

UDC 141.3:316.7:32.019.51A. O. KHODZHAIAN^{1*}, N. V. SAVCHUK^{2*}^{1*}Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv (Kyiv, Ukraine), e-mail alinaalex@knu.ua, ORCID 0000-0002-3015-1016^{2*}Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv (Kyiv, Ukraine), e-mail natalka@knu.ua, ORCID 0000-0002-5794-1333**Ukrainian Identity in the Context of Memory and Forgetting:
Philosophical and Anthropological Analysis**

Purpose. The main content of the presented study is a philosophical and anthropological analysis of the problem of memory in the context of the phenomenon of forgetting, the essential factors of establishing a new image of the Ukrainian person, his/her national memory and identity. This circumstance, in the situation of Ukraine's defence against the Russian aggressor, upholding of freedoms and European values, poses the following tasks: 1) to undertake a consistent review of the conceptual content of the concepts of "memory" and "forgetting" and to identify their philosophical and anthropological content; 2) to analyse the phenomenon of national memory and show its significance for the struggle of the Ukrainian people for the European choice; 3) to study the main parameters of the process of forming a system of new values in the context of the phenomenon of forgetting in the discourse of philosophical anthropology. **Theoretical basis.** The complex and dynamic process of forming Ukrainian identity in the contexts of national memory and forgetting brings the system of life values to a new level of theoretical and methodological understanding. The philosophical and anthropological dimension of the values of a modern Ukrainian person allows us to engage the methodological discourses of memory studies, which are a way for people to construct their historical past in the perspective of creating a new future in the integrity of axiological, moral and existential content. The relevance of this problem is due to the crisis of worldview and cultural meanings of human existence in the context of war, the processes of which have a powerful impact on all aspects of social, political, and spiritual life, which ultimately leads to the need for a new type of communication, thinking, and behaviour. **Originality.** The study substantiates that the phenomenon of forgetting in the context of the formation of a new national memory largely determines the strategy of asserting Ukrainian identity in the context of modern civilizational challenges faced by Ukraine as a result of military aggression against its freedom and territorial integrity. This situation opens up new prospects for the formation of a civilizational system of values in interaction with a qualitatively different image of the Ukrainian person. **Conclusions.** Today, the Ukrainian state is facing an existential threat, which raises the problem of creating a new Ukrainian person whose worldview and system of values correspond to the image of a European person. Despite the serious problems that Ukraine has faced as a result of geopolitical contradictions on a global scale, philosophical and anthropological analysis has shown that the strategy of forming a new Ukrainian identity in the context of historical memory, which contains an element of forgetting, determines the process of creating a mentality that is consistent with the national strategy of entering Western civilisation. It is within the parameters of such an analysis that a new memory adequate to the needs of our time is formed.

Keywords: memory; forgetting; nation; identity; values; culture; human; mentality

Introduction

The history of civilisation, its achievements, is the foundation that forms our cultural memory. It is an attribute of social, political, and intellectual life. Memory can be imagined as a large illustrated book that reproduces the facts of a past life that determined successes and failures, became fateful or led to losses. Each individual, as a rule, refers to his or her memory, although over time, the situations experienced are interpreted differently, and some of them are preferred to be forgotten. At the same time, it should be noted that the categories of "memory" and "forgetting" are part of social, philosophical, cultural, and scientific knowledge of man. The phenomenon of "memory" and "forgetting" is analysed by the prominent French philosopher Paul Ricoeur from the standpoint of phenomenological hermeneutics. The first part of P. Ricoeur's (2003) work "Memory. History. Oblivion" is devoted to the phenomenological

TOPICAL ISSUES OF PHILOSOPHICAL ANTHROPOLOGY

analysis of memory, the second – to the epistemology of history, and the third – to the hermeneutics of oblivion, one of the main symbols of our attitude to time. Memory as a way of constructing the past by people is studied in the discourses of memory studies, which testify to the popularity of this new academic subject. In the research field of memory studies, the phenomena of "memory" and "forgetting" in various aspects are central, becoming a significant addition to philosophical studies of the main concepts of a new cultural history that provides answers to the demands of our time (Klein, 2000).

