

From National Guilt to Constitutional Patriotism: Jürgen Habermas's Reflections on Post-War Societal Identity

Yaroslav Pasko (ORCID 0000-0002-2806-7341)

Borys Grinchenko Kyiv Metropolitan University (Ukraine)

This article deals with the conceptualization of J. Habermas's discourse on historical memory and post-war societal identity. Analysis covers his criticism of Marxism as a tool of "essentialization of history" and social reductionism that devalues identities. It is substantiated that Habermas engages in active public communication directed against the traditional vision of the social institution of history, particularly against German historians who question the uniqueness of the Holocaust and the guilt of the German community. The author focuses on how Habermas, appealing to collective intelligence and rationality, rejects the reproduction of collective memory tied exclusively to conventional German identity. Analysis also covers the theoretical distinction of Habermas from the postmodern discourse of F. Lyotard on the role of the historical factor in the conditions of deliberative democracy. Habermas emphasized that effective public communication and the intention to form a common European constitutional identity were the factors that helped overcome the consequences of the past and united societies against the violence of Nazism and Communism.

KEYWORDS
*communication,
social institute
of history,
social transformation,
historical memory,
dialogue,
deliberative democracy,
identity.*

Introduction

The figure of J. Habermas is central for the philosophical discourse in the field of research into social theory and philosophy of history of the 20th century. We can talk about his symbolic significance and influence on national communities and civil society in Central and Eastern Europe. The theoretical and practical contribution of this researcher to the process of democratization of European societies, the intellectual community that kind of prepared the theoretical foundations for the Velvet Revolutions of 1989 under the influence of the ideas of the German philosopher is quite noticeable. As one of the key intellectual figures of the 20th-21st centuries, an outstanding social theorist, J. Habermas thoroughly investigated the influence of various factors of the past on the problems of social transformations. When analyzing his theoretical legacy, it is worth noting not only the terms important for social changes, such as system, lifeworld, communicative action, which "actualize" the possibilities of free and impartial horizontal communication, communicative paradigm, but also the concepts of historical memory, dialogue, dialogical memory, important for the philosopher's comprehension of the problems of identity, understanding each other, substantiation of the historical discourse associated with universal principles of rationality.

Despite the noticeable theoretical and practical influence of one of the leading representatives of the social critical theory on the processes of social changes in Central and Eastern Europe, it is quite common in academic literature to claim that J. Habermas is primarily a philosopher and social theorist, whose scientific interests lie beyond the analysis of the processes of the historical past. However, meaningful comprehension of the theoretical reflections of the famous German intellectual refutes simplified ideas

about the German researcher distancing from historical issues and, in particular, from the study of historical memory. His theoretical legacy testifies to the presence of a fully fledged and conceptually grounded historical vision, which is directly related to the understanding of the influence of the open "public sphere" on the development of identities, a key factor in historical change. For this researcher, history becomes part of a common framework of philosophical and social research.

In the process of conceptualizing his historical discourse, one of the leading representatives of "communicative philosophy" has passed rather a thorny way from recognizing the Marxist vision of the philosophy of history to defending left-liberal views of the historical process.

Since late 1960s, the philosopher has been a consistent opponent not only to the Marxist philosophy of history but also to the traditional, conservative vision, characteristic of Germany's right-wing political spectrum. Habermas' historical discourse is organically connected with strengthening civic identity in Central and Eastern Europe in the 1960s-1980s, revival of the role of the life world, socio-historical, institutional renewal of societies that for many years suffered from the rule of communist regimes.

Habermas' key intellectual contribution to the process of social changes stemmed from his focus on the importance of preserving "a true history." In practice, this normative principle was manifested in the call to "live by the truth," so popular in the dissident circles of Central and Eastern Europe in the 1970s and 1980s, which became a prologue to the ultimate de-legitimization of totalitarian regimes. In this connection, the appeal to historical origins and the search for self-determination created preconditions for the Velvet Revolutions of 1989.

Actualization of new identities would be impossible without the de-legitimization of the theoretical basis of the old political order – Marxism, increasingly viewed in terms of responsibility for the “practical consequences of the deeds of communist regimes” (L. Kołakowski). Habermas’ social criticism of the menace of manipulation of the “historical past” for opposition-minded society in Central and Eastern Europe became a factor of revival of the European identity, value-based resistance of societies, restoration of moral and normative principles.

