” – to an era of a “disenchanted” framework – which is “more ‘in the mind’, where the link with God passes more through our endorsing contested interpretations”. [17] The term “disenchantment” thus represents a change – “the dissolution of the ‘enchanted’ world, the world of spirits and meaningful causal forces, of wood sprites and relics” [18] – which is, according to Taylor, connected with certain forms of religion, “especially those of modern Reformed Christianity, both Catholic and Protestant”. [19] In this way, Taylor wants to avoid the widespread “confusion of disenchantment with the end of religion”. [20]

A similar line of argument is pursued by Miloš Havelka, who claims that “disenchantment does not even denote the total loss of the divine and transcendence”. [22] Nevertheless, Havelka goes further and shows that Weber’s “disenchantment” – understood as an attempt to define a new role of religion and faith in modern society, which is linked more likely to “profanization” than to “secularisation” [23] – could help us to explain the present “ambiguity” of the “process of secularization”, because the “internalizing” of the religious faith and values, which is expressed in the very term “disenchantment”, “ultimately leads to its antithesis”. [24] This “antithesis” can nowadays be observed in the multiple expressions of the human “need for faith”, in “the manifestations of ‘religious’ banding together by groups and classes”, or in “the modern growth of ‘pseudoreligions’, world religions or even fundamentalism.” [25] Havelka thus uses his interpretations of Weber’s term – referring also to the famous passage about the “old gods”, who “rise up out of their graves” [26] – in order to explain the modern dynamics between “secularisation”, on the one hand, and the so-called “revenge” (Gilles Kepel) [27] or “return” (Wilhelm Friedrich Graf) [28] of gods, on the other.

II. Discussion of Patočka’s Understanding of Religion (Derrida, Hagedorn, Chvatík)

Our aim is to show that a similar interpretation of the problem implied by Weber’s term “disenchantment of the world” – i.e. the problem that within the process of secularisation, antagonistic tensions have given rise to new, multiple forms of religiosity – can be also

found in the work of the Czech philosopher Jan Patočka. But before turning directly to this question, we have to briefly mention some of the existing interpretations of Patočka's work.

Concerning the question of religion, Patočka scholars are mostly interested in the writings of the 1970s, especially the *Heretical Essays in the Philosophy of History* (Kacířské eseje o filosofii dějin, 1975). At the time, Patočka developed a monumental conception of the philosophy of history, and the role of religion was one of its main questions. More precisely, Patočka was especially interested in Christianity and its virtue of "foundation of the abysmal deepening of the soul", which was, according to him, "thus far the greatest, unsurpassed but also un-thought-through human outreach that enabled humans to struggle against decadence".[29]

In order to introduce such a reading of Patočka's concept of religion, I want to briefly point out the works of three authors – Jacques Derrida's 6th Patočka Memorial Lecture (IWM, Vienna, 1992)[30] and the papers presented at the Patočka centenary conference (Prague, 2007) by Ludger Hagedorn[31] and Ivan Chvatík[32] – which are concerned with the Czech philosopher's understanding of Christian heritage and its overcoming.

In brief, Derrida refers to Patočka's fifth *Heretical Essay*, to the previously mentioned notion of Christianity as "unthought-through outreach", and discusses the necessity to "think" Christianity "right through".[33] Starting from Patočka's idea that religion consists of the integration and subjection of "the sacred, orgiastic or demonic mystery" to "the sphere of responsibility",[34] Derrida finally focuses on Patočka's remark that "Christianity, after all, understands the Good differently than Plato" – more precisely: "responsible life was itself presented as a gift from something which ultimately, though it has character of the Good, has also the traits of the inaccessible and forever superior to humans – the traits of the *mysterium* that always has the final word."[35] According to Patočka, "responsibility" is now, through the Christian "mysterium tremendum", "vested not in a humanly comprehensible essence of goodness and unity" – instead, the responsibility is linked to "an inscrutable relation to the absolute highest being".[36] Derrida therefore points to the need to further develop this Christian motif of "mystery", of "secrecy", of *mysterium tremendum* – because, according to him: "Christianity has not yet come to Christianity. What has not yet come about is the fulfillment, within history and in political history, and first and foremost in European politics, of the new responsibility announced by the *mysterium tremendum*. There has not yet been an authentically Christian politics because there remains this residue of the Platonic *polis*. Christian politics must break more definitively and more radically with Greco-Roman Platonic politics in order to finally fulfill the *mysterium tremendum*."[37]

