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THE UNDERSTANDING OF NATURE OF WAR BY TRANSCENDENTAL PHILOSOPHERS IN GERMANY AND THE USA

Statement of the problem. History of philosophy has proven to be a reliable advisor in various social, political and private crises as it holds a priceless experience of past generations, who were carefully contemplating on problems that people and society have always faced. In authors' honest opinion, this is true because the philosophical problems has always remained the same since the time of their first formulation. The solutions suggested by philosophers of different epochs – that what has always been a subject of variation in the history of thought. In the situation of brutal and aggressive war against Russian invasion that Ukraine has been through for 3 years already, authors agree that it would be useful to address the intellectual heritage of one of the deepest philosophical traditions that had ever approached the problem of war and the solutions for a stable and long-lasting peace – the transcendentalism. Within the transcendental philosophical tradition, both German and American thinkers have contributed to the discourse on war. The aim of this article is to evaluate the philosophical perspectives of German transcendentalists I. Kant, G. W. F. Hegel, and American transcendentalists R. W. Emerson and H. D. Thoreau on war and peace and to analyze and assess the theoretical frameworks and potentialities of these views for further development in contemporary discussions on conflict resolution and global stability. The study highlights the unique aspects of each doctrine as well as the commonalities in the understanding of the nature of war and peace.

Presentation of the main research material. Transcendentalism emerged as a philosophical movement in the early 19th century as an expansion of use of the philosophical method first suggested and applied by Immanuel Kant in his system of critical philosophy. The method he called transcendental was aiming to explore the conditions of possibility of cognitive and moral facts within the human mind.

Such an approach was a real revolution in philosophy of that age since it for the first time suggested to look for all the explanations of facts not outside but inside the human intellectual nature. In I. Kant's opinion, knowledge, morality, freedom that manifest themselves in the universe of human existence can and must be explained by the reference to the grounds in the mind. As a result, I. Kant developed a philosophical doctrine that observed all the regularities in the world as produced by the proactive activity of mind. In his opinion, the exploration of the structures of the world should now become the exploration of the a priori structures of the mind and its faculties. This strategy has become the core feature of transcendentalism since then.

For example, I. Kant's philosophical revolution gave an impulse to the further development of the transcendentalism by the representatives of German idealism. Johann Gottlieb Fichte, Friedrich Wilhelm Joseph Schelling and Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel productively used the key Kant's idea of mind being a ground for everything in the world but with certain individual modifications. Another German philosopher J. G. Fichte, being a dedicated follower of Kant's approach referred to mind as being a human faculty, radicalizing the subjective nature of the transcendental philosophy and developing a system of ethical idealism. On the contrary, F. W. J. Schelling and G. W. F. Hegel referred to an absolute subject being a carrier of the creative mind turning transcendentalism into objective idealism and mystical pantheism.

In the 19th century, transcendentalism was rapidly spreading and eventually made its way from Germany to the USA where it found its voice through thinkers like Ralph Waldo Emerson and Henry David Thoreau. The problem of war and peace was given a profound consideration by the transcendentalists on both continents. 19th century in Europe and the USA was full of wars and local armed conflicts. Believ-

ing in reason as the ultimate force in the world that brings the order and rationality philosophers were looking for the explanations of the nature of wars its role and possible solutions that could help to establish and preserve peace.

German philosopher I. Kant published several works on politics and philosophy of history where he specifically addressed the nature of wars and revolutions. For our analysis, we selected the following texts: *An Answer to the Question: What Is Enlightenment? Speculative Beginning of Human History, Perpetual Peace: A Philosophical Sketch*. The first of these works primarily examines the defining features of Enlightenment as conceptualized by I. Kant. However, he also briefly addresses the issue of revolution, particularly its potential negative effects on the sustainable development of societies. His another text, *Perpetual Peace*, Kant specifically dedicated to analyzing the major global threats posed by war and exploring possible solutions for mitigating them. This work shows that Konigsberg thinker regarded war as radically opposed to the rational nature of humanity.

