

REFLECTION OF NATIONAL CHARACTER IN PROVERBS AND SAYINGS OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE

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The attitude of scientists to the very concept of "national character" is ambiguous. For example, N.A. Yerofeyev uses the term "ethnic representation", which means "a verbal portrait or image of another people", and S.M. Harutyunyan writes about the "psychological makeup of the nation" as "a peculiar set of diverse phenomena of the spiritual life of the people" [2].

Nevertheless, many scientists do not refuse to study the national character. A sufficient number of definitions are given to this concept in the sociological, historical and psychological literature. S.M. Harutyunyan, who also recognizes the existence of a national character, defines it as "a peculiar national flavor of feelings and emotions, way of thinking and actions, stable and national features of habits and traditions formed under the influence of conditions of material life, features of the historical development of this the nation and manifested in the specifics of its national culture" [cit. according to: 2, p. 136].

If we turn to the "Explanatory Dictionary of the Russian language" by S.I. Ozhegov, we will find the following dictionary entry defining the "character" as a whole: "1. The totality of the mental, spiritual properties of a person found in his behavior. 2. A distinctive property, feature, quality of something" [1, p. 860]. Since we are talking about the character of the entire nation, and not of any particular person, it would be more legitimate to take the second definition as a basis. The adjective "national" in the same dictionary is defined as "characteristic of a given nation, peculiar to it." Thus, we can deduce the basic definition of national character as a set of distinctive properties, features, qualities characteristic of a given nation, peculiar to it.

S.G. Ter-Minasova, reflecting on whether there is still a national character, where to look for it and what can be considered a source that provides objective information about the national character, identifies four sources. First, she names a set of stereotypes associated with a given people. The most popular source of stereotypical ideas about national characters are the so-called international jokes, that is, jokes based on a template plot: representatives of different nationalities, having got into the same situation, react to it in different ways, in accordance with those features of their national character that are attributed to them in the homeland of the joke. She considers national classical fiction to be another source. The third source where one can and should look for the "soul of the people" is folklore, oral folk art. According to the scientist, the most reliable and scientifically acceptable evidence of the existence of a national character is the national language. "Language both reflects and forms the

character of its native speaker, this is the most objective indicator of the national character" [2, p. 147].

The purpose of our study is to consider the peculiarities of the British national character precisely through the prism of language, or rather through the proverbs and sayings of the English language, in which folk wisdom or, rather, the results of the cultural experience of the people are directly concentrated.

Note that in many literary sources, instead of the term "British national character", the term "English national character" is used in relation not only to the population of England, but to the whole of Britain as a whole. We will also use these two terms as synonyms in our work.

The English national character is the result of the rich history of the country, its traditions, habits of behavior; it is a reflection of the peculiarities of its climate, nature, geographical features. It is not easy to describe the English character, first of all, because it is quite contradictory and paradoxical.

One of the main features of the British is their conservatism. "Keep a thing seven years and you will find a use for it" says an English proverb. The most striking and famous example of conservatism is the still reverently preserved traditions of the English monarchy. The British perceive the royal family as a guarantor of traditions and social stability, helping to preserve national identity and strengthen a sense of nationalism. This is confirmed by the following proverbs and sayings "Kings have long arms / hands, many ears and many eyes", "The King never dies", "The King's word is more than another man's oath", "The King can do no wrong".

The stereotypical image of the British also includes traits such as self-control and self-control. The British are courageous, they always keep themselves in hand in any situation: for better or worse, for success or failure. It is believed that the better a person controls himself, the more worthy he is: "When angry, count a hundred", "Is not fit to command others that cannot command himself", "Anger and haste hinder good counsel". It is largely due to this trait of national character that the British are considered to be great masters of understatement. "At least said, soon mended", "Speech is silver but silence is gold", "no wisdom like silence", "First think, then speak", "H knows much who knows how to hold his tongue", "Keep your mouth shut and your ears open" consider the British.

In fact, the British rarely say what they think, but this is no reason to accuse them of insincerity for this. Often the reason for this behavior is tolerance of other people's opinions.: «So many men, so many minds», «It takes all sorts to make a world», «Tastes differ».

The British have gone down in history as nimble entrepreneurs, energetic and tireless in inventing ways to become rich. Therefore, English proverbs advise: "Strike while the iron is hot", "A penny saved is a penny gained", "Take care of the pence and

the pounds will take care of themselves", "Money begets money", "Money doesn't grow on trees".

But without hard work and diligence, there will be nothing: no prosperity, no recognition in society, no self-respect. Laziness and idleness in the eyes of most Englishmen have long looked like almost the main vice, and work and diligence are the main virtues: "A rolling stone gathers no moss", "As you sow so you reap", "Never put off till tomorrow what you can do today", "A lazy sheep thinks its wool heavy", "An idle brain is the devil's workshop", "No pains, no gains", "Not that will thrive, must rise at five".

For a respectable Briton, recognition in society is very important. Therefore, in proverbs and sayings we find: "A good name is better than riches" and "A good name is sooner lost than won".

It should be noted that the special hidden English humor is one of the most striking and widely known features of the English national character. The everyday communication of the inhabitants of foggy Albion is permeated with ubiquitous humor, foreigners notice it instantly. It costs nothing for an Englishman to laugh at himself: "Is not not laughed at that laughs at himself first."

Another feature of the British, which is known all over the world and often baffles foreigners, is the constant talk about the weather. The weather really does not take the last place in the life of any Briton. Different researchers evaluate the "significance" of such communication in different ways, some believe that this is nothing more than a topic for conversation when there is nothing to talk about, others believe that this is a kind of form of speech etiquette, an invitation to start communicating.

There are quite a few proverbs and sayings about the weather: "The morning sun never lasts a day", "When it rains pottage you must hold up your dish", "Small rain lays great dust", "A foul morning may turn into a fair day", etc. Thanks to some of them, you can predict the weather forecast: "Clear moon, frost soon", "Clouds going in different directions - bad weather coming, probably hail", "A year of snow, a year of plenty", "Rainbow in the morning gives you fair warning", "When the stars begin to huddle, the earth will soon become a puddle."

British etiquette is one of the most difficult aspects of life in Albion for foreigners. Politeness and courtesy are in the British blood. Their proverbs also say this: "Fair words break no bones", "Soft fire makes sweet malt", "All doors open to courtesy", "A civil denial is better than a rude grant".

"An Englishman's house is his castle" is a saying known all over the world. The British are extremely attached to their country and to their home. For them, there is no more beloved, more cozy place than their own home, in which they can retire from all the hardships and worries of the world around them. Every Briton dreams of his own house, meaning not a city apartment, but a private country house with a beautiful garden and a green lawn under the windows. This affection was captured by the

following sayings: "East or West, home is best", "There is no place like home", "Home is where the heart is", "Every dog is a lion at home".

It follows from all of the above that the British character is unusually contradictory and heterogeneous. Nevertheless, the British national character is unusually stable and very slow to respond to the effects of time. "One of the most distinctive features of the British is constancy and stability of character. If the last Judgment or flood comes, the Englishman will remain an imperturbable Englishman" [cit. according to: 3, p. 90].

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