In philosophical and anthropological works related to the problems of human consciousness and thinking, a number of concepts and characteristics have been developed that represent research areas of memory, which, in addition to social, collective, cultural, and historical memory, include public memory and postmemory. They also identify the main actors, institutions and debates that have shaped the field, as well as the institutional structures that support it (Sierp, 2021). However, all of them do not provide a complete description of the phenomenon of "memory" due to their adherence to established methodology and theoretical principles. We believe that it is expedient to study the problem of "national memory" in the context of "oblivion", which has gained particular importance in the problem posed: collective memory or the right to be forgotten? (Stainforth, 2022). This will allow us to focus on the process of forming a European identity in a modern Ukrainian person in the situation of Ukraine's full-scale war against Russian aggression.

Memory is a part of our everyday life: we live with it, but it does not appear as a mere part of our body or mind. In the former case, memory is studied by neuroscience and neurobiology, in the latter by cognitive psychology. However, by focusing memory on the "head", we will quickly discover that we are ignoring such important aspects of it as the senses. We should not forget about the external triggers that can "trigger memories as images and narratives in your mind that you re-experience, visualise, narrativise and feel" (Garde-Hansen, 2011, pp. 14-15).

At the same time, the very concept of "memory" is historical. For example, some Renaissance thinkers understood memory as a kind of "magic key" that allows you to enter the hidden spheres of an individual's physical and spiritual life. Today, no one doubts that memory is a proper object of study for philosophers, historians, sociologists, and anthropologists. The number of concepts related to memory in the natural sciences and humanities is in the hundreds. Canadian memory researcher and experimental psychologist Endel Tulving (2007) has compiled a list of 256 types of memory. It is proposed to add to them the development of (conscious, commemorative, official) collective memory, the hidden world of "implicit collective memory" (Erll, 2022).

Jan Assmann, author of one of the most influential studies on the importance of cultural memory for humans, called the absence of living witnesses to the most serious crimes and tragedies in the history of civilisation the decisive reason for the popularity of memory studies. The moral essence of the widespread attention to the problem of memory and memories is caused by the need to preserve the memories of witnesses and create "ways to reproduce them in culture" (Assmann, 2010, pp. 111-112). One of the social reasons for the "memorial boom" at the end of the twentieth century is the revival of suppressed nationalist movements on both sides of the Iron Curtain, which led to the revival of collective memory and the slowdown of European integration (Verovšek, 2024).

In all the large number of philosophical, historical and cultural works on the problem of "memory", this concept is revealed in different ways. However, some common features can be

seen. First and foremost, memory is a method for individuals to create events of their own past through the factor of forgetting. Although some researchers believe that forgetting should be studied in the context of the memory of those who witnessed certain events. Others believe that forgetting should be used to study the facts of the past and its reproduction through the use of media, such as memoirs, newsreels, monuments, commemorative gatherings, memorials and museums, as well as the memory of trauma (Kaplan, 2023).

This raises the question: can "memory" and "forgetting" be not only a way of constructing the past, but also the future in the context of forming a new national memory, as a factor in asserting the European identity of the Ukrainian person in the system of modern civilizational values?

Purpose

The review of the problem identified the philosophical and anthropological analysis of the problem of historical memory in the context of the phenomenon of forgetting as an essential factor in the affirmation of national memory and the corresponding identity, which leads to the creation of a new image of the Ukrainian person. This circumstance, in the situation of a large-scale war between Ukraine and the Russian aggressor for freedom and European values, poses the following tasks: 1) to undertake a consistent review of the conceptual content of the concepts of "memory" and "forgetting" and to identify their philosophical and anthropological content; 2) to analyse the phenomenon of national memory and show its significance for the struggle of the Ukrainian people for the European choice; 3) to study the main parameters of the process of forming a system of new values in the context of the phenomenon of forgetting in the discourse of philosophical anthropology.

