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Making Sense of History with Paul Ricœur and Jan Patočka

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“History may therefore be looked upon as an extensive development of meaning and as an irradiation of meanings from a multiplicity of organizing centers.”¹

“The constant shaking of the naïve sense of meaningfulness is itself a new mode of meaning, a discovery of its continuity with the mysteriousness of being and what-is as whole.”²

Paul Ricœur was one of the first philosophers to recognize the importance of Patočka’s thought in the field of phenomenology. By acknowledging Patočka as a key figure in the history of phenomenology and his constant confrontation with other phenomenologists, such as Husserl, Heidegger, Fink, and Merleau-Ponty, Ricœur enabled the reception of the Czech author to the philosophical community. Specifically, in 1981 he wrote the preface to the French edition of Patočka’s *Heretical Essays in the Philosophy of History*.³ One year after Patočka’s death, Ricœur wrote also an entry on Patočka’s life and works for the *Encyclopedia Universalis* (1978) and other comprehensive studies on his thought, such as the essays “Patočka et le nihilisme” (1990)⁴ and “Jan Patočka: d’une philosophie du monde naturel à une philosophie de l’histoire” (1997).⁵ The major points of the twenty years of Ricœur’s reading of Patočka’s work, ranging from his death in 1977 to the conference dedicated to his philosophical heritage which took place in Neapolis in 1997, are summarized in Domenico Jervolino’s article “Ricœur lecteur de Patočka” (2007).⁶ Whereas Ricœur discussed the central issues that dominate the thought of the Czech philosophers in his articles and lectures,

Patočka did not write any essays on Ricœur's thought. Nevertheless, it does not mean that the relationship between these authors is univocal. Indeed, Patočka showed interest in Ricœur's work, especially in his critique of transcendental idealism and his hermeneutics of symbols. The Ricœurian influence on Patočka's oeuvre can be confirmed in his letters to the Polish philosopher Krzysztof Michalski, written between 1973 and 1976,⁷ but also in his objections to Husserl's phenomenology and in his critical reading of Heidegger's thought presented in his major works *The Natural World as a Philosophical Problem* (1936) and the *Heretical Essays in the Philosophy of History* (1975).⁸

At the basis of Ricœur's and Patočka's philosophies there is an intense intellectual and practical engagement with the social and political concerns of their time. There are many relevant biographical aspects of Ricœur's life that have profoundly shaped his intellectual and moral profile. By advocating pacifism and Christian socialism, he became involved in the French socialist left-wing movements all during the 1930s. His pacifist ideals caused him to oppose French rearmament against Hitler, a stance he regretted later as a prisoner of war from 1940 to 1945. After the war, he was a fierce opponent of the French civil war in Algeria that led to an arrest and bomb threats, he was part of a movement in favor of student reforms and uprisings, and he was involved with Eastern European activists through the Cold War. As for Ricœur, Patočka's life and moral convictions are inseparable from his thought. The Czech philosopher was the principal author and spokesman, together with Václav Havel and Jiri Hajek, of the civic initiative in the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic called Charter 77.⁹ In favor of human rights, the importance of Patočka's contribution to the Charter 77 goes beyond the original aim of the declaration, pointing to the moral and political crisis in a society reduced to the sphere of instrumental rationality.¹⁰ Patočka died after being accused by his fellow-citizens of disrespecting the objects of their public worship and of attracting too many young followers. Just after his death, Ricœur published the article "Jan Patočka, le philosophe-résistant" in the journal *Le Monde* (March 19th, 1977) emphasizing the implications of the Czech thinker's attitude of resistance for the men in power, the fellow citizens, and the outsiders.¹¹ Patočka's and Ricœur's philosophical reflections and their personal engagement in political causes were a source of inspiration for philosophers and politicians who were connected with them. After Patočka's death, the last Czechoslovak and the first Czech President Václav Havel emerged a strong political and philosophical force by continuing to apply Patočka's thought in order to think the human condition under late communism and the meaning of dissidence. In a similar way, the French president Emmanuel Macron was influenced by his time with Ricœur, who broadened his horizons with ideas that have fresh resonance today.¹²

Belonging to the second generation of phenomenologists, Ricœur and Patočka thoroughly studied Husserl's phenomenology and Heidegger's philosophy of Being. Whereas Ricœur preserves phenomenology as a descriptive method and incorporates it into his own hermeneutics of the self, Patočka aims at establishing phenomenology as an inquiry into the appearing of things by freeing it from subjectivism and the metaphysics of consciousness. Ricœur moves, then, from a descriptive phenomenology as a reflection on human embodied will and the intentional modes of consciousness to the elaboration of a hermeneutic phenomenology as a methodology directed to the interpretation and description of human experience and its nature. Patočka develops instead an asubjective phenomenology, which describes being in terms of processes, thrusts, and movements, that is, a dialectical phenomenology of modes of becoming. Despite the differences in their ways of addressing phenomenology, Ricœur and Patočka appear to each other as partners in a common endeavor: to apply phenomenological insights to our lived existence as physically, socially, and culturally embedded in a shared world with others through and within time. As such, by focusing on human existence and its temporal dimension, their diverse works affect all sense fields of history.

There has been relatively little research on the intersection between Ricœur's and Patočka's works around the problem of history.¹³ Acknowledging that this topic occupies an important place in their entire philosophical projects, my analysis will be limited here to Ricœur's early essay "Husserl and the Sense of History" (1949)¹⁴ and the first part of his oeuvre *History and Truth* entitled "Truth in the Knowledge of History" (1965),¹⁵ and to Patočka's *Heretical Essays in the Philosophy of History* (1975), with a particular focus on the third essay entitled "Does History have a Meaning?"¹⁶ Following Ricœur's and Patočka's lines of thought, I will show that their conceptions of history develop from a critical reading of Husserl's reflections on the meaning of history (variously: *Historie*, *Geschichte*) and Heidegger's analysis of the Dasein's own historical existence. Behind general similarities between Ricœur and Patočka on history, lie divergences that need to be raised. My article will be divided into two sections. First, I will present how Ricœur and Patočka contribute to the development of a philosophical analysis of the meaning of history by using the phenomenological method. I will explain that their approaches to this topic are connected to their critical readings of Husserl's *Crisis* project and to his mature conception of transcendental phenomenology as a description of full living in plurality.¹⁷ In the second part, I will discuss Ricœur's and Patočka's ideas on the historical openness towards the future. In this context, I will rely on Ricœur's concepts of historicity and hope and Patočka's idea of the care of the soul, that is, of the eternal dimension of our being, as influenced by Heidegger's thought. Finally, these reflections will lead to a discussion of the limitations of Ricœur's and Patočka's Eurocentric perspectives on history.

