



CONCEPTS OF BEING, CONSCIOUSNESS AND LANGUAGE IN TRANSFORMATION FROM EUROPEAN MIDDLE AGES TO THE ENGLISH RENAISSANCE

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Abstract. In the paper, the author discusses the concepts of being, consciousness and language as notions being transformed within the historical period between the Middle Ages and the Renaissance in the English philosophical mind, and contradictions between mass nature of labor and unfair nature of the appropriation of its results matured. The moral ideals of the Middle Ages fell into a period of prolonged crisis in a philosophical and cognitive sense. Real life was lost, eluded from those philosophers who adhered to the former, oriented to God and the sacred writing of ideals. All this led to a split in the spiritual life of the late Middle Ages and opened real possibilities to a new historical period - Renaissance.

Keywords: being, West, consciousness, classical philosophy, Renaissance, Middle Ages, empiricism, logic, form, method.

Introduction

The beginning of the third Renaissance, which is striding forward in Uzbekistan, has opened up new prospects for our people: we have begun to rethink our existence, our life. In connection with independence, new, serious and difficult tasks have arisen for representatives of the social sciences of the Republic, including philosophy, and this is quite understandable, because, firstly, Uzbekistan has the richest traditions in the field of philosophy, and secondly, the new position of our republic as an independent state requires deep philosophical understanding. But there is also a third aspect of this problem, namely: the study and clarification of the vicissitudes of strengthening Western classical philosophy of the New Age as a system can give much that is useful, first of all, for studying the peculiarities of the formation of current Uzbek philosophy in a comparative sense, and in the aspect of restoring historical justice as well; this will be a serious step towards revealing the influence of Eastern, in particular, Central Asian philosophy, on Western one, including English. The philosophy of Uzbekistan should enter the international arena, and in this sense, a deep study of English and English-language philosophy is one of the effective ways of promoting our country. This task cannot be accomplished without studying, without so to say “invading” philosophical life, its history, without trying to thoroughly gain the history of the formation of the philosophical “grandees” of the modern world.

The tasks related to the study of the processes of culture development as a system, with the identification of contradictory unity and interdependence of common and regionally unique properties in them, in the best possible way stimulate the search in this direction, and set the initial theoretical guidelines for the comparative study of the cultures of the East and West, the establishment of types of equivalence of cultural phenomena, including in the field of



philosophy history. Today, the restoration of historical justice, truth in general, and in Uzbekistan, in particular, is an important task of science and its researchers. The study and revival of the undeservedly “forgotten” part of the healthy spiritual heritage of our statehood and, as a result, return of the broad masses to it acts as a support, an intellectual and emotional factor in the recreation of a truly sovereign Uzbekistan and its entry, together with the world community, into the new civilization of the third millennium. Therefore, the problem of spirituality, its wealth and role in the spiritual-moral education of society and youth, in particular, is acquiring especially important significance today. The modern large-scale socio-cultural crisis of the beginning of the XXI century, connected with the geopolitical redivision of the world after the collapse of the former Union, calls for the justified attention of scientists, statesmen, and political leaders to the need in the current conditions to develop a new paradigm of historical vision with an emphasis on internal guarantees of a spiritual and ethical order, directly and immediately connected with the moral qualities of people.

Discussion and results

As is known, philosophy proceeds from the recognition of the movement and development of the external world and human thought as a result of external and internal contradictions acting here. The principle of historicism, the recognition of the fact that the history of philosophy is closely and organically connected with the history of production, culture, science, technology, with the history of social worldviews, determines another aspect of its study. Philosophical concepts represent the highest form of mental abstraction. But it is known that the processes of abstraction and generalization do not exist unchanged at all stages of historical development. The development of abstract philosophical meanings is closely connected with the development of the category of the abstract itself, and therefore is of unconditional interest, since the development of the meanings of categories is a necessary component of the study of the laws of development of human thinking and cognition, an integral part of the theory of knowledge of any philosophical system. Categories are concepts of philosophy. And, as is known, no area of knowledge can exist without concepts through which it expresses itself.

It is precisely because philosophy arises and exists in human culture due to the deep need of each specific individual and all people without exception for a common orientation, self-expression and self-determination in the surrounding social and natural reality that philosophy has formed a system of concepts, a specific categorical language. Revealing the main features of the genesis of the philosophical categorical system, we can find new means of constructing such a system in other areas of science, which increases the effectiveness of not only theoretical but also empirical methods of scientific research and, secondly, in the process of forming the foundations of a certain system of categories, the heuristic role of philosophical ideas in deepening and expanding scientific concepts is revealed with the greatest depth. A formulated concept, as is known, does not remain something given once and for all, inert, frozen: inquisitive philosophical thought repeatedly returns to it, verifying its boundaries, content, meaning and significance, as well as all possible interrelations with other concepts.