In *Speculative Beginning of Human History*, I. Kant reflects on the possible origins of human history, offering a comparative speculative analysis of creationist and naturalist perspectives on the emergence of human civilization. He highlights the link between history and warfare, which, together with the continuous preparations for war, he identifies as an essential obstacle to human progress. As he asserts: "It must be admitted that the greatest evils which afflict civilized nations are brought about by war, and not so much by actual wars in the past or the present as by never-ending and indeed continually increasing preparations for the war" [8, p. 82]. According to I. Kant, humanity should not simply focus on the causes of individual wars but must eventually recognize their most obvious and catastrophic consequence – the potential annihilation of all humans. A globally sustained peace agreement, composed on the principles of justice, appears to be the only workable solution that could offer humanity hope for survival. Kant suggests the framework for such a potential perpetual peace treaty in his work, highlighting several important conditions that states must fulfill before such an agreement can become a reality. The first condition, according to Kant, is that every state willing to participate in the perpetual peace agreement must become a republic. He begins the respective chapter with the following assertion: "The only constitution which has its origin in the idea of the original contract, upon which the lawful legislation of every nation must be based, is the republican" [7, p. 120].

Another crucial condition is the establishment of an international organization whose task must be to protect the treaty from any potential acts of military

aggression. On this matter, I. Kant states: "Hence there must be an alliance of a particular kind which we may call a covenant of peace (*foedus pacificum*), which would differ from a treaty of peace (*pactum pacis*) in this respect, that the latter merely puts an end to one war, while the former would seek to put an end to war forever. This alliance does not aim at the gain of any power whatsoever of the state, but merely at the preservation and security of the freedom of the state for itself and of other allied states at the same time" [7, p. 134]. Through this work, I. Kant sought to draw public attention to a rational approach to resolving interstate conflicts, one that avoids the use of military force driven by emotional competitions. He fully acknowledged that humans are more often guided by emotions than by reason, particularly in matters of competition and war. Nevertheless, he was trying to show to his readers that such a peace agreement appears to be the only viable alternative to a catastrophe of self-destruction. Otherwise, as I. Kant ironically suggests, perpetual peace will ultimately be achieved – but only on the common graveyard for humanity. He puts all his irony in the following passage: "Perpetual peace". A Dutch innkeeper once put this satirical inscription on his signboard, along with the picture of a graveyard. We shall not trouble to ask whether it applies to men in general or particularly to heads of state (who can never have enough of war), or only to the philosophers who blissfully dream of perpetual peace" [7, p. 93]. In this context, I. Kant is seen as a determined opponent of war and a passionate advocate for peace.

For G. W. F. Hegel, he had extensive knowledge of ancient military history and European wars, reflected throughout his works. Rather than just describing conflicts, Hegel consistently offered deep theoretical insights on war.

German philosopher first addressed the nature of war and peace in his early political writings, particularly in *The German Constitution* and *On the Scientific Ways of Treating Natural Law, Its Place in Practical Philosophy, and Its Relation to the Positive Sciences of Right*. In his later works, he continued his reflections, most notably in *The Phenomenology of Mind* (also translated as *The Phenomenology of Spirit*), and *Elements of the Philosophy of Right*, or *Natural Law and Political Science in Outline*, among others.

His ideas on the nature of war and peace stand in radical contrast to those suggested by I. Kant. In his critical reflections on the phenomenon of war, G. W. F. Hegel tries to overcome the limitations of subjectivism and historical particularities in order to identify the fundamental principles to support his basic idea that war is a historically necessary phenomenon. Philosopher argues that war should not only be viewed as an unfortunate disruption of peace

but as a phenomenon with historical inevitability, social significance, and even vital importance for the sustainable development of states and humanity. In his political writings, he repeatedly asserts that when it comes to the sovereignty of state, war constitutes a “substantial duty” of every individual. Furthermore, he stresses that war serves as the ultimate indicator of a state’s vitality. His lines on that are the following: “The health of a state generally reveals itself not so much in the tranquillity of peace as in the turmoil of war. The former is a state of enjoyment and activity in isolation, in which the government is a wise paternalism which makes only ordinary demands upon its subjects; but in war, the strength of the association between all [individuals] and the whole is displayed, both in the extent of the demands which this association has managed to impose on individuals and in the worth of what the latter are prepared to do for it of their own initiative and inclination” [6, p. 6].