The Meaning of History as a Phenomenological Problem

The phenomenology of Husserl had a permanent and profound impact on the philosophical formation of Ricœur and Patočka. Although Ricœur never met Husserl personally, in 1934–1935 he began to study his thought in Paris through the works of Eugen Fink, Gaston Berger, Emmanuel Levinas, and Merleau-Ponty. After the Second World War, Ricœur published his French translation of Husserl's *Ideen I* (1950). In the same year, he put into practice Husserl's phenomenology and published the first part of his *Philosophy of the Will* entitled *Freedom and Nature: The Voluntary and the Involuntary*.¹⁸ Ricœur also presented his critical interpretation of Husserl's writings, giving particular attention to his philosophy of consciousness, in a series of essays which were later collected as *A l'école de la phénoménologie* (1967).¹⁹ Among these, his 1949 essay "Husserl and the Sense of History" can be considered as Ricœur's most original reflection on history as a theme central to his body of work as a whole. The sustained interest in history shifts and gains in profundity in his thought from his early views of history worked in his collection of essays, *History and Truth* (1965), in which he provides an introduction to the Husserlian elements which have influenced his own philosophical position, to his masterful trilogy *Time and Narrative* (1983–1985),²⁰ until his late monograph, *Memory, History, Forgetting* (2000).²¹ The topic of history is analyzed through different approaches, among them phenomenology, hermeneutics, ethics, moral philosophy, critical theory, and politics. Without denying the importance of his mature works, my analysis will be limited to his earliest writings. These provide highly significant elements and instructive interpretive keys with which to assess his broader thought on history.

Like Ricœur, Patočka was from the very beginning of his thought closely connected to Husserl's phenomenology. Spending the school year 1928–1929 at the Sorbonne in Paris, Patočka attended a series of lectures given by Husserl, which were to develop into the *Cartesian Meditations*.²² Introduced a few years later to the final development of Husserl's thought by the German phenomenologist himself, he took a decisive part in having Husserl invited by the *Cercle philosophique de Prague* for lectures at the German and the Czech University in Prague in 1935. These became the basis for Husserl's last major work, the *Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology* (1936), which had a profound impact on the direction of Patočka's philosophical career. The critical analysis of Husserl's diagnoses of the crisis of European modernity led Patočka to develop his own thematization of the concept of lifeworld (*Lebenswelt*) and to formulate a phenomenological philosophy of history. More precisely, as Ricœur argues, in Patočka's work we can find an elliptical movement with two foci: the phenomenology of the natural world

and the question of the meaning of history.²³ Patočka's transition from the phenomenology of the natural world to the problematic of history follows a dialectical thread that begins with the phenomenology of the movement of life, passes through the problematic character of history and ends in the inquiry on the solidarity of the shaken.

Ricœur's and Patočka's approaches to history and the question of its meaning arise from their critical reading of Husserl's thought, in particular of his *Crisis* project. Prior to the *Crisis*, Husserl's published works were focused on individual consciousness and the problem of the lived experience, rather than on the issue of the historical, social, and communal life. The *Crisis* represents, then, a change in direction in Husserl's thought. It is in this oeuvre that he develops what he calls his own "teleological historical reflection" grounded on the intellectual reconstruction and the "backwards questioning" (*Rückfragen*) of the history of Western culture.²⁴ The attention to the methodology and the status of the human and cultural sciences (*Geisteswissenschaften*) leads Husserl to explore the meaning of history through the history of philosophy and of the Western culture in general as exhibiting an intelligible structure. In his perspective, in which history is described as driven by an inherent teleology, Husserl supports a Eurocentric understanding of philosophy and history. Eurocentrism can be defined as the confusion or identification of "aspects of human abstract universality (or even transcendental) in general with moments of European particularity."²⁵ Husserl's teleological-historical Eurocentrism is evident in his definition of Europe as a "spiritual geography" having its own "spiritual historicity."²⁶ Specifically, Husserl sees history, and paradigmatically the history of philosophy, as a form of meaning-making, and as the manner through which meanings become sedimented in being passed from one generation to another.²⁷ In his 1949 influential article "Husserl and the Sense of History," Ricœur tracks the German phenomenologist's turn towards history. He recognizes that the analysis of Husserl's account of the sense of history and the function of the history of philosophy provoke an interrogation concerning the very possibility of a philosophy of history. It is from this essay that the question of history explicitly comes up in Ricœur's thought and returns in his writings in other guises, such as the status proper to the history of philosophy; objectivity and subjectivity in history; the sense of history in general; the place of violence and non-violence in history; the meaning of history and Christian eschatology, progress, ambiguity, hope, and so on. Ricœur's first collection of articles on the topic of history, *History and Truth* (1965), bears the mark of his constant concern for the sense of history as a question connected to his critical reading of Husserl's approach to this topic.

Although Ricœur defines Husserl as "the most non-historic of professors," he recognizes that "it was the very tragedy of history which inclined Husserl to think historically."²⁸ The political crisis in Europe in the mid-1930s prompts a question both about history and about human existence

in history. Husserl's *Crisis* develops, then, as "an attempt at an etiology of crisis—the rise of National Socialism—and [. . .] a sketching out of a project for avoiding or overcoming it."²⁹ More precisely, National Socialism led Husserl to reflect upon how the spirit can become ill and to consider history as a place of danger and possible failure, but also to find a response to his own situation by pointing to "the sense and senselessness of man."³⁰ Therefore, according to Ricœur, Husserl's interest in history and his elaborate treatment of the history of philosophy in his mature work can be explained as motivated by the need to face external circumstances linked to the turbulent events of the Nazi years. Consequently, Ricœur concludes that Husserl "was summoned by history to interpret himself historically."³¹ Hence, the crisis of Western culture was the occasion for opening Husserl's phenomenological project to history. Husserl's awareness of the collective crisis of humanity leads him to reflect on the European man, his destiny and possible decline, as well as on the necessity to find possibilities for his rebirth. Ricœur observes that Husserl finally "situates his own philosophy in history with the conviction that it is responsible to this European man and that it alone can show him the way of his renewal."³² The consciousness of the crisis within history pushes Husserl to question the sense and the goal of who we are and where we are going as humanity. Thus, Husserl's philosophy of history goes from the European crisis to the search of meaning, i.e., from the doubting to the need for a renewed sense. Ricœur emphasizes the Kantian inheritance in Husserl's phenomenology with reference to Kant's 1784 essay "Idea for a Universal History with a Cosmopolitan Aim."³³ It is in this article that Kant focuses on the "unsociable sociability" (*ungesellige Geselligkeit*) of human beings as a spur to individual and social improvement. Husserl claims that it is in Europe that human being has a teleological sense, namely a task or an Idea in the Kantian sense of the term, which is "philosophy itself as the totality of understanding and as the infinite perspective of the sciences."³⁴ Indeed, Husserl's aim is to give its whole breadth to the Idea of European humanity, considered from the point of view of the philosophy of history and to submit the European crisis to a new elucidation. In his thought the philosophy of history is conceived as marked by infinite tasks and as an unending progress. In this way, the concept of history involves a path for reason that is essentially progressive and that includes not only knowledge, but also speculative, ethical, and aesthetical perceptions.³⁵ Thus, Ricœur argues that in Husserl's *Crisis* "the notion of man qualifies the notion of reason in an existential and historical manner, while reason gives man a signification. Man is the image of his Ideas, and Ideas are like the paradigm for existence."³⁶ Whereas it is uncertain from Husserl's position if Europe will abandon or resurrect its universal humanistic mission, his analysis of the European possibilities and his perspective on history remain overtly Eurocentric. Husserl places the origin of philosophy in ancient Greece and projects onto Europe alone as the bearer of the meaning of the development of human civilization. According