Derrida's interpretation is subsequently discussed in Hagedorn's paper,[38] but Hagedorn, – asking a question "what will Christianity be – after the end of Christianity?"[39] and elaborating the idea of "demythologized Christianity" – goes further and sketches the reconsideration of the Christian motif in a broader context of Patočka's work. He finally emphasizes that Patočka's thought is pervaded by the idea of "negativity", of "constitution of meaning precisely from the absence of a 'positive' idea" etc., expression of which can be also found in Christianity, in the idea of the "renunciation

of God”, of “winning oneself through loss” etc.[40] In this way, Hagedorn finally turns his attention to Patočka’s remarks on the Christian concept of “radical sacrifice”, which is “de-mythologized”, freed of reciprocal economy etc. – in Patočka’s words quoted by Hagedorn: “It is not sacrifice for something or someone [...] it is a sacrifice for everything and for all. In a certain essential sense, it is a sacrifice for nothing [...]”[41]

In the very end of his paper,[42] Hagedorn, in order to underline the picture of “demythologized Christianity”, arrives at Patočka’s words presented in one of his private seminars in the 1970s. The Czech philosopher turned to the *Gospel of Matthew*, to the famous Mt 27,46 (“My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?”) and comments: “[...] – the answer lies in the question. What would have happened if thou hadst not forsaken me? Nothing; something can happen only once thou hast forsaken me. The sacrifice must be carried through to the very end. He has forsaken precisely in order that there be nothing, nothing here anymore for me to hold on to [...]”[43]

This very line of rethinking Patočka’s notes on Christianity is pursued by Ivan Chvatík, who – referring to the same biblical interpretation mentioned at the end of Hagedorn’s paper[44] – formulates the idea of the so-called “third conversion”: the existing forms of Plato’s concept of the “care for the soul”, i.e., the Greek and the Christian “turn”, has to be followed by a third – in Patočka’s words – “gigantic conversion”, “an unheard-of metanoein”,[45] by a new formulation of human relation to responsibility, which has to be articulated in the situation of a man forsaken by God, by the “solidarity of the shaken”, i.e., solidarity of the so-called “spiritual persons”. [46] Subsequently, in one of his following papers,[47] Chvatík criticizes Derrida’s previously mentioned lecture, because the Derrida implied that Patočka is a “Christian thinker”, who sees the hope of Europe in its ability to further develop Christianity through getting rid of Platonism. Instead, according to Chvatík, Patočka’s intention was to overcome Christianity through a further development of the concept of the person, i.e., through the new formulation of the “care for the soul”, which was originally established by Plato.[48]

III. Linking Patočka’s Work to the Discussion of Disenchantment/Secularisation

Nevertheless, in order to find a link between Patočka’s work and the previously mentioned discussions on the “disenchantment of the world”, we need to formulate a different approach to Patočka’s understanding of religion. In comparison with Jacques Derrida, Ludger Hagedorn, and Ivan Chvatík, we have to shift the emphasis of our reading of Patočka’s work from the 1970s to the 1950s, because especially at that time Patočka explicitly mentions his inspirations in classical sociology.

Most important for us is the study *Supercivilization and Its Inner Conflict* (Nadcivilizace a její vnitřní konflikt) from the 1950s,[49] in which Patočka develops Weber’s idea of “rationalization”[50] and emphasizes the link to the sociologically/historiographically-grasped “process of secularisation”. [51] His interpretation implies that these concepts – “rationalization” and “secularization” – are more or less interconnected, because the spreading of “rationalization” requires the elimination of the traditional grounds of society – i.e., the elimination of religion.[52]