According to G. W. F. Hegel, world history is the process through which the “spirit of the world” or “absolute idea” unfolds. This process manifests itself through nations and their most prominent individuals, whose actions propel history forward, often without their conscious awareness of its true historical purpose. Philosopher explains the role of individuals in history through the framework of his concept of ethical life (*Sittlichkeit*), arguing that it is ultimately the spirit of the world that guides them toward the realization of the absolute idea. He summarizes this notion in *System of Ethical Life*, stating: “Thus in ethical life the individual exists in an eternal mode; his empirical being and doing is something downright universal; for it is not his individual aspect which acts but the universal absolute spirit in him” [5].

The ultimate purpose of world history, in G. W. F. Hegel’s opinion, is the realization of freedom. From this perspective, history follows a predetermined trajectory; with the spirit of the world, utilizing individuals as instruments in its unfolding. In *Philosophy of Right*, G. W. F. Hegel identifies four world-historical empires that represent the successive embodiments of the absolute idea: the Oriental, the Greek, the Roman, and the Germanic [4, p. 346]. All other nations, he argues, fall outside this historical progression and remain fundamentally unhistorical in their essence.

According to G. W. F. Hegel, a people’s historical character and its potential to become a world-historical state or kingdom are fundamentally linked to its “health”. A healthy nation is strong, resilient, and capable of both state-building and self-defense. In *The German Constitution*, G. W. F. Hegel asserts that the ultimate test of a state’s health is war. This is because, in a well-functioning state, the balance between individual interests and the common good

can readily shift in favor of the latter. As a result, the state can depend on its citizens, who must always be prepared to sacrifice their individuality—and even their lives—to preserve the state’s freedom and sovereignty. G. W. F. Hegel elaborates on this idea in *Philosophy of Right*: “This relation and the recognition of it constitute their substantial duty. Property and life, not to speak of opinions and the ordinary routine of existence, they must sacrifice, if necessary, in order to preserve the substantive individuality, independence, and sovereignty of the state” [4, p. 330]. A state whose citizens or subjects are unwilling to make such sacrifices, G. W. F. Hegel argues, is ultimately destined to cease to exist. He further emphasizes that this willingness to sacrifice constitutes the “ethical element of war” [4, p. 330].

Ultimately, G. W. F. Hegel justifies the historical necessity of war, presenting it as a crucial factor for preserving the health of any state or nation and maintaining the “shape and individuality of the ethical totality” [6, p. 140-141]. This argument appears in his political-philosophical work *On the Scientific Ways of Treating Natural Law, on its Place in Practical Philosophy, and its Relation to the Positive Sciences of Right*, where he explicitly positions himself in opposition to Kant’s idea of perpetual peace as the ultimate goal of reason in history.

According to G. W. F. Hegel, any form of peace, particularly a perpetual one, undermines the vitality of the state. Without the necessity of a collective struggle, individuals remain focused on their personal interests and are unprepared to set aside their prosperity and comfort for the survival of the state. He articulates this idea in the following passage: “It is this second aspect of the connection which posits the necessity of war for the shape and individuality of the ethical totality. In war, there is the free possibility that not only individual determinacies, but also the sum total of these, will be destroyed as life, whether for the absolute itself or for the people. Thus, war preserves the ethical health of peoples in their indifference to determinate things [Bestimmtheiten]; it prevents the latter from hardening, and the people from becoming habituated to them, just as the movement of the winds preserves the seas from that stagnation which a permanent calm would produce, and which a permanent (or indeed “perpetual”) peace would produce among peoples” [6, p. 140-141]. In *Philosophy of Right*, G. W. F. Hegel further cautions against perceiving war as an absolute evil, arguing instead that it is an integral part of historical and political reality: “War is not to be regarded as an absolute evil. It is not a merely external accident, having its accidental ground in the passions of powerful individuals or nations, in acts of injustice, or in anything which ought not to be” [4, p. 330]. This perspective emphasizes G. W. F. Hegel’s belief that war, far from being an anomaly or a failure of

political systems, is an inherent and even necessary aspect of state development and historical progress.