to him, Europe is not a geographical reality “as on a map, as if thereby the group of people who live together in this territory would define his defense of endangered European humanity.”³⁷ He problematically insists on the notion of the “spiritual sense” of Europe and on the unity experienced as the European homeland. The exclusion of different civilizations such as India, China, Eskimos, Gypsies, from humanity’s destiny and teleology as European, is an arbitrary prejudice.³⁸ Also his attempt to present a comparative typology between the European and non-European as centered on the notion of familiarity and strangeness is inadequate to categorize historical humanity as a whole. Moreover, by focusing his attention on the “European crisis,” Husserl lacks of any comprehension of the global crisis of humanity and of “the paradoxes of modernization and Westernization in the non-Western colonial and semicolonial world.”³⁹ Motivated by the Cartesian mode of understanding the history of Western philosophy as Greek-European science, Husserl’s reading of history is characterized by a scientific conception of the history of philosophy, though he himself rejects Descartes’s objectivism. His Eurocentrism has troubled and continue to concern phenomenologists and philosophers of all boards. A philosophic judgment of Husserl’s Eurocentric overtones and Western categories is, then, necessarily required.

As Ricœur’s analysis of Husserl’s turn towards the question of history profoundly influenced his approach to this topic, Patočka’s reading of Husserl opens up several questions that would illuminate his thought. It is in his early essays entitled “On the Philosophy of History” (1940) and “History of Philosophy and its Unity” (1942) that Patočka outlines his methodological and theoretical principles to analyze the history of philosophy and begins to develop his own reflection on history.⁴⁰ More precisely, Patočka’s critical approach to Husserl’s work has a profound impact on the elaboration of his thought as dominated by the analysis of the unity of the history of philosophy (Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, Descartes, Comenius, Herder, Hegel, Marx, Comte, etc.) and of his own philosophy of history within the theoretical space of the phenomenological movement. The most elaborated form of Patočka’s conception of history can be found in his late works: *Plato and Europe* (1973) and the *Heretical Essays on the Philosophy of History* (1975).⁴¹ Like Ricœur, Patočka recognizes that Husserl’s late attention to history “is marked by a conviction that European humanity is passing through a protracted spiritual crisis whose roots must be sought deep in the past, at the very beginning of modern thought.”⁴² Both Patočka and Ricœur feel the necessity to answer to the problem of the modern philosophy and science in Europe, that is, to recognize the symptoms and find responses to the spiritual crisis affecting the modern man as having no unified worldview, namely as a being living “at once in his own naturally given environment and in a world created for him by modern natural science, based on the principle of mathematical laws governing nature.”⁴³

Ricœur and Patočka recognize Husserl's larger concern with the dynamics of history and they are aware of the challenges of thinking history in the aftermath of his phenomenology. In *History and Truth*, Ricœur broadens and expands his previous analyses of Husserl's phenomenological approach to history. Specifically, it is in the first part of his oeuvre entitled "Truth in the Knowledge of History" that Ricœur aims at addressing the problem of the meaning of history moving from his reading of Husserl. As Ricœur points out, the keyword of Husserl's approach to history is that of the "advent of meaning."⁴⁴ Indeed, believing in a certain teleology of history, Husserl thinks that mankind is unified in its theoretical meaning. Hence, Husserl's attempt is to justify the meaning of history of the consciousness, expecting a certain coincidence between the meaning of self-knowledge and that of history. Contrary to the historian's history, which is attentive to the meaning of the events in themselves, Ricœur accuses Husserl to have abandoned in his history of consciousness not only the non-meaningful "from which every sense is taken" but also "the individual, the non-systematizable, and the exceptional."⁴⁵ The analysis of Husserl's perspective on history leads Ricœur to discuss a different philosophical interpretation of history attentive to singularity. As he puts it, history does not unfold itself as a cohesive movement of a system, but it weaves "itself into persons and works."⁴⁶ In this context, history is understood "as a series of disconnected appearances, each of which requires a new and total encounter."⁴⁷ Whereas in Husserl's thought history appears as a unique human consciousness whose meaning progresses through logical moments, in the opposed approach history is understood as a multiple emergence, as a disconnected series of upheavals having their own specific meanings. Ricœur introduces his own conception of history as a dimension which "is virtually continuous and discontinuous, continuous as a unique meaning in progress and discontinuous as a configuration of persons."⁴⁸ According to Ricœur, the meaning of history cannot be reduced to a development of a sequence. Contrary to history as an advent of consciousness's meaning leaning towards an optimistic ideal, "the interpretation of history which takes account of the sudden appearance of individual centers of consciousness leads rather to a tragic vision of the ambiguity of man who always begins anew and who may always defect."⁴⁹ Ricœur recognizes, then, that the meaning of history is an imperfect mediation, that is, it arises from the interweaving of different perspectives of anticipation of the future, reception of the past, and lived experience of the present, without upholding the idea of a totality where reason in history and its reality would finally coincide.

According to Patočka the question of the meaning of history requires a preliminary clarification of the concept of meaning itself. In the third essay of his *Heretical Essays in the Philosophy of History* entitled "Does History have a

Meaning?" Patočka begins his analysis with the revision of Frege's distinction between the notions of "meaning-sense" and that of "significance-reference."⁵⁰ Whereas significance indicates an objective relation and it is often limited to realm of λόγος, meaning deals with the conception of an object, it renders something intelligible and it pertains to something more real such as feelings and actions. Neither meaning can be reduced to purpose or value, nor to something obvious. As Patočka explains, "when we speak, for instance, of the meaning of suffering, the meaning of anxiety, the meaning of corporeity [. . .] in all these instances meaning is [. . .] something we need to reach through an explanation."⁵¹ Meaning requires, then, the work of interpretation in order to be unveiled. In phenomenological terms, meaning as a progressive movement has to be searched through the openness of things themselves. But contrary to any subjectivistic position, in his phenomenological view Patočka argues that the meaning does not exclusively depend on us because we do not have the power "to keep things from appearing meaningless under some circumstances and, hand in hand with that, to keep meaning from speaking to us from things if we are open to it."⁵² Hence, we are open to both meaningful and meaningless reality. This double possibility embedded in things testifies the problematicity of all meaning. I claim that Patočka follows here Ricœur in acknowledging that we must consider the opposition between meaningful and meaningless aspects of things. With reference to Wilhelm Weischedel, Patočka argues that meaning is not something individual, but each meaning refers to "a global meaning of the totality of what-is, of life and of events."⁵³ However, life must not be seen as the continuous illusion of a total meaning that has to be uninterruptedly researched. Beyond the radical skepticism of nihilism based on the disbelief in meaning that is independent of human life and the original and uncritical faith in meaning, Patočka finds a third way. As Ricœur clearly argues in the preface of Patočka's *Heretical Essays*, "haunted by nihilism, Patočka saw a way out in the notion of problematicity itself, a concept which appeared to him to evade both the dogmatic 'non meaning' of the cynical disciples of Nietzsche as well as the dogmatism of any straightforward apologetic of meaning."⁵⁴ According to Patočka, it is necessary to question "what the phenomenon of a loss of meaning itself means."⁵⁵ It is, then, from the loss of meaning that human beings find themselves pushed to search for meaning in the problematicity of things. Coherently, Ricœur argues that for Patočka, within the condition of problematicity meaning is "a proper meaning, a meaning neither too modest nor dogmatic, which gives courage for a life in the atmosphere of the problematic."⁵⁶