The study of the historical-philosophical process is not of self-sufficient importance. It is necessary to know the past most of all in order to better understand the present and foresee the direction in which development will go in the future. This has a direct relation to the history of English philosophy. The specificity of a phenomenon is fully manifested, as a rule, at such key stages of its development when it reaches wise maturity. Philosophy is no exception in this regard. From this point of view, the stage of development of philosophy during the period of



the first Eastern Renaissance (IX-XIII centuries), when it became possible to recognize and highlight what was fundamentally in demand scientific worldview of the West, is its stage maturity, when it was possible to confidently judge not only its unique specificity, but also its no less unique value [7;9]. Regarding precisely such stages, key in their nature, one can and should say that the problem of interpreting philosophy as a reflection of being is that very deep historical and philosophical problem. The contradictory nature of the renewal of philosophical consciousness not only reflects the contradictions of the renewal of the life of the people, it is an integral element of this life and one of its prime movers. Therefore, penetration into the essence and tendency of the processes occurring in philosophical consciousness is an important prerequisite for a deep understanding of the entire set of processes of development of society of the period under study as one of the historical stages of the movement of universal civilization.

In transitional periods of world cultural-philosophical thought interpretation of such issues as interdependence and coherence of such complex categories as "being", "language", "consciousness", and their relationship with the worldview of the English Renaissance and philosophy raises many questions. Without answering these questions, one cannot come close to the comprehension of the essence of the matter in general. To answer the essence of the question correctly, we must, first and above all, to make clear what was the objective reality of that time, what was the philosophical thought of the period expressed in the English language, including the works of philosophers and philosophically minded people, we need to determine how it was reflected in authors' terminology. One of the leading specialists on European Renaissance V.I. Rutenburg expressed the general opinion of experts stating: "The Renaissance was one of the greatest universal cultural revolutions that mankind had experienced" [3, p. 5; 1, pp. 135-137; 8], from that very time, experience and observation, geometry and kinematics were highly respected, the foundations of experimental natural science were laid, and knowledge became power. But before we understand the content and uniqueness of English philosophical thought of that time, we need to comprehend the Renaissance phenomenon itself as a historical event and a stage in the lives of people; that is, we should define what the Renaissance is, why is the Renaissance, and what kind of revival of antiquity, what the European Middle Ages were represented by in this perspective, etc. All these are important questions, and without understanding their essence we cannot have a clear understanding of the historical environment, that is, these are all important questions, and without understanding their essence we cannot have a clear understanding of the historical environment, that is, it is impossible to ensure the genuine scientific nature of not only this particular study, but also any other one.

There are many fundamental studies by specialists in this field of science on the historical evolution of English philosophy, including empiricism. Since the latter concept is explained differently in various sources, we will turn to the interpretation that is considered more or less generally accepted: "Empiricism is a direction in the theory of knowledge that recognizes sensory experience as a source of knowledge and believes that the content of knowledge can be presented either as a description of this experience or reduced to it" [4, p. 797]. And yet, there have been long-standing disputes about which philosophy was originally English philosophy, whether empiricism was an exclusively British phenomenon, and whether it could have originated in any other country. We are inclined to believe that this is a universal phenomenon: the first germs of empiricism as a form of philosophical knowledge arose in Ancient Egypt, India and China, as well as in Ancient Greece and Rome. However, empiricism



became a meaningful, consistent and qualitatively accurate system of philosophical knowledge in England. This happened because the most favorable factors developed here, contributing to the development of forms and methods of scientific knowledge, ensuring the conditions for its truth, revealing the ability of man to know the reality around him in the presence of outstanding thinkers such as Roger Bacon, Thomas More, Francis Bacon, Thomas Hobbes, John Locke, George Berkeley and others [5]. It is known that empiricism developed in England in the XYII century as one of the main trends in world philosophy [4, p.797]. English philosophical thought (and empiricism, in particular) is the result of the long-term formation of science not only in England but also in previous centuries. The entire history of philosophy, including those long years when it was not yet separated from the scientific method proper, is the history of man's theoretical thinking and his reasoning about the meaning of life, the history of the struggle, to put it simply, between feeling and reason, the experienced and the rational. This is confirmed by the entire historical-philosophical tradition preceding the Renaissance, be it ancient Egyptian hymns, ancient Chinese treatises or ancient Indian Vedas.

It is generally accepted that there is nothing in philosophy of the Middle Ages, the Renaissance one, and later times that was not present in one or another embryonic form the ancient Greeks philosophy. Separated from mythology, ancient Greek philosophy was, as is well known, extremely diverse. It studied the problems of mathematics, astronomy, logic, poetry, but mainly nature and man. Historically, the first form of philosophy was natural philosophy, i.e. attempts to explain, using theoretical reasoning, such phenomena that were incomprehensible to ancient man as the change of day and night, winter and summer, the boiling of water or its transformation into steam and ice, thunder and lightning, etc. Against this background, the fact that the main reason for the existence of a very large number of schools and movements in ancient philosophy (including those that completely groundlessly and speculatively explained the existence of the world) is the factual ignorance or neglect of the experimental method by ancient thinkers (of course, ignorance in a mass form, as a general tendency), which became a distinctive feature of English empiricism, seems paradoxical. In the broadest and most generally accepted sense, ancient Greek philosophy was divided into physics, dialectics and ethics. If, chronologically, physics appeared first, as we have just stated above, then ethics was the last, and its founder was Socrates. A unique feature of the philosophical thinking of the ancient era was its holistic character, not divided into separate sciences.