American transcendentalism is one of the first specific currents of American philosophy, which occurred in the period preceding the Civil War in the United States. In addition, while the early period of the movement in the 1830s was marked by an interest in the philosophy of nature, later, as the Civil War approached, transcendentalism increasingly concentrated on societal issues and political themes. Active discussions on the socio-political crisis of the United States contributed to the fact that prominent philosophers of American transcendentalism, R.W. Emerson and H.D. Thoreau, took the positions of public intellectuals. Therefore, the philosophical understanding of war occupied an important place in the philosophy of transcendentalism, not only in relation to the Civil War in the United States, but also to the Mexican-American War that preceded it. At the same time, the comprehension of the phenomenon of war by American transcendentalism took place not only at the level of practical comments on the existing political situation, transcendentalists tried to understand war on a theoretical level long before the crisis of American society. Due to the close connection of American transcendentalism with European philosophy, the works by R. W. Emerson also touch upon the Napoleonic Wars.

In his early 1838 essay titled *War*, R. W. Emerson emphasized the role of war in the development of society. For the early R. W. Emerson, war appeared as a driving force of societal progress in its early stages: "War educates the senses, calls into action the will, perfects the physical constitution, brings men into such swift and close collision in critical moments that man measures man. On its own scale, on the virtues it loves, it endures no counterfeit but shakes the whole society until every atom falls into the place, its specific gravity assigns it" [1, p. 180].

If for archaic societies, war functions as an ordering force, a driver of progress, and a natural phenomenon, then for a developed society, war is a pathology. R. W. Emerson compares war to a disease epidemic that, unlike ordinary illnesses, destroys human consciousness: "War, which to sane men at the present day begins to look like an epidemic insanity, breaking out here and there like the cholera or influenza, infecting men's brains instead of their bowels, – when seen in the remote past, in the infancy of society, appears a part of the connection of events, and, in its place, necessary" [1, p. 179].

American philosopher concludes that war in a developed society is a disease, while for savage tribes war appears to be not only a necessity, but also a factor of development. For him, the era of wars is the era of underdevelopment of humanity, a time when man has not far departed from the animal: "It is the ignorant and childish part of mankind that is the

fighting part. Idle and vacant minds want excitement, as all boys kill cats. Bull-baiting, cockpits, and the boxer's ring, are the enjoyment of the part of society whose animal nature alone has been developed" [1, p. 183].

The essay on war was written in 1838, long before the approach of the Civil War in the United States and ten years before the Mexican-American War. R. W. Emerson's reflections on war in this essay belong to the times when he had not yet seen the war with his own eyes. However, this work contained the ideas that R. W. Emerson, will be also developing in his later philosophy. For instance, the idea of avoiding or to ending the war through the means of trade will be acceptable and important. R. W. Emerson addressed this idea in 1838 with the following lines: "Nothing is plainer than that the sympathy with war is a juvenile and temporary state. Not only the moral sentiment, but trade, learning, and whatever makes intercourse, conspire to put it down. Trade, as all men know, is the antagonist of war. Wherever there is no property, the people will put on the knapsack for bread; but trade is instantly endangered and destroyed. And, moreover, trade brings men to look each other in the face, and gives the parties the knowledge that these enemies over sea or over the mountain are such men as we; who laugh and grieve, who love and fear, as we do. And learning and art, and especially religion, weave ties that make war look like fratricide, as it is" [1, p. 185].

The American philosopher does not deny that the history of humanity can be presented as a history of wars. However, from this perspective, the history of humanity is also the history of the denial, avoidance, and end of wars, which is the engine of civilizational progress.

The American Civil War began in 1861, by which time the philosophical thought of American Transcendentalism had already passed its peak. While the early phase of Transcendentalism emerged during a peaceful period known as the "Era of Good Feelings", reflections on war during the golden age of Transcendentalism were predominantly theoretical, drawing on historical knowledge and European Transcendentalist perspectives on war.