Statement of basic materials

The analysis of the concept of historical memory brings to the fore the problem of "national memory", the formation of which is of particular relevance in the situation of Ukraine's struggle for freedom and territorial integrity against the Russian occupier. The origins of the study of this problem should be sought in the works of Western and Ukrainian intellectuals devoted to the study of the theory of the nation, national identity, nationalism and its types. It should be noted that the role of philosophy in the analysis of these problems is significant, if not decisive. Suffice it to recall Johann G. Fichte's "The Addresses to the German Nation", which begins the study of this vast and complex topic. After all, the problem of the "nation" is actively used by politicians to support their ideological positions. However, a full knowledge of the essence of the nation and its structural component – national memory – can be provided by a philosophical and anthropological analysis, from the standpoint of which it is possible to clarify their significance for a person. A large number of works have been written on this topic, but it is advisable to start with the lecture "What is a Nation" by the French thinker Ernest Renan, delivered in Paris in 1882 at the Sorbonne University. This speech has not lost its significance for those works that explore memory, forgetting, and their history as important adequate ways of forming national memory and national identity. It is important to bear in mind that the French scholar's lecture had a significant impact on researchers of the theory of the nation in the twentieth century, especially in its second half (Ilin, 2023, p. 52).

It is worth noting that during this period, the ideas of the Italian writer and politician Giuseppe Mazzini were popular, who defined the meaning of nationality for all liberals in Europe. The main characteristics of nationality are common ideas, common principles and

TOPICAL ISSUES OF PHILOSOPHICAL ANTHROPOLOGY

common goals. It is necessary that the ideas of nationality that arise within a country, as "a necessary component in the order of universal destiny, must retain their originality even as they enter harmoniously into mankind's general progress" (Turner, 2014, p. 168). A nation is an association of those who have been united by language, geographical conditions or an assigned historical role. These people share a common goal, are guided by the same principles, and work together to fulfil the task set by history.

The arguments of E. Renan (2000), a consistent republican, were aimed at justifying the right of the nation, whose wish is "the sole legitimate criterion, the one to which one must always return" (p. 119). Based on this position, Renan criticises the German romantic and philosophical discourse, represented in particular in the works of Fichte and Herder. Thus, for Gottlieb Fichte (2017), the nation is an ethnographic community of people who have lived in the same community since ancient times, constantly reproducing themselves in the processes of economic and cultural activity (pp. 49-50). The latter determines the national spirit and mentality of the people. Contrary to the understanding of the nation as a natural and ancient phenomenon, Renan argues that the nation is a historical and rather late phenomenon. From his point of view, a nation is not defined by race, language, religion, or cohabitation. "Aside from anthropological traits there is reason, justice, truth, and beauty, things that are the same for all" (Renan, 2000, p. 115).

E. Renan's position is in line with the statement of G. Mazzini, for whom the nation, nationality, is "the union of those efforts of mankind that God has assigned to people".

This mission is the task which a people must perform to the end that the Divine Idea shall be realised in this world; it is the work which gives a people its rights as a member of Mankind; it is the baptismal rite which endows a people with its own character and its rank in the brotherhood of nations... Nationality depends for its very existence upon its sacredness within and beyond its borders. (Turner, 2014, p. 168)

In Renan's understanding,

The nation, like the individual, is the outcome of a long past of efforts, sacrifices, and devotions. Of all cults, that of the ancestors is the most legitimate: our ancestors have made us what we are. A heroic past with great men and glory (I mean true glory) is the social capital upon which the national idea rests. These are the essential conditions of being a people: having common glories in the past and a will to continue them in the

present; having made great things together and wishing to make them again. (Renan, 2000, p. 118)

The existence of a people, like that of an individual, is to constantly affirm life.

One of the main factors in the creation of a nation is "forgotten history", or forgetting. Indeed, the development of historical research is often dangerous for nationality. Indeed, historical research reveals

Deeds of violence which took place at the origin of all political formations, even of those whose consequences have been altogether beneficial. Unity is always effected by means of brutality; the union of northern France with the Midi was the result of massacres and terror lasting for the best part of a century. (Renan, 2000, p. 110)

But the creation of national memory makes us forget about violence, suffering, and fratricidal wars. "The essence of a nation is that all individuals have many things in common; and also that they have forgotten many things..." (Renan, 2000, p. 110). In this respect, the French must forget both the Catholic war against the Huguenots and the fratricidal confrontation in the south of France in the thirteenth century.