Therefore, the goal of this survey is not only to distinguish Habermas’ discourse of historical memory from “Marxism and German traditionalism”, but also to substantiate the influence of the philosopher’s historical ideas on the Central European discourse, to realize the significant contribution of the German researcher to the strengthening of the European identity in Central and Eastern Europe.

Research methods

Methodologically, this article rests on a set of general and special scientific methods, which ensured the comprehensiveness and impartiality of the analysis. The method of comparative analysis was of fundamental importance – it was used to systematically compare the philosophical and historical views of Jürgen Habermas with the dominant concepts of the 20th century (Marxism, German traditionalism and the postmodern vision). This made it possible not only to identify differences, but also to reconstruct kind of a dialogue between these intellectual trends on the role of the past in modern society.

An important place in this paper belongs to the method of the social critical theory. Its interdisciplinary nature and emancipatory potential allow us to delve into the issues of historical memory, to trace the mutual influences between memory and identity. Within the framework of this method, the factor of the “lifeworld” plays a key role in the de-legitimization of the Marxist pattern of memory, the practical processes of de-occupation of Central Europe. Habermas criticizes the traditional, Marxist and postmodern models of historical memory, which, according to the philosopher, largely personify social and historical reductionism. Criticism of the authorities and social structures that directly influence the formation of various identities also presents an important aspect of the analysis.

The hermeneutic method was used to interpret and comprehend the primary sources – key works by J. Habermas, as well as the works of his opponents and followers. Its actualization in my research, in the context of the philosopher’s ideas, helps us understand how societies in Central Europe construct their ideas of the past. The interpretation of Habermas’ texts makes it possible to explain and understand the “historical” in Habermas as part of a holistic discourse focusing on significant social changes, so important for Central and East European societies.

Application of the historical-contextual method allowed us to consider theoretical debates (in particular, the “historians’ dispute” in Germany) as a manifestation of the struggle between different versions of interpretation of the past. This method made it possible to tie theoretical discussions with specific processes of social transformation in Central Europe, in particular, with the overcoming of “distorted sociality”, creation of worldview prerequisites for the “velvet revolutions” of 1989.

The methods of analysis and synthesis were used to draw the key conclusions of this survey and to form a holistic view of Habermas’ contribution to the problem of historical memory.

Results and Discussion

Theoretical substantiation of the problem of historical Central Europe

When considering Habermas’ historical vision, it is worth noting the key theoretical ideas of his predecessors, rather important in the process of substantiating the Central European historical discourse. Substantiating various forms of authentic history (monumental, antique), the German philosopher Nietzsche pays special attention to theoretical approaches to the problems of the historical, the ability of an individual and a community to recreate a new identity through imagination, to free themselves “from the burdens of the past” for the sake of the future (*Nietzsche, 2013*).

In the context of Nietzschean criticism of the past, we can mention Hans-Georg Gadamer, who emphasized the priority of tradition, as the philosopher’s main opponent.

Memory for the philosopher is an organic heir to tradition, a factor that continues to retain significant importance in the modern era. The researcher does not deny the possibility of a critical attitude to tradition, but points out that even changing a tradition is a form of joining it (*Gadamer, 2007*).

Quite obvious in this context are the German theoretical influences on the formation of identity in Central and Eastern Europe. In the German cultural space for the first time, with a helping hand from F. List, the term *Mitteleuropa* appears in the mid-19th century, presuming the formation of a clear historical vision, involvement of “small nations” in the German political and cultural orbit and building a dependent identity among “small nations” (*Henderson, 1983*).

However, this stance immediately met strong opposition. German reflections on the issue of historical heritage found a strong “response” from Central European intellectuals, directly influencing the formation of the national self-consciousness and identity of the Czech and Polish societies. We see ideological separation from the German identity in the theoretical works by Tomáš Masaryk, who emphasized the strong differences between these identities and clearly contraposed the Czech identity and historical memory to the German domination in the region (*Masaryk, 1972*).

Beyond doubt, the powerful “crystallization” of identities in Central Europe would have been impossible without strong theoretical prerequisites: the linguistic and cultural concept of the nation, the “printing revolution” of the Modern era, the decisive role of cultural leaders (T. Masaryk, J. Kolar, F. Palacký, A. Mickiewicz), as well as the demarcation of social memory and socio-cultural identity from externally imposed political, historical and social principles. The concept of identity in these conditions acquires social legitimization through the strengthening of self-awareness, self-discipline, the ability to constant self-improvement, and has become fundamentally important in the process of evolution of historical memory. Theoretical and social prerequisites have arisen for the public functioning of the “collective ego”, which has clearly “separated itself from the metropolis, the historical memory imposed from outside” (*Bokzański, 2015: 54*).