Moreover, Patočka goes further and outlines a thesis that can be understood as his own interpretation of the problem of secularization: he understands the outcome of this process as the possibility to distinguish between the “rational” (racionální) and “super-rational” (nadracionální) level of human life:[53] whilst in traditional civilizations, these levels were mutually permeated, in modern, secularized civilization we have a chance to keep the distinction between, on the one hand, what is in our power, what is calculable, graspable by positive knowledge etc., and, on the other hand, what is beyond it, what cannot be objectified, understood by positive knowledge, ruled, etc.[54]

It is my argument that the distinction between the “rational” and “super-rational” level – which can be linked to other distinctions, such as “profane–sacral”, “everyday–exceptional”, etc. – provides a key to Patočka’s understanding of the problem and corresponds to Weber’s term “disenchantment of the world”. In the study *Supercivilization and Its Inner Conflict* from the 1950s, as well as in the *Heretical Essays in the Philosophy of History* from 1975, Patočka shows – appropriately to Charles Taylor’s as well as Miloš Havelka’s interpretations of the “disenchantment” mentioned above – that the possibility to distinguish between these two levels does not mean that the level of “super-rational” can be simply denied.

For example, Patočka’s description of the so-called “moderatism” and “radicalism” (formulated in the 1950s, with an explicit reference to the cold-war tension between the West and the Soviet empire) demonstrates that these two great attempts to marginalize or even to completely deny the “super-rational” and to realize the idea of the true “rational (super)civilization” were unsuccessful – the first attempt turned into a materialism and “moral somnolence”, the second one into a kind of totalitarian “political religion”. [55] The core of this problem was later elaborated in the *Heretical Essays*, especially in the fifth one: the necessity – and, at the same time, the inability – to find a fruitful relation to the “super-rational” is expressed in Patočka’s description of the so-called “technological” or “industrial” civilization (in the 1970s, the Czech philosopher does not use the distinction “moderatism–radicalism” any longer), in which the distinction “everyday–exceptional” turns into its pathological form – i.e., into an oscillation between “boredom” and “orgy”, lacking a “bulwark against orgiastic irresponsibility”. [56]

Consequently, Patočka points out that the distinction “profane–sacral” [57] (which, according to our perspective, corresponds to the distinction “rational–super-rational”) is not an exclusive expression of “religious life”, it is rather a basic element of social life in general, because “every form of humanity on whatever ‘level’ recognizes some form of the opposition between the ordinary and the exceptional, but not everyone also seeks to rise above decadence”. [58]

But what does it mean “to rise above decadence”? European history, according to Patočka, is a story of this “rise”, it is the “care for the soul”, which – in the context of this paper – can be understood as a search for a fruitful relation between “rational” (everyday, ordinary, profane etc.) and “super-rational” (exceptional, special or even sacred etc.); it is a cultivation of these opposites: on the one hand, the sphere of the “super-rational” is a

source of meaning unknown to everyday life; on the other hand, the relation to the rational level avoids the fall into “orgiastic demonism”, which the level of the “super-rational” also opens.[59]

From this point of view, the main question of Patočka’s analysis of religion can be formulated in the following way: how can the relation between “rational” and “super-rational” be constituted now, in the modern Western society, where the traditional form of this relation – Christianity – was exhausted? How and in which terms can we now define the (disenchanted? de-mythologized? post-Christian? post-religious?) level of the “super-rational” (exceptional, special, sacred, etc.)?

This problem remained an opened question and a challenge of the final part of Patočka’s work; its remarkable philosophical interpretations can be found, for example, in the previously mentioned works of Jacques Derrida, Ludger Hagedorn, or Ivan Chvatík, i.e., in their meditations on the concepts of “Christian *mysterium tremendum*”, “demythologized Christianity”, “third conversion”, etc.