The author of the work *Communicative and Cultural Memory* J. Assmann (2010), who considered E. Renan one of the first theorists of national memory, noted a number of the French thinker's main points: emphasis on the role of reference to the past as the most important principle for the unity of the nation; he stressed that tragedies, sadness and patience unite more than joys and achievements; he noted the decisive role of forgetting in the formation of national memory; he clearly outlined the differences between scientific analysis and memory creation. These provisions should be used to study both the problem of memory and the problem of forgetting as important components of national memory.

These provisions are also essential not only for the analysis of memory, but also for the study of the concept of nation. At the same time, it is important to take into account that Renan's lecture "What is a Nation?", delivered at the Sorbonne University, was not only his scientific position, but also a fundamental philosophical prediction.

Through their various and often opposed powers, nations participate in the common work of civilization... which, after all, is the highest ideal reality that we are capable of attaining. The nations are not something eternal. They had their beginnings and they will end. A European confederation will very probably replace them. But such is not the law of the

century in which we are living. At the present time, the existence of nations is a good thing, a necessity even. Their existence is the guarantee of liberty, which would be lost if the world had only one law and only one master. (Renan, 2000, p. 119)

An example of a creative analysis of Renan's lectures is the well-known book *Imagined Communities*, written by the American historian and political scientist Benedict Anderson in the context of the analysis of the nation from the standpoint of constructivism. B. Anderson's thoughts on the significance of memory and forgetting in the process of nation formation testify to his vision of a deep anthropological value in it that has emerged as a result of historical development over the previous two hundred years.

In an anthropological spirit, then, I propose the following definition of the nation: it is an imagined political community – and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign. It is imagined because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion. (Anderson, 2000, p. 568)

However, as Anderson emphasises, over the previous two centuries, it was primarily the sense of belonging to a "community" that led millions of people not only to kill their own kind, but also to die in the name of these imagined phenomena.

Part of the difficulty is that one tends unconsciously to hypostasize the existence of Nationalism-with-a-big-N (rather as one might Age-with-a-capital-A) and then to classify 'it' as an ideology... It would, I think, make things easier if one treated it as if it belonged with 'kinship' and 'religion', rather than with 'liberalism' or 'fascism'. (Anderson, 2000, p. 567)

Based on this, it should be noted that the memory of every nation, as well as of an individual, is rooted in cultural traditions. Victories, military glory, triumph and everything else that can instil in citizens, especially in the younger generation, pride in their ancestors, starting with

TOPICAL ISSUES OF PHILOSOPHICAL ANTHROPOLOGY

Ancient Greece, is an important component of building a spirit of patriotism. And it includes national memory, in unity with the phenomenon of national consciousness. Depending on the level of their education and history, each person can remember certain events that took place 100, 200, and 500 years ago, drawing appropriate conclusions for themselves. They form the basis of the perception of oneself as part of a national community that has a history of its own. Its defence, as well as the defence of oneself, depending on the time, religious, cultural, political and economic situation, gives rise to the tragedy of fratricidal (civil) wars, which in the new historical conditions, the situation of a new value attitude to a person, is better to forget.

In this context, Anderson sees Renan's lecture at the Sorbonne as a technology for the future formation of national (nationalist) ideologies. It is no secret that every state seeks to find such examples and heroes in its history that could become a starting point in the formation of national memory. In particular, schools in Poland teach students not to forget about the Battle of Grunwald in 1410, which marked the beginning of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, and in Paris, as in all other French cities, many streets, squares, and boulevards are named after marshals and generals of Napoleon's Grand Army. Just as in Ukraine, they are named after heroes who fought for its freedom throughout its thousand-year history. Therefore, while demanding to "forget" everything "negative", we are also saying that we "remember" the good and great things achieved by nations. Even in a global world, every state turns to memory, including national memory, in order to form a new image of a person, but in the context of forgetting.

As a rule, each state, in its practical activities to create the kind of person it needs – a citizen – also focuses its philosophy of educational work on the memory of both heroic and tragic pages of its history. For example, in Israel, the memory of the Holocaust, committed by the Nazis during World War II with the aim of exterminating the Jewish people, is constantly maintained. However, this does not prevent Israel from maintaining economic, political, and cultural ties with Germany today, which implies forgetting or silencing this tragedy. Likewise, the Ukrainian people will never be able to forget the Holodomor of the 1930s, committed by Stalin's regime (Orjuela, 2024), for the sake of implementing the utopian idea of communism.

