

PATOČKA'S PRACTICAL PHILOSOPHY AS AN ANALYSIS OF THE MODERN ERA

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Jan Patočka, a pupil of Husserl's and Heidegger's, was on a par with Masaryk, the two of them being the most important Czech philosophers of the 20th century. The present articles sketches Patočka's understanding of a practical philosophy and its critical, dynamizing and stabilizing properties on a historical scale, which he interprets as one of the driving forces behind the modernization process throughout Europe. A philosophy thus interpreted has always political aspects as well, being apt to motivate societal change or to stabilize a political order not yet fully established. These effects are illustrated with regard to liberalism and socialism, which Patočka considers the two most momentous projects of the modern era.