It is in this context marked by the problematic of the nature of meaning, that Patočka discusses the meaning of history moving from the distinction between prehistoric humanity and history, that is, between the natural and the historical world. History is not a given of the natural world; rather, history is an intellectual and spiritual effort to link events onto a meaningful whole, that is, it is a movement towards the truth. Patočka argues that "history differs

from prehistoric humanity by the shaking of accepted meaning. We would be asking erroneously if we were to ask what caused this shock; it is as vain as asking what causes humans to leave their sheltered childhood for a self-responsible adulthood.⁵⁷ The movement from the prehistorical to the historical world consists, then, in a changing of perspective from a given and unshakable meaning to an understanding of meaning as problematic. Patočka's conception of history as linked to his idea of Europe shares with Husserl a strict universalism as well as a Eurocentric vision. When speaking about history and its meaning, Patočka has in his mind Western philosophy and politics. Indeed, he argues that philosophy "as the radical question of meaning based on the shaking of the naïve, directly accepted meaning of life developed only along western lines."⁵⁸ As Patočka observes, we can speak of history "where life becomes free and whole, where it consciously builds room for an equally free life [. . .] where humans dare to undertake new attempts at bestowing meaning on themselves in the light of the way the being of the world into which they have been set manifests itself to them."⁵⁹ The light of the being of the world refers here to what is disclosed by philosophy as building room for an equally free life in its Greek origins. Patočka's language used in his *Heretical Essays on the Philosophy of History* clearly runs the risk of Eurocentrism. The influence of Husserl's and Heidegger's thought in the development of his analysis of history, leads Patočka to dangerously argue that there is no other history than European history and consequently that history emerges and continues with the philosophical spirit, which is carried essentially by Western Europe.⁶⁰ Like Husserl, Patočka is not concerned with Europe seen as a geographical area, but with it as a spiritual phenomenon. More precisely, history is understood as the establishment of the spiritual foundations of human existence. Consequently, historicity is linked to human being's spiritual existence. Such a conception of history and its corresponding philosophy of history appears to be naïve and hazardous.⁶¹ Which would be for example the conditions upon which European life could become free and whole? How can it build an equally free life? More generally, what does Europe still have to offer spiritually after its crisis? Patočka does not give any clear answer to such questions. Although the Eurocentric vision has been prevalent until the twentieth century, we have the necessary duty to distance ourselves from this perspective, we must criticize and resist this claim to reproduce the same scheme of thought. According to Patočka, history begins only with Greek civilization, which suspends and challenges the political, cosmological, and natural orders. The denaturalization of meaning done by the Greeks corresponds to the problematization of meaning standing at the very foundations of European civilization. Patočka speaks, then, of a new vision of the world in which the search for the meaning is a risky process. The beginning of history marks the emergence of a new relation to human finitude as linked to the possibility of discomfort, misunderstanding, and all the different forms of strife and conflict into which human beings are embedded.

The meaning of history becomes an open problem, that cannot be preliminary defined, namely, it is something always at stake in the drama of human finitude and freedom. Far from all acceptance, human life in history finds itself exposed to risk, i.e., historical life is a “on a boundary over which it cannot step along which everything is transformed.”⁶² Patočka highlights, then, the problematicity of the meaning of history as consisting in the shaking of presupposed meanings.

Before proceeding any further, let me briefly summarize what we have discussed so far. We have seen that Ricœur and Patočka are aware of the significance of the evolution of Husserl’s phenomenology reflected in the *Crisis*. Both authors recognize that the crisis of Western culture represents the occasion for opening Husserl’s phenomenological project to history. The situatedness of the consciousness in a time of crisis leads Husserl to look for the source of the time of crisis in a questioning-back and to a reconsideration of the lifeworld as the non-thematic ground of experience. Ricœur’s reading of Husserl leads him to reject the idea of history as a totality, as an absolute mediation, or as the full and perfect realization of meaning. Although he gives up the Hegelian idea of history, Ricœur does not deny the necessity to search for meaning in history as an incomplete and imperfect mediation of the reception of the past, the experience of the present, and the expectation for the future. Husserl’s attempt to understand the crisis of Europe during the mid-1930s by examining the history of Europe as a spiritual and cultural crisis, has a profound influence also on Patočka’s philosophy of history. According to Patočka, history is the trembling of any given and finite certainty of meaning. As such, there is no truth standing over human history and finding its fulfillment in it. Every meaning is, then, created in the deeds of our finite existence and can be only situational. The fact that meaning is relative to the human finite situation implies the necessity that to constantly reaffirm it through the Socratic elenctic and protreptic methods, that is, “through the searching for new questions and answers with others by providing reasons that we can give an account for.”⁶³

On the Openness of Historicity

Whereas the metaphysical and the epistemological approaches to history are focused respectively on what history is, how it exists, and how we know it considering the gap between past and present, phenomenology is primarily concerned about how past events are given to us and what our experience of them is like. In other words, phenomenology inquires the ways in which history present to us, how it enters our lives, and the forms of experience in which it is involved. The phenomenological perspective focuses, then, on history as a phenomenon and on the lived experience of the historical. The notion of experience is at the core of the phenomenological reflection on history.⁶⁴ We do not just exist in history as beings who passively belong to an

historical context characterized by particular political and social frameworks. Rather, we are ourselves historical beings involved in the historical reality and concerned by historical events. In this context, our experience is not just observation, but also interaction within the world as historically shaped. Otherwise put, we are intertwined with history through our individual historicity, i.e., through our situatedness and active participation into an historical world. Thus, as a defining feature of our existence, historicity places us in the dialectic between our belonging to an historical world and our appropriation of it. Let us now turn to Ricœur's and Patočka's conceptions of history as a dynamic phenomenon involving the consideration of the past into the present, but also our expectations for the future.