Today, it is hard to imagine that Ukraine will quickly forget the thousands of soldiers who died in the fight against Russian aggression. The memory of the heroes will forever remain in the history of the Ukrainian state and its people. In this context, "forgetting" appears as the antithesis of "forgetfulness" (Delich, 2004), incompatible with cultural memory. It, in turn, grows up in a situation of "enlightening" trauma, which is a type of rational response to sudden changes at the personal or social level. The response to trauma is to try to change the circumstances that led to it, because the memory of the negative experience will influence future actions. In his work *National Trauma and Collective Memory*, Arthur Neal considers traumatic, i.e. tragic events in American history (the Civil War, the Great Depression, World War II, the Vietnam War) as triggers of radical change that occurred over a relatively short period of time. In his characterisation, these traumatic, tragic events are capable of shaking the foundations of the social world of the people who experience them (Neal, 1998).

Tragic events are no less important for the formation and affirmation of national memory than memories of successes and achievements. Thus, memory and forgetting do not appear as positive or negative phenomena of cultural life. Exploring the problem of "forgetting", Paul Connerton speaks of seven types of it. Three of them he considers positive, and the rest – negative. The first is *prescriptive forgetting*, which is established to support the interests of all political forces and

TOPICAL ISSUES OF PHILOSOPHICAL ANTHROPOLOGY

parties, to stop the development of their confrontation that arose earlier. An example of this forgetting can be found in ancient Greece, when in 403 BC, after the short rule of the "thirty tyrants", it was forbidden to mention all crimes committed during this period, regardless of which side or political force a particular citizen supported.

Forgetting that is constitutive in the formation of a new identity. For the new image of a person and the corresponding identity, it is important to establish a new shared, sustained memory that is used when old narratives go into a latent state. For example, the memory of a previous religion may prevent neophytes from converting to a new confession.

The next type, *forgetting as annulment*, involves getting rid of unnecessary information, which is growing exponentially in the modern world. For example, the practices of the bureaucratic apparatus, which were established in the era of the modern state, become unnecessary in the situation of the development of new technologies.

Repressive erasure involves punishing a criminal (or political regime) by destroying evidence of its existence – monuments, documents, laws, graves, etc. For example, after the 1917 revolution in Russia, titles and the old administrative division were abolished, street names were changed, churches were destroyed, etc. In ancient Rome, the so-called "damnatio of memory" (*damnatio memorialis*) served to fulfil this task.

Forgetting as planned obsolescence is generated by the capitalist economy. It involves the replacement of old goods with new ones in order to encourage citizens to consume more prestigious goods. As a result, people fall prey to advertising, constantly strive for the new, forget the old, and at the same time forget themselves.

Forgetting as humiliated silence is an attempt not to recall those tragic events that cannot be expressed. An example of this is the silence about the defeat suffered by Japan as a result of the Second World War. But the Japanese "economic miracle" became a form of forgetting the past tragedy (Connerton, 2011, pp. 34-48).

A final form of forgetting that researchers have identified is *structural amnesia*, when a person or several people are spared the negative memory of their past by the state.

From the point of view of philosophical anthropology, it is important to take into account the changes that took place in various spheres of life in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries, which turned modern history into a part of the personal experience of millions of people. In addition, compulsory general education has turned the school history course into a tool for human socialisation, new technologies have made people virtual participants in historical and political events, and the active development of the socio-cultural infrastructure of memory encourages us to remember the collective past that should be forgotten in the interests of peaceful, tolerant coexistence. But this does not mean "forgetfulness", which is essentially a testament to the limited consciousness and analytical thinking of a person. In the process of forming national memory, forgetting not only accompanies but also determines it.