The historical experience of Central European nations provides an excellent example of the connection between the identity and the formation of historical memory. It is worth mentioning here Zdzisław Krasnodębski, who noted that the homeland alone, without internal historical self-determination, is a dead, alien entity (*Krasnodębski, 2005: 234*).

In this context, I consider it appropriate to refer to the theoretical vision of the famous Hungarian researcher György Schöpflin, who links the reconstruction of the Central European identity with social and political distancing from an alien non-European identity.

True self-determination ... brings a secondary, higher level of identity to the people, thereby helping them avoid the threat of reductionism... The Central European project is a way of re-Europeanizing this territory, restoring... values, ideals,... decisions and practices, identities that were destroyed by the Soviet-type system. (*Schöpflin, 1990: 68*).

Substantiation of the historical discourse becomes relevant within memory studies, in the context of Holocaust studies, focusing on records of the memory of the surviving concentration camp prisoners. Records of the feelings and experiences of eyewitnesses has become an important tool for restoring a holistic, emotionally and individually rich picture of the past. Highly important in this context is the historical discourse of the German philosopher Habermas, who, focusing on the tragic consequences of the Holocaust, victims of the totalitarian violence, criticizes the dominant historical discourses of memory: Marxist and traditional. Conceptualization of the historical discourse by one of the leading social theorists of the 20th century is highly useful for understanding the relationship between the identity and historical memory in Central Europe.

Habermas' criticism of the Marxist interpretation of the "Historical"

The theoretical and practical consequences of Marxism were criticized by German social theorists in the 1970s and 1980s not only as a dangerous ideological construct, but also as a factor that contradicts the modern European discourse and the liberal-democratic interpretation of the past. Habermas generally rejects the Marxist interpretation of the philosophy of history, which, in his opinion, is directly related to the misconceptions about the dominance of universal laws of the historical progress. According to the researcher, Marxism, which "grew from the criticism of alienated 'bourgeois' sociality, itself historically proved unable to overcome its social consequences" (*Habermas, 2001: 92*).

Habermas criticised the total predictability of social development inherent in Marxism, the dependence of the key aspects of historical development of the social sphere, civil society not on the effects of economic factors, but rather on class and political factors. Important for Habermas in this context is the principled denial of Marx's famous statement that "the history of all societies that have existed until now is the history of class struggle." (*Marx, Engels, 1974: 410*).

The Marxist priority of the class identity and marginalization of the role of other identities is perceived in Habermas' discourse as a factor of social and historical reductionism. Within the framework of this approach, the real cultural and historical experience, which has been preserved for many years in the memory of various social groups, remains out of sight. A similar critical view of Marxism is held by Benedict Anderson, who noted that "national experience has turned out to be an inconvenient anomaly for the Marxist theory." (*Anderson, 1983: 13*).

In practical terms, Marxism legitimized an alternative occupational model of memory in Central European countries, which avoided a real public dialogue with national communities, silenced the fundamental conflict lines of national histories, and provided a theoretical basis for the ide-

ological strengthening of the communist regimes. Its incompatibility with the memory of Central European societies was especially noticeable in the context of the interpretation of the events of World War II, the Soviet invasion in 1968, and the role of dissident movements in the 1960s and 1970s. Jaroslav Killas, in particular, noted that for "Marxist-minded intellectuals, class and political interests weighed much more than the specific interests of individual and collective actors." (*Killas, 2013: 308*).

The Marxist discursive framework used the cultural and historical memory of society as a tool of political propaganda and social exclusion of the "memory" of those individuals and communities who opposed communist regimes.

Contrary to the Marxist interpretation, Habermas saw historical memory inseparable from historical and factual truth, an important element combining the experience of the past with the individual and collective identity of a person and society. For the researcher, memory is not a function of rigid historical laws or simple mechanical reproduction of the dominant views of the ruling class but rather an integral component of public discussion, a phenomenon associated with the experience of various, above all, politically discriminated social groups. Interesting in this context are Habermas' rhetorical questions, which were addressed not only to the academic community but to the European society as a whole.