Parallel to their critical retrievals of Husserl's phenomenology, Ricœur's and Patočka's analyses on the topic of history are profoundly influenced by Heidegger's philosophy. Ricœur met Heidegger in France in 1955 during the Cerisy Colloquium. Influenced by Heidegger's thought, Ricœur took his work on phenomenology beyond eidetic and existentialist phenomenology opening it up towards a phenomenology that was hermeneutic in its focus.⁶⁵ In 1933, Patočka received a Humboldt fellowship and an invitation to work under Husserl's supervision in Freiburg. It was during the summer semester of that year that Patočka attended a few of Heidegger's lectures. Patočka recognized that Heidegger's ontological perspective was one of the great accomplishments of the twentieth-century. However, he considered Heidegger's philosophy as not fully appropriate to the understanding of human existence as long as it is not just related to self-understanding but also to the body, community, language, and the world.⁶⁶ Ricœur and Patočka acknowledge that in Heidegger's thought the question of history belongs among the most fundamental questions of human existence. According to Heidegger, being historical is a feature of the Dasein and history has always an existential qualification made by human beings in the present for the sake of their future. In Heidegger's view, the happening of history is the happening of being-in-the-world.⁶⁷ Similarly to Husserl, Heidegger develops a Eurocentric vision of history and philosophy as born in Greece and coming to adulthood in Germany. His Eurocentric prejudice can be summed up in the affirmation that the history of human thought is the history of European thought. According to him, "the history of Being is more than an ontic narrative of Western historicity. It is a unique story about the origin of man and of the world in the ontological sense. In the meantime, the Other is invited to join, through the medium of a dialogue with early Greek thinkers, in the project of retrieving the first beginning and embarking onto the other beginning."⁶⁸ Together with the conception of the Greek and the German as the two most philosophical of the European languages, in his 1935 lecture course *Introduction to Metaphysics* Heidegger presents also a Eurocentric analysis of the various geopolitical responses to technological globalization seen as a pathology of the culmination of the history of Western

metaphysics.⁶⁹ The ethnocentrism of Heidegger's philosophy of history, his prejudices, and political commitments deserve to be radically criticized in order to develop a different and more adequate conception of history, that is, a less ethnocentric and a more intercultural approach.

There are two major ideas in Heidegger's perspective on history that are critically retrieved by Ricœur and Patočka: thrownness and projection. First, Heidegger stresses the finitude and thrownness of the Dasein, that is, of its coming into existence without being asked. In its being-already-in-the-world, Dasein deals with its own facticity as received from the past. Heidegger distinguishes at this point the inauthentic and the authentic Dasein. Whereas the first is characterized by its absorption in everyday life without questioning or choosing its mode of existence, the second is aware of its thrownness and recalls the significance of its past and understands it in terms of the current possibilities it provides. Second, the notion of thrownness is taken up by Heidegger in parallel with the emphasis on Dasein's projection into the future. In its being-ahead-of-itself, Dasein attempts to define itself in the present through the awareness of its future possibilities. Whereas for the inauthentic Dasein the future is seen as a generalized waiting to see what will happen, the authentic Dasein anticipates its mortality, remembers its own responsibility and is aware of the possibilities provided by thrownness. Dasein's thrownness and projection are implied in its Being as care characterized by anticipatory resoluteness. Without going into the complete details of Heidegger's influence on Ricœur's and Patočka's thinking on history, my focus here will be on thematizing the impact of Heideggerian thought on the Ricœurian concept of historicity and Patočka's notion of the care of the soul as related to the question of the meaning of history.

History and historicity refer, each in its own way, to the same fundamental feature of human being's individual, collective, and social existence. As Ricœur puts it, "because history is our history, the sense of history is our sense."⁷⁰ Therefore, there is "a certain mutual belonging between the act of narrating (or writing) history and the fact of being in history, between *doing* history and *being* historical."⁷¹ Recalling the etymological sense of the word history from the Greek term *ἱστορίᾱ*, Ricœur precises that history is not "an anxious interrogation on our discouraging historicity, on our way of living and sliding along in time, but rather [it is] a reply to this 'historical' condition—a reply through the choice of history, through the choice of a certain knowledge, of a will to understand rationally."⁷² Considered from a phenomenological perspective, the concept of historicity refers to our finite condition, i.e., to our concrete life as spanned out in time, to the conscious and subconscious understanding of ourselves as passing in and through a language and a culture that have been passed down through a tradition to which we belong. The concept of historicity finds, then, its own meaning in relation to Ricœur's phenomenological valorization of human embodiment. Following his line of reasoning, historicity can be

defined as human being's bodily engagement with the world as the spatiotemporal dimension of our existence. Historicity represents at once an enabling condition and a limitation for our understanding. Ricœur further develops his reflections on historicity in the more recent phase of his hermeneutic project including his three-volume *Time and Narrative*, which can be read as an investigation on the historicity of existence. More precisely, Ricœur recognizes that narration is the modality that makes the dimension of historical individuality effective. As historical beings, our "personalities mature by placing themselves in a narrated time and within a determined (narrated and experienced) tradition."⁷³ Although Ricœur's argument is influenced by Heidegger's notion of thrownness (*Geworfenheit*), he criticizes Heidegger's treatment of historicity for two major reasons. First, Ricœur confers to the notion of historicity a social dimension. According to Ricœur, Heidegger's analysis on the Dasein's historicity is individualistic. Rather than viewing the Dasein's historical heritage as inherently social, Heidegger wrongly sees it as monadic, concentrating his analysis on the individual and non-transferable possibility of being-towards-death. As we are thrown into the world, we find ourselves as involved within a heritage that is transmitted through generations. In Ricœur's view, historicity becomes a public dimension. Second, Ricœur gives to the notion of historicity a hopeful orientation. According to Ricœur, historicity as a form of public time "breaks free from the stranglehold of mortality which Heidegger considers to be the authentic form of human being-in-time."⁷⁴ Otherwise put, Ricœur challenges Heidegger's analysis of being-towards-death as the most authentic form of human existence. Although Ricœur agrees with Heidegger in considering human being as a being-ahead-of-itself, that is, as possibility, he does not share with Heidegger the conviction that being-towards-death is the only authentic mode of existence. Indeed, with reference to Augustine and the Christian tradition, Ricœur develops a view of philosophy which is "more a celebration of life rather than a preparation for death." Already in his early phenomenology, Ricœur described human life as "the joy of 'yes' in the sadness of the finite."⁷⁵ In this way, the meaning of history and historicity are thought as part of a thinking according to hope. Our understanding of history is not a resignation, but a firm commitment to the concrete horizon brought forth by human historical existence itself.