Nevertheless, our main aim was to point out that Patočka touches the question mentioned at the very beginning of this paper through the references to Charles Taylor’s and Miloš Havelka’s works: the “disenchantment of the world”, which goes along with the process of “secularization”, does not mean the loss of the level of the “super-rational” in general, it is only a loss of one of the traditional, institutionalized forms of our understanding of this level and of our relation to it. The contemporary search for the new forms of this relation shows that we cannot overcome the necessity and inevitability of human relation to the “super-rational”. On the contrary, the attempts to simply marginalize or completely deny the level of the “super-rational” finally lead to pathological forms of this relation (a modern oscillation between “boredom” and “orgy”) as well as to new, multiple forms of religiosity (incl. “political religions”, “pseudo-religions”, “fundamentalisms” etc.), which raise doubts about the unambiguity of the process of secularisation – in Max Weber’s words:

“...the many old gods, disenchanted and hence assuming the form of impersonal powers, rise up out of their graves, reach out for power over our lives and begin their eternal struggle among themselves again.”[60]

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Notes

[1] Weber, Max, “Science as a Vocation”, in: Max Weber, *Complete Writings on Academic and Political Vocation*, New York: Algora Publishing 2008, p. 45. The translation was modified.

[2] This working paper, originally presented at the IWM Junior Visiting Fellows Conference (December 11, 2014, Institut für die Wissenschaften vom Menschen, Vienna), discusses and develops the outcomes of my previous research – especially my interpretations of the relation between Jan Patočka and Max Weber (Homolka, Jakub, “The Problem of Meaning in the Rational (Super)Civilization”, in: Lubica Učník, Ivan

Chvatík, Anita Williams (eds.), *Asubjective Phenomenology*, Nordhausen: Verlag Traugott Bautz, 2015) and my interpretation of Patočka's understanding of secularisation (Homolka, Jakub, „Proces sekularizace v 'době poevropské'“, in: Johann Pall Arnason, Milan Hanyš (eds.), *Politika a náboženství* [the exact title to be confirmed], Praha: TOGGA 2015 – forthcoming). The paper was prepared within the framework of the Jan Patočka Junior Visiting Fellowship, sponsored by the Institute for Human Sciences, Vienna, and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic, Prague.

[3] *IWM Research Focus II: Religion and Secularism*. See: Institut für die Wissenschaften vom Menschen, www.iwm.at, Article retrieved from the WWW (31.03.2015), “Religion and Secularism”, <https://www.iwm.at/research/focus-ii/> .

[4] *IWM Research Focus VI: The Philosophical Work of Jan Patočka*. See: Institut für die Wissenschaften vom Menschen, www.iwm.at, Article retrieved from the WWW (31.03.2015), „The Philosophical Work of Jan Patočka”, <https://www.iwm.at/research/patocka/> .

[5] The lecture *Wissenschaft als Beruf* was firstly published in 1919.

[6] Weber, Max, “Science as a Vocation”, p. 35.

[7] Weber, Max, *Gesammelte Aufsätze zur Religionssoziologie I–III*, Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr 1988.

[8] Weber, Max, *Selections in Translation*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2007, p. 331.

[9] Weber, Max, *Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, London: Routledge 2005, p. 123f.

[10] Max Weber, “Science as a Vocation”, p. 51.

[11] In order to accent Weber's position, we can compare his approach with that of Emile Durkheim (1858–1917), the French sociologist who was living in the same period. Durkheim, on the one hand, claimed that we are living in a „period of transition and moral mediocrity“, in which „the former gods are growing old or dying, and others have not been born“, but, on the other hand, he was convinced that the constitution of a new religion is just a matter of time, because, according to him, society cannot live without collective ideals which are created exclusively by religion. See: Durkheim, Emile, *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*, London: The Free Press 1995, p. 429.

[12] Max Weber, “Science as a Vocation”, p. 51.

[13] For example, see Miloš Havelka's selective summary of the contemporary discussions on secularisation: Havelka, Miloš, “Two Trends in the Process of Secularization in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries”, in: Lukáš Fasora, Jiří Hanuš, Jiří Malíř (eds.), *Secularisation and the Working Class*, Eugene (Oregon): Pickwick Publications 2011, p. 3f.

[14] Gauchet, Marcel, *The Disenchantment of the World. A Political History of Religion*, Princeton: Princeton University Press 1997.