We may ask if Germans, Poles and Russians really paid attention to the memory of Jewish victims? Was the historical specificity of others taken into account? How was it represented? Did the Poles understand the German historical perspective, and did the Germans understand the Polish and Russian views? Did the Poles, Germans and Russians recognize the views of their victims, the victims of Nazism (in West and East Germany) and communism (Poland, Russia, East Germany)? (*Habermas, 1989: 38*).

Substantiation of Marxism within Habermas' discourse should be considered from the methodological standpoint of the social critical theory. It involves not only elimination of all forms of alienation and social unfreedom, but also an attempt of a value-based and socio-historical denial of the model of the past that is organically linked to the occupational and totalitarian social order, the spread of a monological identity alien to European communities.

Noting the influence of the German philosopher of the 20th century on social critical theory, Leszek Kołakowski emphasizes the full responsibility of Marxism for the historical experiments of the communist regimes in the 20th century. The Polish researcher emphasizes that

Marxism was both a theoretical reflection and a political subject of social changes that were the product of the French and industrial revolutions. It was the theory of a particular revolutionary movement... which arose as a result of the impact of industrialism on the deeply stratified European society of the 20th century, and became a transitional link between the historical events of the French and Russian revolutions. (*Kołakowski, 1978: 130*).

Habermas and Central European intellectuals shared the conviction that Marxism had not overcome alienation, but exacerbated social and historical conflicts instead. This idea of the dominance of "alienated sociality" in capitalist and communist societies is directly linked to the criticism of the priority of class identities, which means the loss of the personal authentic essence, connection of a person with his authentic "ego."

A significant shift in the philosopher's attitude to Marxism did not go unnoticed by Western analysts. The growing criticism of Marx's ideas by Habermas and the circle of

Polish intellectuals close to him (Kołakowski, Walicki, Kuroń) met a mixed reaction of the intellectual community, in particular, of Edward Thompson. In the early 1970s, the researcher published an open letter to philosophers who had previously shared Marxist ideas. In the letter, he reproached them for their renouncement of the "revisionist Marxism" of their youth (*Quote: Tony Judt, 2024: 121–122*).

Responding to this criticism, Habermas acknowledged that Marxism was the most influential response to the many ills of capitalist societies and liberalism, but its role in the existing reality requires a significant rethinking. Emphasizing Marxism's responsibility for failed social experiments, the philosopher admits that

Marxism becomes difficult to distinguish from communism, which ultimately became not only its most important but also its only practical consequence... The everyday use of Marxist categories for the vulgar purpose of suppressing individual and collective freedom over time diminishes the charm of the doctrine itself. (*Łuczewski et al., 2013: 336*).

Despite the common critical assessment of the consequences of the ideas of the classic of the "world proletariat", there had been certain differences in the attitude to Marxism between Habermas and Central European intellectuals since the 1960s. In particular, Adam Michnik in the 60s cautiously criticized Habermas, because the latter, largely adhering to the Marxist vision, did not provide a consistent theoretical analysis of Stalinism, did not use the historical experience of Eastern Europe, the efforts of the societies of these countries to defend their identity within the framework of the "social critical theory" (*Michnik, 1990: 248–249*).

Such criticism of one of the leading German social theorists was not unique. Similar thoughts were expressed by one of the leading philosophers of the second half of the 20th century, M. Dżiński, whose views were close to those of the former dissident camp (*Habermas, Michnik, 1994:11*).

Nevertheless, the events of the 1970s and 1980s forced the German philosopher, who in his youth had some sympathy for Marxism, to eventually not only significantly shift the social emphases of Marxism, but also to define a clear theoretical demarcation line with Marxism. Habermas somewhat distances himself from the vision of the Polish intellectuals, which was widespread at that time – they noted the complete exhaustion of the Marxist project of the philosophy of history, primarily its futurological vision. Instead, the German social critic emphasized the selective possibilities of the Marxist analysis, which, under certain conditions, could be used within the framework of the social critical theory.

By contrast to Polish philosophers who, starting from the 1960s, consistently denied the theory and practice of Marxism, Habermas made emphasis on the exhaustion of primarily the Leninist and Stalinist interpretations of the Marxist philosophy of history with their unjustified priority of 1) "a holistic concept of social development, 2) excessive attention to the conflicts of social actors, 3) the lack of functional arguments in Marx regarding his criticism of constitutional democracy, 4) the essentialization of history." (*Habermas, 1990*).

The German philosopher saw this latter trend as particularly dangerous for modern democratic processes in Europe. The scholar considered Marxist claims to the all-encompassing social unity, total predictability of the future within the universal logic of historical progress, to be unfounded.

