

Abstract

This thesis deals with the concept of modernity called “nadcivilizace” (“supercivilization”) that was developed in the nineteen-fifties by Czech philosopher Jan Patočka (1907-1977) in his originally unpublished study *Nadcivilizace a její vnitřní konflikt*. The main goal of the thesis is to introduce this concept in the framework of the author’s life and work, as well as in the context of current research in the field of historical sociology. This goal is fulfilled through three main steps, which are preceded by preliminary remarks about the issues of nowadays civilizational analysis. The first part is focused on the introduction of the author’s concept of modernity as it was presented in the aforementioned study. Patočka’s original term “nadcivilizace” is introduced and put into the context of civilizational analysis. At the same time, the circumstances of the genesis of the text, and the spiritual framework of the epoch in which Czech philosopher lived, are presented. Second part attempts to put the original concept into the author’s lecture of philosophy of history, and to demonstrate the changes that occurred in Patočka’s understanding of modernity in his work *Kacířské eseje o filosofii dějin* (*Heretical Essays in the Philosophy of History*, 1975). Finally, the last part is dedicated to the problem of the “civilizational paradox” that concretely demonstrates the meaning of Patočka’s work in the context of current historical sociology.

key words: Patočka, nadcivilizace, supercivilization, civilisation, Heretical Essays, philosophy of history, modernity, multiple modernities, axial age, Eisenstadt, Husserl, Masaryk, Weber, Toynbee, rationalisation, secularisation, science