Originality

The study has substantiated the necessity of philosophical and anthropological analysis of the phenomena of "memory" and "forgetting" as ways of constructing not only the past, but also the future of all spheres of society. It is determined that historical memory in the context of forgetting is an effective factor in establishing national memory and identity adequate to modern civilizational values in the contradictions of socio-cultural reality and geopolitical challenges. In the situation of an existential threat to Ukraine posed by Russian aggression, their content in the

discourse of philosophical anthropology becomes an important social, cultural and ideological resource for the formation of a more perfect image of a human being.

Conclusions

The danger that Ukraine faces as a result of the full-scale war unleashed by Russia makes the problem of creating a new Ukrainian person whose culture of thinking is in line with the values of Western civilisation more urgent. The philosophical and anthropological analysis has shown that the strategy of forming a new Ukrainian identity in the context of historical memory includes the phenomenon of forgetting. Their interaction determines the process of creating national memory and mentality, as well as the corresponding strategies for joining the European community. Forgetting as an attribute of the memory process is an important factor in overcoming cultural traumas, the result of tragic and negative events of the past. The presented types of forgetting show its importance in strengthening socio-cultural ties and creating a new content of memory. In its space, national memory is formed in the parameters of a new value and anthropological dimension.

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A. O. ХОДЖАЯН^{1*}, Н. В. САВЧУК^{2*}

^{1*}Київський національний університет імені Тараса Шевченка (Київ, Україна), ел. пошта alinaalex@knu.ua, ORCID 0000-0002-3015-1016

^{2*}Київський національний університет імені Тараса Шевченка (Київ, Україна), ел. пошта natalka@knu.ua, ORCID 0000-0002-5794-1333

Українська ідентичність у контексті пам'яті і забуття: філософсько-антропологічний аналіз

Мета. Головний зміст представленого дослідження складає філософсько-антропологічний аналіз проблеми пам'яті в контексті феномену забуття, суттєвих факторів ствердження нового образу української людини, її національної пам'яті та ідентичності. Вказана обставина, у ситуації оборони України від російського агресора, відстоювання свобод і європейських цінностей, ставить такі завдання: 1) здійснити послідовний огляд концептуального змісту понять "пам'ять" та "забуття" і виявити їх філософсько-антропологічний зміст; 2) провести аналіз феномену національної пам'яті та показати її значення для боротьби українського народу за європейський вибір; 3) дослідити основні параметри процесу формування системи нових цінностей у контексті феномену забуття в дискурсі філософської антропології. **Теоретичний базис.** Складний і динамічний процес формування української ідентичності в контекстах національної пам'яті і забуття виводить систему цінностей життя на новий рівень теоретико-методологічного осмислення. Філософсько-антропологічний вимір цінностей сучасної української людини дозволяє залучити методологічні дискурси memory studies, які є способом конструювання людьми свого історичного минулого в перспективі створення нового майбутнього в цілісності аксіологічного, морального та екзистенційного змісту. Актуальність поставленої проблеми обумовлена кризою світоглядно-культурних смислів буття людини в умовах війни, процеси якої здійснюють потужний вплив на всі аспекти соціального, політичного, духовного життя, що зрештою призводить до необхідності нового типу спілкування, мислення й поведінки. **Наукова новизна.** Обґрунтовано, що феномен забуття в контексті формування нової національної пам'яті в значній мірі визначає стратегію ствердження української ідентичності в умовах сучасних цивілізаційних викликів, які постали перед Україною в результаті військової агресії проти її свободи і територіальної цілісності. Ця ситуація відкриває нові перспективи формування цивілізаційної системи цінностей у взаємодії з якісно іншим образом української людини. **Висновки.** Сьогодні українська держава перебуває перед екзистенційною загрозою, що актуалізує проблему творення нової української людини, світогляд і система цінностей якої відповідають образу європейської людини. Незважаючи на серйозні проблеми, які постали перед Україною в результаті геополітичних суперечностей світового масштабу, філософсько-антропологічний аналіз показав, що стратегія формування нової української ідентичності в контексті історичної пам'яті, яка містить елемент забуття, обумовлює процес творення менталітету, що відповідає національній стратегії входження в західну цивілізацію. Саме в параметрах такого аналізу здійснюється формування нової пам'яті, адекватної запитам сучасності.

Ключові слова: пам'ять; забуття; нація; ідентичність; цінності; культура; людина; менталітет

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