Theoretical approaches to historical memory: Habermas versus traditionalism and postmodernism.

No less critical was the philosopher's attitude to the historical concept associated with the traditionalist interpretation of the past, seen by Habermas as a theoretical basis justifying the Holocaust. The German researcher took rather an active part in the German and pan-European discussion of the 1980s regarding the analysis of the Nazi historical period, its consequences for humanity and influence on building the German national identity. In this context, of particular interest is the dispute of one of the leading German philosophers with the conservative historian and well-known specialist in the problems of Nazism E. Nolte, who justified the historical phenomenon of the Holocaust as "a natural reaction of the Nazis to the previous Stalinist reprisals in the Soviet Union." (*Nolte, 1982*).

For Habermas, such argumentation was unacceptable. According to the scholar, the Holocaust is a unique phenomenon, and any attempts to justify it or to mitigate the responsibility of the Germans for the crimes committed are unreasonable.

Habermas opposed the theoretical stand of German historians who, "mourning the loss of history," were actually trying, in the researcher's opinion, to instill national, and moreover nationalist, myths in society. He linked such historical interpretation of the past with traditional forms of the national identity. In accordance with the researcher's vision, "such forms should be subject to discussion in the public sphere and consequently replaced with a "post-conventional identity based on constitutional patriotism that justifies rational, universal principles of morality and democracy." (*Port, 2017*).

The German philosopher saw the contrary stand as an attempt by certain academic and political circles to remove from public discussion the issues of the historical guilt of the German society, the historical role of Germany in the 20th century, the memory of sufferings of the Jewish people and the consequences of this shameful phenomenon. In course of this discussion, one of the founders of the social critical theory naturally found himself on the theoretical battlefield of a fierce ideological struggle between the two dominant approaches to history in Europe: the traditional conservative, and the liberal.

The former approach substantiates the importance of the historical memory in the process of social cohesion, moral and normative unity of society, formation of the memory policy, which assumes the priority of historical heritage in the process of socio-political changes. Its basic unifying constant is the common past of society, the cultural tradition. Important here is not only the primary traditional role of reciprocity, solidarity, moral responsibility, but also the modern principles that determine the trend towards the development of "national projects". This is about the influence of the historical memory on the formation of the life-world of representatives of different social groups, their awareness of their common ethnic experience, readiness for future project modelling on the principles of the priority of society over an individual.

Arguing with the supporters of this approach, Habermas alternatively offers a liberal model of identity that is close to it, resting on the principles of "bloodless" constitutional patriotism. This model, in his opinion, requires motivational power that is found not in everyday politics but in historical and common European memories. For the philosopher, it is important to critically reflect on the practical consequences of historical traditions, attaching to the Hol-

oacast a unique role in the formation of a common European identity, personification of the memory of the outcasts.

The pathos of J. Habermas' criticism primarily focuses on the dominance in public life of German conservatives, who, in his opinion, were trying to adjust everything connected with the consequences of the past. All cultural phenomena, the philosopher notes, which "do not fit into the picture created by conservatives, are personalized and moralized..., that is, the blame for them is placed on left-wing intellectuals." (*Habermas, 1989:78*).

J. Habermas considers the accusations of conservatives counterproductive, because, in his opinion, they gather all the propaganda clichés that have existed since the Dreyfus trial (1894–1906), when conservative circles viewed his defenders as intellectuals.

Despite his criticism of the "pan-historicism" of traditionalist German historians, one of the leading German philosophers considers the historical past to be central in shaping modern social and political processes. At the same time, he insists on the need to adhere to the historical truth, when substantiating history, which is directly connected to the German people's feeling of the guilt for the consequences of World War II. For him, the national identity must be consistent with historical facts, which indicate the need to atone for the guilt of the German people.

The researcher denies the priority of such basic elements of memory formation as tradition and myth, criticizes the traditional principles of social development as highly dangerous in the conditions of real conflicts. According to Habermas, the traditional approach is incompatible with preservation of the true memory and only contributes to its disappearance. In these conditions of empirical history, "tradition turned out to be powerless before the horrors of the Nazi crimes".