For example, in his essay *War*, R. W. Emerson examines war in its ontological significance – as a fundamental principle governing any system: "Considerations of this kind lead us to a true view of the nature and office of war. We see, it is the subject of all history; that it has been the principal employment of the most conspicuous men; that it is at this moment the delight of half the world, of almost all young and ignorant persons; that it is exhibited to us continually in the dumb show of brute nature, where war between tribes, and between individuals of the same tribe, perpetually rages. The microscope reveals miniature butchery in atomies and infinitely

small biters, that swim and fight in an illuminated drop of water; and the little globe is but a too faithful miniature of the large" [1, p. 182].

The transcendentalists' global perspective of war was influenced by the fact that, they observed wars mainly from the distance, occurring on other continents or in different historical periods. R. W. Emerson's philosophical reflection on the phenomenon of war was partially based on the Napoleonic wars, which were a popular topic of discussion in the United States in the 19th century. In his essay *Napoleon*, R. W. Emerson presents his views on the aggressive and imperial war. He begins the work with the reflections on the connection between the leader and his people, comparing a state to the organism: "It is Swedenborg's theory that every organ is made up of homogeneous particles; or, as it is sometimes expressed, every whole is made of similars; that is, the lungs are composed of infinitely small lungs; the liver, of infinitely small livers; the kidney, of little kidneys, etc. Following this analogy, if any man is found to carry with him the power and affections of vast numbers, if Napoleon is France, if Napoleon is Europe, it is because the people whom he sways are little Napoleons" [2, p. 382].

For R. W. Emerson, the responsibility for the actions of the government lies not only with Napoleon Bonaparte, but also with every citizen who supports this system. This claim is also true for H. D. Thoreau, he develops it further and illustrates by his example of civil responsibility in opposing the criminal actions of the government, during the aggressive war against Mexico. R. W. Emerson also brings forward the example of Napoleon to analyze the consequences of aggressive wars for the civilian population: "He left France smaller, poorer, feebler, than he found it; and the whole contest for freedom was to be begun again. The attempt was in principle suicidal. France served him with life and limb and estate, as long as it could identify its interest with him; but when men saw that after victory was another war; after the destruction of armies, new conscriptions; and they who had toiled so desperately were never nearer to the reward, – they could not spend what they had earned, nor repose on their down-beds, nor strut in their chateaux, – they deserted him. Men found that his absorbing egotism was deadly to all other men" [2, p. 401].

In case of the expansionist wars, R. W. Emerson no longer emphasizes the natural inevitability of war or its role as a force of progress; instead, he presents war as a destructive force that undermines society. The example of the Old World played a crucial role in the reflections of American Transcendentalists, particularly in shaping and developing the new American society. European crises, wars, and social upheavals served as lessons from which important conclusions were drawn about building the Ameri-

can state. Thus, in the final part of his essay *War*, R. W. Emerson directly addresses American society, urging citizens to take responsibility for their country's future. "Not in an obscure corner, not in a feudal Europe, not in an antiquated appanage where no onward step can be taken without rebellion, is this seed of benevolence laid in the furrow, with tears of hope; but in this broad America of God and man, where the forest is only now falling, or yet to fall, and the green earth opened to the inundation of emigrant men from all quarters of oppression and guilt; here, where not a family, not a few men, but mankind, shall say what shall be; here, we ask, Shall it be War, or shall it be Peace?" [1, p. 201].

Asking such a question appears reasonable, because 23 years later the Civil War began, during which R. W. Emerson, already a famous philosopher and influential intellectual, publicly expressed his opinion on the war in the context of the war in his homeland. In the years immediately preceding the Civil War and during the military confrontation between the North and the South, R. W. Emerson's philosophy was much less concerned with philosophical issues, but focused mainly on urgent social matters such as the crisis of slave society and war. His works of that time can be split into three thematic groups: slavery, abolitionism and war. Which coincides with the gradual departure of society from the awareness of the crisis of slave society through the struggle against slavery, and eventually the war to put an end to it. Despite the fact that R. W. Emerson recognized the legitimacy of the Civil War, he was still not its violent supporter, because he did not see a scenario for the end of the war in favor of the northern states. In his work *American Civilization*, he noted that for the free states who represent a more developed civilization, war is more exhausting, while for the slave-owning, agrarian South, due to its low civilizational development, war is a completely natural and acceptable state: "The war is welcome to the Southerner; a chivalrous sport to him, like hunting, and suits his semi-civilized condition. On the climbing scale of progress, he is just up to war, and has never appeared to such advantage as in the last twelvemonth. It does not suit us. We are advanced some ages on the war-state, – to trade, art, and general cultivation" [1, p. 284].