Patočka was profoundly inspired by Heidegger's concept of Dasein and by his examination of human existence in the world as presented in *Being and Time*. Whereas Husserl presented an ahistorical subjectivity, Heidegger was concerned about the relationship between human being and the Being, as an historical relationship that is manifested in human freedom and responsibility. Patočka argues that "Heidegger is a philosopher of the primacy of freedom and in his view, history is not a drama which unfolds before our eyes but a responsible realization of the relation which humans are. History is not a perception but a responsibility."⁷⁶ However, although

Heidegger's thought provided a way for Patočka to develop his own understanding of human existence, the Czech philosopher recognized that the insights of the Heideggerian ontological philosophy were necessary but not entirely sufficient for a philosophical understanding of "the concrete humans in their corporeal worlds."⁷⁷ Therefore, by pushing Heidegger's *Being and Time* beyond where the German author intended it, Patočka's philosophy is not Heideggerian, but it is built on the Heideggerian foundations. In his thought Patočka makes use of a central theme presented by Heidegger's thought when he speaks about "care." In Heidegger's view, the concept of care is what defines the being of the Dasein and implies an essential concern directed towards our relationships with the beings in the world. More precisely, the care is the existential a priori that precedes the situations of Dasein. Patočka uses Heidegger's idea of care, but he combines to the Heideggerian perspective the sense of care presented by the Socratic dialogues. Whereas for Heidegger care pertains to Dasein, Patočka refers to the Socratic perspectives according to which care is of the soul. Deeply influenced by Socrates and Plato, Patočka sees philosophy not only as a theoretical enterprise but as a way of life. According to him: "philosophy is not the ultimate abstraction; rather it is the work of living beings, living minds on their hard and lonely way of search. The philosophizing minds are not indifferent to meeting other minds, sometimes across centuries or even millennia; many a time, it is the ultimate, or even the only thing. And the particular environment in which it happens is the history of philosophy."⁷⁸ For Patočka, it was Socrates the first who focused on the idea of human responsibility as connected not just to human thinking, but also to the acting into the world. Patočka recognizes, then, in the Greek heritage on which Europe was built, the idea of the care for the soul. This topic is already present in his 1947 lectures on Socrates held at Charles University of Prague and it culminates in his 1970s works, especially in his *Heretical Essays in the Philosophy of History*, in his *Europe and Post-Europe* as well as in his lecture course *Plato and Europe* in which he continues reflecting on the current situation of the world. The idea of the care for the soul was displaced from philosophical reflection by the modern scientific venture, that is, by the ascendancy of mathematical sciences in the sixteenth and seventeenth century. But the meaning of one's being cannot be expressed by laws coming from the empirical domain of things.⁷⁹ Patočka returns, then, to Socrates as representing the open moment of philosophical inquiry into the meaning of the world as a whole, an openness that needs to be restored. As Patočka puts it, "care for the soul is the bequest of ancient Greek philosophy. Care for the soul means that truth is something not given once and for all, not merely a matter of observing and acknowledging the observed, but rather a lifelong inquiry, a self-controlling, self-unifying intellectual and vital practice."⁸⁰ To return to Socrates means for Patočka to reconsider the question of how we can live in a world where traditional beliefs and the meaning are in crisis. Therefore, we have to "shake the everydayness of the fact-crunchers and

routine minds⁸¹ to see beyond the scientific reasoning and its critique. The care of the soul involves the realization that our understanding cannot be reduced to mathematized certainty and that our knowledge is finite since we are finite human beings. In short, to take care for our soul means “to care for truth and freedom of thinking by questioning presuppositions that we inherited from our tradition.”⁸² To take care of the soul is essential in the attempt to confront the crisis of meaning, that is, to try to live a responsible life when old values are no more meaningful and the new ones are not yet clear. It is by virtue of the critical understanding of our historical situation that the possibility of the future opens to us. It is in this context that Patočka speaks of the possibility of reconquering hope in the present historical epoch marked by the horror generated by the wars. He argues: “It is thus certain that the efforts done in order to turn at last our attention away from this terror, to let ourselves be penetrated and supported by the great tasks which call for us, if we listen to the situation of our epoch in the spheres of action, of knowledge and of art, these efforts have a positive meaning, even if we should neither neglect their limits. We see the constitution of philosophies and theologies of hope. Hope is not a simple relief of the horror and of the fear which the dangers inspire us, dangers to which our epoch is exposed, but the very possibility of opening us to a future. Generally speaking, the discovery of the future is one of the most important and most characteristic features of our present.”⁸³ Like Ricœur, Patočka is critical of the objectifying of the horizon of the future: “modern ideologies objectify the open horizon and thus create an enclosing horizon that needs to be broken through, in order to find the true openness of the horizon of time, that can never be stifled, but also needs its humble and careful determinations.”⁸⁴ However, whereas Ricœur refers to the Christian eschatology, Patočka’s perspective on history is not messianic at all, but still leaves place for hope.⁸⁵

Heidegger understands history as an “ever-repeated rising out of fallenness,”⁸⁶ which can be hidden beneath the mask of progress, humanism, and power. As inherently connected to Dasein’s historical condition of thrownness into the world, fallenness can’t be surpassed. According to Ricœur, concentrating his analysis on Dasein’s fallenness and the non-transferable possibility of being-towards-death, Heidegger’s view on historicity is individualistic and monadic. Against Heidegger, Ricœur rejects the idea to conceive anxiety as the fundamental way of human being in the world. He argues, then, that joy and hope have an equal claim to be seen as basic clue to the meaning of history and humanity. Criticizing Heidegger’s negative perspective, Ricœur’s thought presents a belief in transcendence, namely, a desire to say “yes” in spite of the negative aspects affecting our existence as historical beings. Contrary to Heidegger, Patočka’s philosophy of history is grounded on the idea that there is the possibility to restore the meaning of history even though peace is only a fragile balance. Otherwise put, Patočka believes that meaning can be restored even out of events that

presumably trigger no hope or revival. Patočka's analysis of the fundamental dimension of the care of the soul can be understood as a full assumption of the problematicity of history, as involved into the attempt to restore the sense of community and to redefine human actions under extreme crisis.

Conclusion

In this article I have explored to what extent Ricœur's and Patočka's works offer significant contributions to the understanding of history and its meaning. Emerging from the witness of a deep crisis of history brought up by the great disasters of the two World Wars and from the related alteration of the very manner of comprehending human being's historical experience, Ricœur's and Patočka's analyses focus on history as a complex phenomenon. I showed that their conceptions of history can be understood only through a careful analysis of their critical reading of Husserl's works, in particular of his late reflections in the *Crisis*, and Heidegger's phenomenological analyses of Dasein. Ricœur and Patočka attempt to give an answer to what exactly is meant by history. The problem of the meaning of history is connected to the historicity of human existence. Nevertheless, the comparison between Ricœur's and Patočka's approaches to history has shown their inner limitations with respect to thinking history and its meaning. In concluding this paper, let me briefly criticize their limited understanding of the historical world as marked by the Eurocentric prejudice.