[15] See Taylor's and Havelka's critical reflections on Gauchet's work: Taylor, Charles, "Foreword", in: Marcel Gauchet, *The Disenchantment of the World. A Political History of Religion*, Princeton: Princeton University Press 1997, pp. IX–XV; Havelka, Miloš, "Two Trends in the Process of Secularization...", p. 13.

[16] See, for example: Taylor, Charles, *A Secular Age*, Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press 2007, p. 25, 446.

[17] Ibid., p. 554.

[18] Ibid., p. 553.

[19] Ibid., p. 553.

[20] Speaking about "a confusion of disenchantment with the end of religion", Taylor remarks that "even Weber seems to have fallen into this at times". Ibid., p. 553.

[21] Taylor's and Havelka's understanding of the terms "disenchantment", "secularisation", etc. would deserve more precise comparison. In brief, Taylor's approach is different especially thanks to the fact that he understands the "secularity" and "disenchantment" as a part of the self-development of religion itself. From this perspective, Havelka's approach is much more Weberian, emphasizing the outer impacts of what Weber calls "intellectualization" and "rationalization". Nevertheless, in the framework of this paper, we see the similarity between both authors in their common emphasis on the fact that the term "disenchantment" does not mean the end of religion – instead, it implies the change of the forms religiosity, of human relation to transcendence etc. See (especially the first footnote, in which Havelka comments Taylor's *Secular Age*): Havelka, Miloš, "Sekularizace, odkouzlení světa a 'pluralizace náboženskosti'", *Sociologický časopis* 49 (2), 2013, pp. 221–240; see also Havelka's distinction between different definitions of the term "secularisation": Havelka, Miloš, "Two Trends in the Process of Secularization...", p. 9f.

[22] Havelka, Miloš, "Two Trends in the Process of Secularization...", p. 15.

[23] Havelka, Miloš, "'Odkouzlení' versus sekularizace?!", *Sociológia* 44 (5), 2012, p. 575f.

[24] Havelka, Miloš, "Two Trends in the Process of Secularization...", p. 15.

[25] Ibid., p. 15.

[26] Ibid., p. 15f.

[27] Kepel, Gilles, *The Revenge of God: The Resurgence of Islam, Christianity and Judaism in the Modern World*, Cambridge: Polity Press 1994.

[28] Graf, Wilhelm Friedrich, *Die Wiederkehr der Götter. Religion in der modernen Kultur*, München: C. H. Beck 2004.

[29] Patočka, Jan, *Heretical Essays in the Philosophy of History*, Chicago and La Sale: Open Court 1996, p. 108.

[30] Derrida, Jacques, “Ketzertum, Geheimnis und Verantwortung: Patočkas Europa”, in: Jan Patočka, *Ketzerische Essays zur Philosophie der Geschichte*, Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp 2010, pp. 181–211; Derrida, Jacques, *The Gift of Death*, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press 1995, pp. 1–34.

[31] Hagedorn, Ludger, “Beyond Myth and Enlightenment. On the Religion in Patočka’s Thought”, in: Erika Abrams, Ivan Chvatík (eds.), *Jan Patočka and the Heritage of Phenomenology*, New York: Springer 2011, pp. 245–262.

[32] Chvatík, Ivan, “The Responsibility of the ‘Shaken’. Jan Patočka and his ‘Care for the Soul’ in the ‘Post-European’ World”, in: Erika Abrams, Ivan Chvatík (eds.), *Jan Patočka and the Heritage of Phenomenology*, New York: Springer 2011, pp. 263–280.

[33] Derrida, Jacques, *The Gift of Death*, p. 28.

[34] Ibid., p. 2.

[35] Patočka, Jan, *Heretical Essays...*, p. 106.

[36] Ibid., p. 106.

[37] Derrida, Jacques, *The Gift of Death*, p. 28.

[38] Hagedorn, Ludger, “Beyond Myth and Enlightenment”, p. 251f..

[39] Ibid., p. 252.

[40] Ibid., p. 258f.

[41] Patočka, Jan, “The Danger of Technicization in Science according to E. Husserl and the Essence of Technology as Danger according to M. Heidegger”, in Erazim Kohák (ed.), *Jan Patočka: Philosophy and Selected Writings*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press 1989, p. 339.