In Emerson's later thought, echoes of his earlier views on war as an archaic state of society remain. He maintained that war was ill-suited to a developed society and that primitive societies had an advantage in warfare. Thus, he believed that a more advanced civilization should resolve conflicts through other means. Consequently, even in the event of a Northern victory, R. W. Emerson struggled to see an optimistic outcome: "Again, if we conquer the enemy, – what then? We shall still have to keep him under,

and it will cost as much to hold him down as it did to get him down. Then comes the summer, and the fever will drive the soldiers home; next winter we must begin at the beginning, and conquer him over again. What use then to take a fort, or a privateer, or get possession of an inlet, or to capture a regiment of rebels? But one weapon we hold which is sure. Congress can, by edict, as a part of the military defence which it is the duty of Congress to provide, abolish slavery, and pay for such slaves as we ought to pay for. Then the slaves near our armies will come to us; those in the interior will know in a week what their rights are, and will, where opportunity offers, prepare to take them. Instantly, the armies that now confront you must run home to protect their estates, and must stay there, and your enemies will disappear. There can be no safety until this step is taken" [1, p. 284].

The civilized world, for R. W. Emerson, should use civilized means, namely economic, social, and ideological. For R. W. Emerson, war is a means of uncivilized peoples, and they are better at this art. The civilized world has already moved from the stage where war is the engine of society's development to the stage where the engine of society's development is the art of avoiding wars. While R. W. Emerson's close friend and student, the transcendentalist H. D. Thoreau, believed that violence can only be defeated by violence, although his political philosophy began as directly related to anti-war activism. The Mexican-American War was one of the most influential events shaping H. D. Thoreau's political thought: "Thoreau's best-known contributions to the antebellum antislavery movement are three blistering speeches given over ten years and later published as 'Resistance to Civil Government' (1849), more commonly known as 'Civil Disobedience'; 'Slavery in Massachusetts' (1854); and 'A Plea for Captain John Brown' (1859). In these writings, Thoreau reacts to national crises in a context of pervasive community activism: the Mexican War in the mid- to late 1840s; the return of Anthony Burns to slavery in 1854; and John Brown's raid on Harpers Ferry in 1859" [3, p. 186].

For H. D. Thoreau, it was important to convey to society that the war of aggression waged by the American government is not the responsibility of the government alone, but of every citizen. It was because of his unwillingness to pay taxes to the American government that was waging an aggressive war that H. D. Thoreau ended up in prison. He describes this experience in detail in one of his most famous works, *Resistance to Civil Government*. In this work, H. D. Thoreau expresses his views on wars of aggression and the responsibility of every citizen for the actions of a criminal government. By his example, H. D. Thoreau shows that paying taxes is a criminal act, that the place of an honest citizen

in such a situation is prison. H. D. Thoreau literally declares that he is declaring war on the state: "In fact, I quietly declare war with the State, after my fashion, though I will still make what use and get what advantage of her I can, as is usual in such cases" [9, p. 17]. H. D. Thoreau is considered a classic figure of nonviolent protest, and while he shared R. W. Emerson's views on war, his stance was more radical. He was convinced of the necessity of active resistance and believed that to overcome violence, one must fight by any means necessary.

Conclusion. The analysis of the philosophical doctrines by I. Kant, G. W. F. Hegel, R. W. Emerson, and H. D. Thoreau revealed a deep and evolving discourse on the nature of war and peace. I. Kant's vision of perpetual peace stands in a sharp contrast to G. W. F. Hegel's justification of war as a necessary historical phenomenon. While I. Kant viewed war as an irrational and destructive force that humanity must overcome through legal and moral structures, G. W. F. Hegel underlined its role in shaping national identity and keeping the vitality of the state.