Ricœur's and Patočka's analyses of history display an unsolved confusion between what history is in general and European history. On the one hand, Ricœur and Patočka might be considered to be right to approve Husserl's and Heidegger's claim that the European thought presents the forms of generality and universality which become characteristic of the European history. Yet, they acknowledge that the European way of thinking was imposed everywhere and it was accompanied by a specific type of violence. The imposition of the European will to other countries was criticized by critical theorists, postcolonial thinkers, but also admitted by Ricœur and Patočka as well.⁸⁷ On the other hand, though, Ricœur and Patočka are finally unable to critically distance themselves from the European cultural endeavors and to coherently reject the presupposed superiority over other forms of rationality and modes of existence. In short, these authors seem to show an inability to explain how to truly listen to different non-Western or non-European set of historical contexts, cultural traditions, and othered conceptualization of historical experiences.

After the Second World War, Europe has lost its position as the center of world history. The end of Europe is taken by Patočka as an historical fact. Although the Czech author is concerned about the "post-European" historical era, he does not discuss about how to deal with the idea of Europe as

determinant of our historical self-understanding. Otherwise put, Patočka's claim that there is only European history but that we are living in a post-Europe historical context ends up to be an unsolved paradox. By assuming that history has spiritual foundations and that it can be understood only through them, in his works Patočka does not abandon the connection among the concepts of history, spirit, and foundation. Against the background of the modern crisis, Patočka's perspective on the post-European epoch is not freed from the problematic character of those three recurring notions. In this context, Patočka does not recognize that the care for the soul can be said not to be really exclusive to the Greek heritage. Agreeing with Aviezer Tucker's analysis of Patočka's thought, it is probably due to cultural biases that Patočka does not consider that also Eastern religions, such as Buddhism, might refer to a similar notion of spirituality.⁸⁸ Moreover, according to Patočka it is the open soul of the Europeans that has to encounter the new world's spiritual attitude. In this way, he continues to accord a spiritual supremacy of Europe over non-European societies. Finally, we can state with Ricœur and Patočka that the meaning of history must be constantly questioned, but this questioning is more far-reaching than what Ricœur and Patočka acknowledged in their own accounts of history.

¹ Paul Ricœur, *History and Truth*, trans. Charles Kelbey (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1965 [1955]), 39.

² Jan Patočka, *Heretical Essays in the Philosophy of History*, trans. Erazim Kohák (Chicago and La Salle: Open Court, 1996 [1975]), 61.

³ Ricœur, *Preface* to the French edition of Jan Patočka's *Essais hérétiques sur la philosophie de l'histoire*, trans. Erika Abrams (Lagrasse: Éditions Verdier, 1981).

⁴ Ricœur, "Jan Patočka et le nihilisme," *Esprit* 166, (1990): 30-37.

⁵ Ricœur, "Jan Patočka: d'une philosophie du monde naturel à une philosophie de l'histoire," *Studia Phaenomenologica* 7, (2007): 193-200.

⁶ Domenico Jervolino, "Ricœur lecteur de Patočka," *Studia Phaenomenologica* 7, (2007): 201-17.

⁷ Patočka, "Briefe an Krzysztof Michlaski," *Studia Phaenomenologica* 7, (2007): 99-161.

⁸ Patočka, *The Natural World as a Philosophical Problem*, trans. Erika Abrams (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 2016 [1936]).

- ⁹ For an analysis concerning the philosophical motivations related to Charta 77, see Jakub Čapek, “Le devoir de l’homme envers lui-même,” *Tumultes* 32-33, (2009): 351-70.
- ¹⁰ See Lubica Učnik, “Patočka, Charter 77, the State and Morality: ‘May it all be for the Benefit of the Community,’” *Ethics and Bioethics* 8, (2018): 51-61.
- ¹¹ Ricœur, “Jan Patočka, le philosophe-résistant,” *Le Monde* 34, (March 19, 1977): 4; “Jan Patočka: a Philosopher of Resistance,” trans. Richard Kearney, *The Crane Bag* 7, (1983): 118.
- ¹² See Pierre-Olivier Monteil, *Macron par Ricœur: le politique et le philosophe* (Paris: Lemieux Éditeur, 2017).
- ¹³ See Ludger Hagedorn, Paul Marinescu, “Exploring the Undisclosed Meanings of Time, History and Existence: Paul Ricœur and Jan Patočka as Philosophical Interlocutors,” *Meta. Research in Hermeneutics, Phenomenology and Practical Philosophy* 9, (2017): 379-83.
- ¹⁴ Ricœur, “Husserl and the Sense of History” (1949), in *Husserl: An Analysis of His Phenomenology*, trans. Edward Ballard, Lester Embree (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1967), 143-68.
- ¹⁵ Ricœur, “Truth in the Knowledge of History,” 21-80.
- ¹⁶ Patočka, “Does History have a Meaning?,” 53-78.
- ¹⁷ Edmund Husserl, *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology: An Introduction to Phenomenological Philosophy*, trans. David Carr (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1970 [1954]).
- ¹⁸ Ricœur, *Freedom and Nature: The Voluntary and the Involuntary*, trans. Erazim Kohák (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1966 [1950]).
- ¹⁹ Ricœur, *A l’école de la phénoménologie* (Paris: Vrin, 1967).
- ²⁰ Ricœur, *Time and Narrative*, vol. 1, trans. Kathleen McLaughlin and David Pellauer (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984 [1983]); *Time and Narrative*, vol. 2, trans. Kathleen McLaughlin and David Pellauer (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1985 [1984]); *Time and Narrative*, vol. 3, trans. Kathleen McLaughlin and David Pellauer (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986 [1985]).
- ²¹ Ricœur, *Memory, History, Forgetting*, trans. Kathleen McLaughlin and David Pellauer (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004 [2000]).
- ²² Husserl, *Cartesian Meditations: An Introduction to Phenomenology*, trans. Dorion Cairns (The Hague: Springer, 1960 [1931]).
- ²³ Ricœur, “Jan Patočka: d’une philosophie du monde naturel à une philosophie de l’histoire,” 193.
- ²⁴ Husserl, *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology*, xxiv.