[42] Hagedorn, Ludger, “Beyond Myth and Enlightenment”, p. 261.

[43] Patočka, Jan, “Čtyři semináře k problému Evropy”, in: Jan Patočka, *Sebrané spisy 3: Péče o duši III*, Praha: Oikoymenth 2002, p. 413. The English translation was taken from Ludger Hagedorn’s paper.

[44] Chvatík, Ivan, “The Responsibility of the ‘Shaken’”, p. 272f.

[45] Patočka, Jan, *Heretical Essays...*, p.75.

[46] Chvatík, Ivan, “The Responsibility of the ‘Shaken’”, pp. 275–279.

[47] I refer to the manuscript of Ivan Chvatík’s paper *Jan Patočka – Christian or Platonist?*, which was presented at the conference *The Reasons of Europe* (Rome, December 2013). See: Chvatík, Ivan, *Jan Patočka – Christian or Platonist?*, Unpublished Manuscript 2014.

[48] *Ibid.*, p. 1.

[49] Concerning the study *Nadcivilizace a její vnitřní konflikt*, we cannot give an exact year of its origin, because the study remained in the form of a manuscript, which was firstly published after Patočka’s death; nevertheless, the study was probably written sometime in the 1950s.

[50] Chvatík, Ivan, “The Responsibility of the ‘Shaken’...”, p. 243f.

[51] Patočka, Jan, “Nadcivilizace a její vnitřní konflikt”, in: Jan Patočka, *Sebrané spisy 1: Péče o duši I*, Praha: Oikoymenth 1996, p. 247.

[52] In this paper, we are focusing on Max Weber’s influence, but it is necessary to add that Patočka’s understanding of religion is, of course, rooted in a broader intellectual context. For example, another great influence represents the work of Tomáš G. Masaryk and his analysis of the modern loss of religion (Masaryk, Tomáš Garrigue, *Der Selbstmord als sociale Massenerscheinung der modernen Civilisation*, Wien: Verlag von Carl Konegen 1881), which was in the centre of Patočka’s concern already in the 1930s (see, for example: Patočka, Jan, “Masaryk’s and Husserl’s Conception of the Spiritual Crisis of European Humanity”, in: Erazim Kohák (ed.), *Jan Patočka: Philosophy and Selected Writings*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press 1989, pp. 145–156).

[53] Patočka, Jan, “Nadcivilizace a její vnitřní konflikt”, p. 291f.

[54] Patočka’s distinction between the “rational” and “super-rational” was discussed also by Ludger Hagedorn, who was elaborating the role of “rationality” in Patočka’s concepts of Europe and the so-called “post-European Age”. Nevertheless, in comparison with Hagedorn, we are trying to see Patočka’s distinction from a different perspective, emphasizing the concepts of “secularisation”, “disenchantment”, etc. See: Hagedorn, Ludger, “Überzivilisation und Differenz. Jan Patočkas (Nach-)Europa”, in: Ludger Hagedorn, Michael Staudigl (eds), *Über Zivilisation und Differenz. Beiträge zu einer politischen Phänomenologie Europas*, Würzburg: Königshausen und Neumann 2007, pp. 70f.

[55] Patočka, Jan, “Nadcivilizace a její vnitřní konflikt”, p. 260f., 264f.

[56] Patočka, Jan, *Heretical Essays...*, p. 112f.

[57] See Patočka’s reference to Durkheim’s description of the rites of Australian tribes: “It is easy to imagine that on this level of exaltation people lose all self-consciousness. Since they feel ruled, drawn along by some external power which makes them think and act

otherwise than in ordinary times. They have understandably the feeling of being themselves no longer [...].” See: Patočka, Jan, *Heretical Essays...*, p. 100; cf. Durkheim, Emile, *Elementary Forms of Religious Life*, p. 220.

[58] Patočka, Jan, *Heretical Essays...*, p. 102.

[59] See especially the fifth essay *Is Technological Civilization Decadent, and Why?*: Patočka, Jan, *Heretical Essays...*, pp. 95–118.

[60] Weber, Max, “Science as a Vocation”, p. 45.

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