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BRITISH ENLIGHTENMENT

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England and Scotland played an extremely important role in the history of the European Enlightenment. Britain was the birthplace of the Enlightenment, as the 17th century, with its revolutionary transformations in many areas, pushed England farther than other countries on the path of historical progress. Therefore, in many respects, England was a pioneer and became a model of social progress.

The Glorious Revolution and the Pain of Rights eliminated a significant part of the conflicts that had been developing in England during the Restoration period (1660-1688). King William III of Orange, having created a professional army to fight France, thus, as it turned out, laid another important stone in the foundation of a stable socio-political life, which had significant consequences for the development of the Enlightenment ideology. The fact is that the institution of a professional army provided guarantees against internecine conflicts for supporters of the modernisation of society, while the financial stability of the state ensured the development of entrepreneurship and trade. Eventually, civilised moral attitudes became the norm of communication, rather than the barbaric and fanatical ones of the past. In addition, England has developed the conditions for the development of modern parliamentarism with its inherent legal methods of political struggle and resolution of social conflicts and contradictions. At the same time, civic values did not supplant religious values. Moreover, a feature of not only the English Enlightenment but also of British culture in general was the combination of secularism and religion. There were no conflicts between the Anglican Church and the Enlightenment environment. This allowed for a balance to be maintained between traditional values, which the church was the guardian of, and the innovative ones brought by the Enlightenment. In England, Puritan morality and the ideology of private interest coexisted quite peacefully, with individualism and private initiative being complemented by respect for tradition. This duality left its mark on the formation of the English national character.

The second feature of the English Enlightenment was the absence of confrontation between civil society and the state. English enlighteners were generally characterised by a desire to overcome extremes. For example, while French philosophers perceived the world primarily as a struggle of opposites, English philosophers perceived it as their unity. Therefore, educational works on the British Isles were written in a rather correct and moderate tone, avoiding radical statements. The enlighteners, who did not see the need to overthrow the existing state and legal order, did not generally question it. On the contrary, they sometimes idealised the social and political system of Great Britain. The state was assigned the role of a guarantor of rights and freedoms enshrined in law, while the implementation of the Enlightenment

ideals was entirely left to private initiative, citizens themselves, and civil society. For most of the eighteenth century, society developed on the basis of consensus and tolerance.

The main features of the Enlightenment political programme were formulated by the philosopher John Locke (1632-1704) in his works *An Inquiry into Human Reason* (1687) and *Treatises of Government* (1689). He shared the theories of the natural state of people and the emergence of society and the state through a social contract, which were widespread in the seventeenth century. Since the state, in his view, emerged to protect human rights to private property, personal freedom and security, political power should not encroach on these rights. Having criticised absolute monarchy, he was one of the first to substantiate the idea of separation of powers as a principle of building a constitutional state. In his *Treatises*, Locke developed the ideas of natural sovereignty and the right of the people to resist tyranny if rulers trample on their legitimate rights.

Locke's ethics reduced morality to a set of long-established and well-known biblical precepts set out in Christ's Sermon on the Mount. Consistently advocating individual rights and freedoms, the English enlightenment also recognised the right of every person to pursue his or her own private interest. The ethics of the so-called 'reasonable selfishness' was developed by B. Mandeville and D. Bentham, who saw selfishness as a source of development and progress of society.

The Scottish Enlightenment gave rise to a galaxy of bright personalities, such as E. Fletcher, D. Hume, and A. Smith. The Scottish Enlightenment began when England and Scotland were united into one kingdom - Great Britain. The loss of independence prompted the search for an answer to the question: how can we restore what we have lost and how can we promote economic, social and cultural prosperity? Experience has shown that, for example, it is impossible to do this by political means. As you know, according to the humanist tradition, moral freedom was possible only on the condition of truly civic behaviour - mandatory participation in the affairs of the state and the defence of its constitution. The Scottish enlighteners gave a broader interpretation of the conditions for the realisation of moral freedom and civic valour. They were the first to substantiate in depth the conclusion that the same can be achieved through participation in economic development, social activities, and intellectual pursuits. The civic ethics they developed was a specific contribution of Scotland to the European Enlightenment.

The philosopher E. Fletcher (1655-1716) is called the father of the Scottish Enlightenment. He ideally envisioned Britain as a free state consisting of four independent provinces, including Scotland. Dreaming of the restoration of the Scottish parliament and other authorities, Fletcher linked the success of this plan to the economic rise of his homeland, otherwise it would have involved mass emigration and even greater dependence on England. Under the influence of Fletcher's ideas, the idea that the economy and culture were much more important for the future of Scotland than political symbols was spread in educational circles. This stimulated the search for alternative ways for people to fulfil their civic duty to their homeland.

The leading role in the history of the Scottish Enlightenment belongs to the philosopher, historian, economist David Hume (1711-1776). Hume's main works in philosophy are *A Treatise of Human Nature* (1739) and *An Inquiry into Human Understanding* (1748), and in history, the 8-volume *History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* (1752-1762). He set himself the goal of updating the science of morality. Hume believed that happiness is inseparable from virtue, and that good in the moral sense is everything that is beneficial to all people without exception. A citizen who does not recognise that his or her personal happiness is ultimately linked to the happiness of the whole society, and who does not understand the importance of maintaining the political stability of individual regions of the state, cannot be virtuous.

Like other enlighteners, Hume was hostile to theology and the church, and strongly condemned manifestations of religious fanaticism and superstition. A deist by conviction, he saw no difference between Catholics and Protestants, and sharply criticised the Puritans for their religious intolerance. Hume saw the driving force of social development in the progress of knowledge and morality.

A new stage in the search for alternative forms of civic behaviour is associated with the name of economist Adam Smith (1723-1790). He spent several years working on his main work, *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations* (1776). Smith was a consistent defender of commodity-money relations. Smith believed that only when people are in a producer-consumer relationship with each other do they develop a sense of justice and the skills of civilised communication. In his theory, he assigned to the market the same function that his predecessors had assigned to the state or a club - the function of socialising people. In his system, the place of the citizen was taken by the 'economic man', whose moral freedom was conditioned by his role in economic life. The main motive for human economic activity, Smith believed, is self-interest. However, a person can pursue it only by providing services to other people. Therefore, each individual, although looking out for his or her own interests, unwittingly contributes to the public good.

In general, A. Smith did a great deal for the development of economic science. Suffice it to note his contribution to the development of the labour theory of value, his analysis of the structure of society in terms of the relationship of people to the means of production, etc. All this gives grounds to consider the creative heritage of A. Smith as the pinnacle of economic thought of the eighteenth century.

Thus, the British Enlightenment can be viewed as a series of processes that began in the second half of the seventeenth century and reached their logical conclusion in the eighteenth century, bringing forward a whole galaxy of prominent figures who made the society and culture of Great Britain a benchmark for other European countries.

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