- ²⁵ Enrique Dussel and Eduardo Mendieta, *The Underside of Modernity: Apel, Ricœur, Rorty, Taylor, and the Philosophy of Liberation* (New Jersey: Humanities Press, 1996), 132.
- ²⁶ See Jacques Derrida, *Of Spirit: Heidegger and the Question*, trans. Geoff Bennington and Rachel Bowlby (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989 [1987]).
- ²⁷ See the concept of Generativity (*Generativität*), in Husserl, *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology*, 188.
- ²⁸ Ricœur, “Husserl and the Sense of History,” 144.
- ²⁹ Michael Funk Deckard, “On the Memory of the Past: Philosophy of History in Spiritual Crisis in the early Patočka and Ricœur,” *Meta. Research in Hermeneutics, Phenomenology and Practical Philosophy* 9, (2017): 569
- ³⁰ Ricœur, “Husserl and the Sense of History,” 144.
- ³¹ Ricœur, “Husserl and the Sense of History,” 144.
- ³² Ricœur, “Husserl and the Sense of History,” 143.
- ³³ Immanuel Kant, “Idea for a Universal History with a Cosmopolitan Aim [1784],” trans. Allen Wood, in *The Cambridge Edition of the Works of Immanuel Kant: Anthropology, History and Education*, ed. Gunter Zoller and Robert Lauden (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007): 107-21.
- ³⁴ Ricœur, “Husserl and the Sense of History,” 151.
- ³⁵ Ricœur, “Husserl and the Sense of History,” 157.
- ³⁶ Ricœur, “Husserl and the Sense of History,” 159.
- ³⁷ Husserl, *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology*, 273.
- ³⁸ Husserl, *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology*, 279.
- ³⁹ Eric S. Nelson, *Chinese and Buddhist Philosophy in Early Twentieth-Century German Thought* (London: Bloomsbury, 2017), 182.
- ⁴⁰ Patočka, “Dějepis filosofie a její jednota” [History of Philosophy and its Unity], *Česká mysl* 36, (1942): 58-72.
- ⁴¹ Patočka, *Plato and Europe*, trans. Petr Lom (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2002 [1973]).
- ⁴² Patočka, “Masaryk’s and Husserl’s Conception of the Spiritual Crisis of European Humanity” [1936], in *Jan Patočka: Philosophy and Selected Writings*, trans. Erazim Kohák (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989), 146.
- ⁴³ Patočka, *The Natural World as a Philosophical Problem*, 6.
- ⁴⁴ Ricœur, *History and Truth*, 33.
- ⁴⁵ Ricœur, *History and Truth*, 36.
- ⁴⁶ Ricœur, *History and Truth*, 36.

- ⁴⁷ Ricœur, *History and Truth*, 37.
- ⁴⁸ Ricœur, *History and Truth*, 38.
- ⁴⁹ Ricœur, *History and Truth*, 39.
- ⁵⁰ See Patočka, “Does History have a Meaning?,” 53.
- ⁵¹ Patočka, “Does History have a Meaning?,” 54.
- ⁵² Patočka, “Does History have a Meaning?,” 57.
- ⁵³ Patočka, “Does History have a Meaning?,” 58.
- ⁵⁴ Ricœur, preface to Patočka, *Heretical Essays in the Philosophy of History*, xiv.
- ⁵⁵ Patočka, “Does History have a Meaning?,” 60.
- ⁵⁶ Ricœur, Preface to Patočka, *Heretical Essays in the Philosophy of History*, xiv.
- ⁵⁷ Patočka, “Does History have a Meaning?,” 62.
- ⁵⁸ Patočka, “Author’s Glosses to the Heretical Essays,” 143.
- ⁵⁹ Patočka, “The Beginning of History,” 40-41.
- ⁶⁰ See Jan Patočka, *Plato and Europe*, 211.
- ⁶¹ See Karel Novotný, “Europe, Post-Europe, and Eurocentrism,” in *Thinking After Europe: Jan Patočka and Politics*, ed. Francesco Tava and Darian Meacham (London: Rowman and Littlefield, 2016).
- ⁶² Patočka, “Wars of the Twentieth Century and the Twentieth Century as War,” 131.
- ⁶³ Lubica Učnik, *The Crisis of Meaning and the Life-World: Husserl, Heidegger, Arendt, Patočka*, 36.
- ⁶⁴ See David Carr, *Experience and History: Phenomenological Perspectives on the Historical World* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 4.
- ⁶⁵ See Richard Kearney, *Modern Movements in European Philosophy* (Manchester: Manchester University Press).
- ⁶⁶ See Patočka, *Body, Community, Language*, trans. Erazim Kohák (Chicago and La Salle: Open Court, 1998 [1995]).
- ⁶⁷ See Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, trans. John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson (London: The Library of Philosophy and Theology, SCM Press, 1962 [1927]).
- ⁶⁸ Lin Ma, *Heidegger on East-West Dialogue: Anticipating the Event* (London: Routledge, 2007), 209.
- ⁶⁹ Martin Heidegger. *Introduction to Metaphysics*, 2nd ed. (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 2014 [1953]).
- ⁷⁰ Ricœur, “Husserl and the Sense of History,” 155.
- ⁷¹ Ricœur, “The Narrative Function,” in *Hermeneutics and the Human Sciences*, trans. John B. Thompson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), 251.
- ⁷² Ricœur, “Objectivity and Subjectivity in History,” in *History and Truth*, 25.

- ⁷³ Vinicio Busacchi, *Action, Intersubjectivity and Narrative Identity: Essays on Critical Hermeneutics* (Cambridge: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2019), 148.
- ⁷⁴ Kevin Vanhoozer, *Biblical Narrative in the Philosophy of Paul Ricœur: A Study in Hermeneutics and Theology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 31.
- ⁷⁵ Ricœur, *Fallible Man* (New York: Fordham University Press, 1986 [1960]), 140.
- ⁷⁶ Patočka, "The Beginning of History," 49.
- ⁷⁷ Edward Findlay, *Caring for the Soul in a Postmodern Age: Politics and Phenomenology in the Thought of Jan Patočka* (New York: State University of New York Press, 2002), 27.
- ⁷⁸ Patočka, "Problém dějin filosofie," in *Nejstarsí řecká filosofie* (Prague: Lidové noviny, 1992), 308.
- ⁷⁹ See Lubica Učnik, "Patočka's Socrates: the Care for the Soul and Human Existence," *Investigaciones Fenomenológicas* 4, (2013): 95.
- ⁸⁰ Patočka, "Europe and the European Heritage until the End of the Nineteenth Century," 82.
- ⁸¹ Patočka, "Wars of the Twentieth Century and the Twentieth Century as War," 136.
- ⁸² Lubica Učnik, *The Crisis of Meaning and the Life-World: Husserl, Heidegger, Arendt, Patočka* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2016), 430.
- ⁸³ Patočka, "Les fondements spirituels de la vie contemporaine," in *Liberté et Sacrifice: écrits politiques*, trans. Erika Abrams (Grenoble: Jérôme Millon, 1990), 235.
- ⁸⁴ Eddo Evink, "Horizons of Expectation. Ricœur, Derrida, Patočka," in *On the Proper Use of Phenomenology: Paul Ricœur, Centenary, Studia Phaenomenologica, Romanian Journal for Phenomenology* 13, (2013): 320.
- ⁸⁵ See Eddo Evink, "Patočka and Derrida on Responsibility," *Analecta Husserliana* 89 (2006): 307-21.
- ⁸⁶ Patočka, "The Dangers of Technicization in Science according to E. Husserl and the Essence of Technology as Danger according to M. Heidegger," 335.
- ⁸⁷ See Paul Ricœur, "Civilisation universelle et cultures nationales," *Esprit* 299/10, (1961): 439-53.
- ⁸⁸ Aviezer Tucker, *The Philosophy and Politics of Czech Dissidence from Patočka to Havel* (Pittsburgh University Press, 2000), 64.