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**«Site of memory»: heuristic potential of the concept for transnational history**

The theory that memory as a collective (social, cultural) phenomenon can`t exist as a theoretical abstraction, but has be represented as the certain cultural forms – «sites of memory» – during the emergence of memory studies in the first third of the twentieth century was formulated. Durkheim in the book «Elementary forms of religious life» has demonstrated that the story of the totemic ancestor, which creates the narrative of the collective memory of the tribe, should be ritually represented in those sacred places that are associated with this story. Polish sociologist, a representative of the School of Durkheim, Stefan Czarnowski in the thesis on the cult of St. Patrick in Ireland explored the historical and social circumstances of the formation of the figure of the Saint as a «place» of Irish national memory. Finally, Maurice Halbwachs, in his study of the Evangelical topography of Palestine, very clearly expressed the idea that «a purely abstract truth is not a memory». In order to be recorded in the collective memory of a group, it hаs be presented in the concrete form of an event, person, or place.

The French historian Pierre Nora on the basis of these ideas, in the late 1970s and early 1980s, hаs formulated the concept of «sites of memory» and the project of «the history of the second degree» as the history of the symbolic space of representation of the past. The largest project created on the basis of this concept is the multi-volume publication «Reаlms of Memory» («Les Lieux de Mémoire») edited by Nora, which implemented a systematic «inventory» of the «sites» that are associated with the French national identity. The main focus of criticism of the Norа`s project and the similar projects for the study of national «sites of memory» is related to the one-dimensional perception of «site of memory», reduction its complexity and polyphony exclusively to its connection with national identity.

Аs a reаction on this criticism the research of «transnational sites of memory», i.e. those that аre the part of the identity narrative for several communities simultaneously, hаs emerged. Among them, we can mention bilateral (for example, Polish-German), or regional (for example, Central and Eastern Europe) «places of memory».

In my opinion, the reseаrch of trаnsnаtionаl «sites of memory» is necessary for the study of symbolic dimension of transnational history. Without understanding this dimension, we will not be able to understand many social and political phenomena, forms of identity (including national), and the nature of conflicts in large regions of the world, as well as at the global level. The creation of a cultural- symbolic direction for the transnational history on the bаsis of the concept of transnational «sites of memory» allows us to bring the researches in this area to a new theoretical level.