Habermas also criticized the social postmodern trends of the recent decades, the changes that have taken place within the intellectual discourse. The famous French researcher Olivier Mongin, commenting on the changes taking place in European societies, rightfully notes the postmodern trend towards the marginalization of the historical memory. The researcher claims that

the shift towards reflections on historical heritage ... indicates a deep erosion of the historical consciousness, which no longer allows us to pull the present to the future. It also indicates the weakening of historical experience. From this perspective, there is a lack of the sense of completeness of history: as if the historical feeling in France can exist only within national borders, and the dissolution of the latter inevitably leads to its decline. (*Mongin, 2011: 65*).

Belarusian researcher Furs, substantiating the devaluation of historical experience shaping the identity of a modern person, notes that in the present postmodern conditions, tradition and historical heritage simply become part of the "archive of the past" (*Furs, 2002*). Under this approach, historical memory is no longer considered a powerful integrating factor of development, a driver of social transformation of society on democratic principles.

Importantly, Habermas critically analysed the ideas of Jean-François Lyotard, set out, in particular, in his work "The Conditions of Postmodernity". The French philosopher focuses on the process of legitimization of "small narratives", faith in the latest technological communications, which are considered inseparable from reflections on the Holocaust – representations of the genocide of the Jews. The postmodern vision of the French philosopher focuses on the danger for modern European democracy stemming

from "hot memory", the tragic consequences of the "struggle for memory", which, according to the philosopher, force us to abandon "the complex search for the meaning", large historical and speculative narratives, taking into account only small narratives of communication (*Lyotard, 1979*).

Lyotard, fully in the spirit of the postmodern project, gives preference to the present over the historical past, which, in his opinion, is a factor that encourages us to experience great upheavals once and again. In this context, the question of the tragic nature of history becomes an important "starting point" for Habermas' opposition to the French researcher. For the German philosopher, focusing on the problem of the historical is rather an important and natural task, which, if properly substantiated in the public sphere, can in no way lead to a tragedy. The true history, according to one of the founders of communicative philosophy, gives us the opportunity to use its consequences for building the future European identity.

In contrast to Lyotard's postmodern vision, Habermas sees historical memory as a problem that is part of the unfinished project of modernity. The researcher proposes a theory of communicative action as an alternative to the postmodern vision of the author of "The Conditions of Postmodernity" (*Furs, 2000*).

The German philosopher advocates the priority of the modern narrative of rationality, which, according to him, should bridge the gap between the past and the future, subordinate emotional interpretations of the past to rational, balanced assessments, and make memory dependent on rational and impartial communication about the past. According to Habermas, "the goal of rationality is to facilitate the processes of clarifying the entire set of historical circumstances on the basis of factual reality." (*Maślanka, 2011: 98*).

Strengthening rationality is facilitated by the lifeworld, which played a fundamental role in the revival of Central Europe

The life world as a factor of reproduction of the Central European identity

It is commonly accepted that the revolutionary events of 1989 in Central Europe became part of the pan-European process of liberal social transformations that began in the 1960s. Their main idea presumed not only the consistent de-legitimization of the communist social order, implementation of the maxim of individual rights and freedoms (human rights), which was organic for Western Europe, into public life, but above all, the revival of the "life world", contrary to the "system", in the context of the unfolding prerequisites of the velvet revolutions. This idea of Habermas about the oppositional functionality of revival of the "life world" became an important factor of intellectual and civil resistance to the old communist regime.

By the turn of the 1970s and 1980s, the old, ideologically bound model of memory that existed in the countries of the former Soviet bloc was doomed in the eyes of various social groups. It was seen by the public opinion as a "smokescreen incompatible with the identity of Central European communities."

In accordance with the mainstream European trend, in Central European countries intellectuals and pragmatic representatives of the "system" initiated a strategy of gradual elimination of the old historical framework, inherent in the Warsaw Bloc countries. This happened, not least, thanks to the introduction into public life of the concept of "humanitarian intervention", which became a marker of the inevitability of liberal changes, denial of the consequences of the totalitarian system by intellectuals on the basis of

values (Zafeski, 2012: 223). We should mention here the influence of the opposition network of intellectuals associated with Habermas – Jiří Pelikán from Czechoslovakia, Leszek Kolakowski from Poland, and Iván Szelényi from Hungary – on the processes of social changes in the countries of Central Europe.

Their consistent humanist stand regarding restoration of the historical truth in totalitarian societies became an important intellectual basis for the elimination of the communist regime. Ideologically, the most consistent apologists of liberal transformations came from the dissident community: they were prominent representatives of the Central European resistance movement Adam Michnik and Václav Havel.