In the American transcendentalist tradition, R. W. Emerson initially acknowledged war as a formative force in early societies but later came to regard it as a pathology of developed civilizations. His reflections during the American Civil War underscored the moral and social challenges of warfare. His friend H. D. Thoreau, in contrast, adopted a more essential stance, advocating civil disobedience as a means of resisting unjust wars and oppressive governments. His philosophy highlights the responsibility of individuals to oppose aggression and uphold ethical principles, even at personal cost.

By comparing German idealism and American transcendentalism, this study demonstrates the evolution of philosophical attitudes toward war – from its historical necessity to its perception as an obstacle to civilization. The findings highlight the relevance of transcendentalist thought in contemporary debates on peace and conflict resolution, suggesting that the pursuit of justice and ethical governance remains central for preventing wars in the modern world. The theoretical findings of the study aim to address some gaps in domestic and global discourse on the suggested matter.

Examining classical philosophical doctrines, such as transcendentalism in Germany and America, can enhance our understanding of the fundamental ideas and worldviews of international partners of Ukraine in the current circumstances of war, particularly regarding their perspectives on war and peace. Understanding the underlying causes of these philosophical concepts allows for deeper insight into their modes of thinking, improving more effective mutual understanding.

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Summary

Trush T. V., Tytarenko V. A. The understanding of nature of war by transcendental philosophers in Germany and the USA. – Article.

The article discusses the German and American transcendentalist philosophers' view of war. It attempts to bring to light both distinctive features of thought and what is common between them, bonding them together. Historically, philosophy has always played a great role in those periods of time when social and political crises arose, offering the specific intellectual answers to the eternal problems of humankind. The relevance of an appeal to the transcendentalist traditions in the context of modern global conflicts is, above all, the possibility of deeper understanding of the conditions necessary for establishing a stable and enduring peace.

German idealism made special contributions to views on the nature of reality, the state, war, and peace. The transcendental philosophy of I. Kant laid the foundation for subsequent philosophical attempts to understand war. In his treatise *Perpetual Peace* (1795), I. Kant argued that war is an irrational and barbaric state that can be overcome only through legal and moral mechanisms, in particular by creating a federation of free states. Another German philosopher, G. W. F. Hegel, viewed war as a historical necessity, an integral part of the development of the state and ethical life. In his opinion, conflict is very important for the construction of national identity and for the preservation of state viability. The war was discussed in the works of other German thinkers, in particular J. G. Fichte and F. W. J. Schelling, who turned out to be very representative in the discussion of its nationalistic, metaphysical, and dialectical aspects.

As for American transcendentalism, it was formed in the 19th century under the influence of German idealism. This was a period of return of thought from positive nature to metaphysical reality, to the deification of nature and its deep forces. The American philosopher R. W. Emerson, in his early essay *War* (1838), considered war as a driving force of social progress, but later began to perceive it as a pathology of developed societies. His reflections on war underwent further evolution during the American Civil War. He recognized the moral necessity of this conflict, but remained skeptical about its long-term consequences. His student, friend and follower H. D. Thoreau, on the contrary, took a more radical position. Openly opposing wars of aggression, he opposed the Mexican-American War. In his essay *Civil Disobedience*, he called for individual moral responsibility, insisting that citizens should resist unjust government actions, even at the cost of personal loss. By contrasting transcendentalist views on war in Germany and the United States, this study demonstrates the philosophical evolution: from the idea of war as a necessary stage of history to its perception as an obstacle to civilizational progress. While German idealists mostly integrated war into their concepts of historical development, American transcendentalists increasingly rejected it, insisting on the peaceful resolution of conflicts through moral and social transformation.

By comparing German idealism and American transcendentalism, this study traces the evolution of philosophical perspectives on war—from its historical justification to its recognition as a barrier to civilization. The findings emphasize the relevance of transcendentalist thought in contemporary discussions on peace and conflict resolution, underscoring the role of justice and ethical governance in preventing wars today. Additionally, the study aims to bridge gaps in domestic and global discourse on these issues. Analyzing classical philosophical doctrines offers deeper insight into the worldviews of Ukraine's international partners in the context of war, fostering a more nuanced understanding of their perspectives on war and peace.