The dissident essays “The New Evolutionism” and “The Power of the Powerless”, “The Tragedy of Central Europe” appeared powerful socio-cultural and historical announciators of the velvet revolutions, focusing on the importance of the influence of identity on the formation of a common European memory. These works were especially important for the elimination of the totalitarian system, which was based on “distorted moral and normative principles and consistently bled white the public sphere with “ritualized ideological lies” (Havel, 1978: URL). In this context, important consequences of the implementation of Habermas’ historical concept included the successful struggle of Central European communities for their freedom, de-colonization of the life world, which was associated with the revival of private and public life. This intellectual and practical experience is extremely valuable for Ukraine at one of the most difficult moments in its history.

Conclusion

Analysis of Habermas’ historical discourse allows us to draw some conclusions.

1. Habermas’ historical concept falls within the common framework of social and historical research. It is conceptually aimed at criticizing the dominant philosophical-historical visions of Marxism and traditionalism, which, in the researcher’s opinion, are responsible for the manifestations of communism and fascism. Instead, a comprehensive liberal discourse is proposed that assumes the existence of a new constitutional democratic identity and should provide historical memory for societies that were oppressed in the 20th century.

2. The interdependence of the concepts of identity and historical memory, their subsidiarity in the context of European and Central European experience is substantiated. The central concept here is the Holocaust as a symbol of national guilt and the basis for the restoration of a common European identity.

3. Habermas’ historical discourse directly deals with the problems of Central and Eastern Europe. It gave an impetus to de-legitimization of the occupational models of memory, strengthening of the intellectual movement in the countries of the former Soviet Bloc, and became a prerequisite for the Velvet Revolutions of 1989.

4. The survey actualizes the ideological contradictions between Habermas’ modern view of history and the post-modern vision. It explains the impact of this controversy on the present-day social and historical processes, the importance of the historical factor in the process of social change.

REFERENCES

- Anderson, B. (1983). *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. London, Verso and NLB.
- Bokzański, Zbigniew (2015). *Tożsamości zbiorowe*. Warszawa, PWN.
- Furs, V. (2000). *Filosofia nezavershennogo moderna iurgena Khabermasa* [Jürgen Habermas’s philosophy of unfinished modernity]. European Humanities University. (In Russian)
- Furs, V. (2002). *Kontury sovremennoi kriticheskoi teorii* [Contours of contemporary critical theory]. European Humanities University. (In Russian)
- Gadamer, H.-G. (2007). Put’ k povorotu [The way to the turn]. In: Puti Khaideggera: issledovaniya pozdnego tvorchestva [Heidegger’s ways: Studies of his later work] (2nd ed., pp. xx–xx). Minsk, Propilei (In Russian).
- Habermas, J. (2001). *The postnational constellation: Political essays* (M. Pensky, Ed. & Trans.). The MIT Press.
- Habermas, J. and Michnik, A. (1994). Overcoming the Past. *New Left Review*, 203, 3-16. Retrieved from <https://newleftreview.org/issues/i203/articles/jurgen-habermas-adam-michnik-overcoming-the-past>
- Habermas, Jürgen. (1989). *The New Conservatism: Cultural Criticism and the Historians’ Debate*. Cambridge M.A: The MIT Press.
- Habermas, Jürgen. (1990). What Does Socialism Mean Today? The Rectifying Revolution and the Need for New Thinking on the Left. *New Left Review*, 1/183, 3–21. Retrieved from <https://newleftreview.org/issues/i183/articles/jurgen-habermas-what-does-socialism-mean-today-the-rectifying-revolution-and-the-need-for-new-thinking-on-the-left.pdf>
- Havel, Vaclav (1978). *The Power of the Powerless*. Retrieved from <https://www.nonviolent-conflict.org/wp-content/uploads/1979/01/the-power-of-the-powerless.pdf>
- Henderson, W. O. (1983). *Friedrich List: Economist and Visionary 1789-1846*. London, Frank Cass.
- Judt, T. (2024). *Pereosmyslennia zabutoho XX stolittia* [Reappraisals: Reflections on the Forgotten Twentieth Century]. Nash Format.
- Killas, Ja. (2013). Is there any Sociological tradition of Social Memory Research? The Polish and the Czech Case. *Polish Sociological review*. 3(183), 297-316.
- Kolakowski, L. (1978). *Main Currents of Marxism. Its Rise, Growth, and Dissolution. Vol. II The Golden Age*. Oxford, Oxford University Press. <https://ru.scribd.com/document/106615173/Kolakowski-Main-Currents-of-Marxism-Vol-II>
- Krasnodębski, Z. (2005). *Demokracja peryferii* [Democracy of the peripheries] (2nd ed.). Słowo/Obraz Terytoria.
- Łuczewski, M., Maślanka, T., Bednarz-Łuczewaka, P. (2013). Bringing Habermas to Memory Studies. *Polish Sociological Review*, 3 (183), 335-350. <https://polish-sociological-review.eu/pdf-125612-53634?file-name=Bringing%20Habermas%20to.pdf>
- Lyotard, J.-F. (1979). *The postmodern condition: A report on knowledge*. Manchester University Press.
- Marx, K., & Engels, F. (1974). *Manifest Komunistychnoi partii* [Manifesto of the Communist Party]. In *Tvory* [Works] (Vol. 4, pp. 410–440). Polityvdav Ukrainy.
- Masaryk, Thomas G. (1972). *The New Europe (The Slav Standpoint)*. Lewisburg, Buskneel University Press.
- Maślanka, T. (2011). *Racjonalność i komunikacja: Filozoficzne podstawy teorii społecznej Jürgena Habermasa* [Rationality and communication: The philosophical