Key words: nature, war, peace, I. Kant, G. W. F. Hegel, German idealism, R. W. Emerson, H. D. Thoreau, American transcendentalism, American philosophy.

Анотація

Труш Т. В., Титаренко В. А. Розуміння природи війни трансцендентальними філософами Німеччини та США. – Стаття.

У статті розглядаються погляди німецьких та американських філософів-трансценденталістів природу війни. Автори прагнуть висвітлити як відмінні риси їхнього мислення, так і спільні ідеї, що їх об'єднують. Історично філософія відігравала важливу роль у періоди соціальних та політичних криз, пропонуючи інтелектуальні відповіді на одвічні проблеми людства. Актуальність звернення до трансценденталістських традицій у контексті сучасних глобальних конфліктів полягає передусім у можливості глибшого розуміння умов, необхідних для встановлення стабільного і тривалого миру.

Німецький ідеалізм зробив значний внесок у філософські уявлення про природу дійсності, державу, війну та мир. Трансцендентальна філософія І. Канта

заклала основи подальших філософських спроб осмислення війни. У трактаті *До вічного миру* (1795) Кант стверджував, що війна є ірраціональним і варварським станом, який можна подолати лише через правові та моральні механізми, зокрема шляхом створення федерації вільних держав. Натомість Г. В. Ф. Гегель розглядав війну як історичну необхідність, невід'ємну частину розвитку держави та етичного життя. На його думку, конфлікт відіграє ключову роль у формуванні національної ідентичності та збереженні життєздатності держави. Тему війни розробляли також інші німецькі мислителі, зокрема Й. Г. Фіхте та Ф. В. Й. Шеллінг, які аналізували її націоналістичні, метафізичні та діалектичні аспекти.

Американський трансценденталізм, що сформувався у XIX столітті під впливом німецького ідеалізму, став своєрідним поверненням філософської думки від позитивістських концепцій до метафізичної реальності, до обожнення природи та її глибинних сил. Р. В. Емерсон у своєму ранньому есе *Війна* (1838) розглядав війну як рушійну силу суспільного прогресу, однак згодом почав сприймати її як патологію розвинених суспільств. Його погляди на війну зазнали подальшої еволюції під час Громадянської війни у США. Він визнавав моральну необхідність цього конфлікту, проте залишався скептичним щодо його довгострокових наслідків. На противагу йому, Г. Д. Торо, його друг і послідовник, займав більш радикальну позицію. Відкрито виступаючи проти загарбницьких воєн, він особливо критикував Американо-мексиканську війну. У своєму есе *Громадянська непоко́ра* він закликав до індивідуальної моральної відповідальності, наголо-

шуючи, що громадяни мають чинити опір несправедливим урядовим діям, навіть ціною особистих втрат. Порівнюючи трансценденталістські погляди на війну в Німеччині та США, це дослідження демонструє філософську еволюцію: від уявлення про війну як необхідний етап історії до її сприйняття як перешкоди цивілізаційному прогресу. Якщо німецькі ідеалісти здебільшого інтегрували війну у свої концепції історичного розвитку, то американські трансценденталісти все більше відкидали її, наголошуючи на необхідності мирного вирішення конфліктів через моральне та соціальне перетворення.

Порівнюючи німецький ідеалізм та американський трансценденталізм, це дослідження простежує еволюцію філософських поглядів на війну – від її історичного виправдання до усвідомлення як перешкоди для цивілізаційного розвитку. Отримані результати підкреслюють актуальність трансценденталістської думки в сучасних дискусіях про мир і врегулювання конфліктів, наголошуючи на ролі справедливості та етичного врядування у запобіганні війнам у сучасному світі. Крім того, дослідження спрямоване на подолання прогалин у вітчизняному та глобальному дискурсі щодо цих питань. Аналіз класичних філософських доктрин сприяє глибшому розумінню світоглядних позицій міжнародних партнерів України в контексті війни, що сприяє більш нюансованому сприйняттю їхніх поглядів на війну та мир.

Ключові слова: природа, війна, мир, І. Кант, Г. В. Ф. Гегель, німецький ідеалізм, Р. В. Емерсон, Г. Д. Торо, американський трансценденталізм, американська філософія.