- foundations of Jürgen Habermas's social theory]. Wydawnictwa Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego.
- Michnik, A. (1990). The Moral and Spiritual Origins of Solidarity. In: Without force or Lies. Voices from Revolution of Central Europe 1989-1990. Essays, Speeches and Eyewitness Accounts. San Francisco, 248-249.
- Mongin, O. (2011). *Vyklyky skeptyzmu* [Challenges of skepticism]. Dukh i Litera. (In Ukrainian)
- Nietzsche, F. (2013). Pro koryst' i shkidlyvist' istorii dlia zhyttia [On the use and abuse of history for life]. In *O pol'ze i vrede istorii* [On the use and abuse of history] (pp. 158–230). Kharkiv, Folio (In Russian).
- Nolte, Ernst (1982). *Marxism, Fascism, Cold War*. Van Gorcum Publishing.
- Port, Andrew. (2017). Holocaust Scholarship and Politics in the Public Sphere: Reexamining the Causes, Consequences, and Controversy of the Historikerstreit and the Goldhagen Debate. *Central European History*. 50. 375-403. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0008938917000826>
- Schöpfung, G. (1990). The Political Traditions of Eastern Europe. *Daedalus*, 119(1), 55–90. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20025284>
- Zaleski Paweł Stefan (2012). *Neliberalizm i społeczeństwo obywatelskie*. Toruń. Retrieved from <https://monografie.fnp.org.pl/monografie/images/Files/yR-gZc14eM9B6CnstQDNqTOzdWALuFbU.pdf>

Від національної провини до конституційного патріотизму: рефлексії Юргена Габермаса про повоєнну суспільну ідентичність

Ярослав Пасько (ORCID 0000-0002-2806-7341)

Київський столичний університет імені Бориса Грінченка (Україна)

Ця стаття присвячена концептуалізації дискурсу Ю. Габермаса про історичну пам'ять у контексті трансформації повоєнної суспільної ідентичності. Аналіз охоплює його критику марксизму як інструменту «есенціалізації історії» та соціального редукціонізму, що девальгує ідентичності. Обґрунтовано, що Габермас бере участь в активній публічній комунікації, спрямованій проти традиційного бачення соціального інституту історії, зокрема проти німецьких істориків, які ставлять під сумнів унікальність Голокосту та провини німецької спільноти. Автор зосереджується на тому, як Габермас, апелюючи до колективного розуму та раціональності, відкидає відтворення колективної пам'яті, пов'язаної виключно з конвенційною німецькою ідентичністю. Аналіз також охоплює теоретичне розмежування Габермаса з постмодерним дискурсом Ф. Ліотара щодо ролі історичного чинника в умовах деліберативної демократії. Габермас підкреслював, що ефективна публічна комунікація та намір сформувати спільну європейську конституційну ідентичність були тими чинниками, які допомогли подолати наслідки минулого та об'єднали суспільства проти насильства нацизму та комунізму.

Ключові слова: комунікація, соціальний інститут історії, соціальна трансформація, історична пам'ять, діалог, деліберативна демократія, ідентичність.

Received (Надійшла до редакції): 18.04.2025,

Accepted (Прийнята до друку): 20.06.2025

Available online (Опубліковано онлайн) 30.06.2025