Ancient Greek philosophy contains many paradoxes, two of which, which have become traditional, we would like to dwell on. Despite the fact that philosophy appeared as an attempt to comprehend the natural phenomena that people experience on a daily basis, it was in the philosophy of this period that an important stratification for subsequent science occurred - theoretical thought was developed to such an extent that it separated from sensory, empirical knowledge. We believe that this was the result of the creativity of a galaxy of thinkers headed by Aristotle. Aristotle is a unique phenomenon in the history of human thought. It should be noted that he is the founder of formal (traditional) logic. He formulated three laws of logic (identity, non-contradiction and excluded middle) out of four (the fourth, the law of sufficient reason, appeared only in the XYII century and belongs to G. Leibniz). Due to the teachings created by Aristotle, he became an object of worship for the leading philosophers of the Middle Ages. A question may arise: the European Middle Ages rejected and consigned to oblivion the ancient norms of life, which is why, as a consequence, centuries later the revival of antiquity became necessary. How then could Aristotle, the greatest scientist of antiquity, become an



example for the Middle Ages? However, everything was exactly like that, and this is the second paradox, which is characteristic of the object of our paper study and which, by virtue of this, we mention.

It is worth carefully studying medieval texts, and more broadly, the spiritual processes that took place at that time, as it becomes clear that the European Middle Ages, despite the fact that it is sometimes considered a dark period in the history of mankind, was far from a homogeneous and ambiguous phenomenon. We dare to say that the Middle Ages were, in fact, an outstanding period in terms of content, when man ceased to be a talking animal, acquired his own home, his own land, his own cattle and game, which gave full scope for the manifestation of energy, resourcefulness, etc. qualities of each person. It was the Middle Ages that prepared the material basis for Magellan, Columbus and Vasco da Gama to sail fearlessly across the seas and oceans on caravels, and for Nicolaus Copernicus, Galileo Galilei and Giordano Bruno to lift the veil of secrets of the universe and the galaxy, thereby elevating the role and greatness of man in this process of learning the secrets of nature and the universe. It is a fact that genuine folk art begins with the phenomena of the Middle Ages. As for the church, its actions directed people's attention to work, creative activity: "We will provide you with a place in heaven, just stick to what we advise" (it is enough to recall against this background the history of the issuance of indulgences by the fathers of the church).

The above-mentioned will help us to identify the origins of English philosophy of the Renaissance, so we will dwell upon it briefly.

One of the reasons for the death of antiquity was that slavery had exhausted itself. Externally, this was manifested in the fact that the ancient Romans, who conquered many countries and peoples, were mired in wealth, luxury and debauchery. Against this background, and especially in connection with the emergence of Christianity and the cruel persecution of the first Christians, the search for justice, the highest truth, an appeal to God as the wisest, final authority and, ultimately, the cultivation of the Almighty became quite understandable. And the cultivation of God, essentially an abstract phenomenon, could only occur with the help of imagination, and not just imagination, but logical reasoning, sophisticated logical constructions. Aristotle, who created the best logical treatises in history, was a recognized author and an unsurpassed expert on such constructions. That is why he became the banner of the Middle Ages.

The leading type of European medieval philosophy, which determined both the way of thinking and the language of religious and philosophical texts of that time, was scholasticism. It arose in the period of late antiquity, and gave up its position as the leading trend of world philosophy only during the Renaissance, having existed in this role for more than a thousand years. The main distinctive features of scholasticism were the unconditional supremacy of God and theology in all spheres of life, the attitude to logic as the most worthy and serious science, the synthesis of dogmatics with speculative-rationalistic methods for explaining both natural and social phenomena. Simply put, in scholasticism, God came to the forefront, and man, society and nature became secondary as his creations.

For more than a thousand years, everything was subordinated to theology - history, ethics, aesthetics, literary criticism, poetry, etc., including the recognized leader of the sciences - philosophy. The church decided everything, and what contradicted it was expelled, persecuted, destroyed. Christianity became not only and not so much a religion, as a way of life and thought. A kind of fetishization, deification of canonical texts, and first of all the Bible, took place. For a huge army of writers, poets, philosophers, politicians, these texts became the



subject of deep and comprehensive study for many centuries. Now, at the beginning of the XXI century, people sometimes ask themselves: the Bible is not that big in volume, its content has practically not changed, any more or less knowledgeable person can even learn it by heart. Yes, this is true. However, learning it does not mean understanding the text of the Holy Scripture in meanings and shades, as the pillars of medieval religion wanted. This is precisely why such linguistic and philosophical processes as interpretation and commentary gained unprecedented scope. The Bible had to be understood correctly, and this is one of the reasons why there was a shortage of commentators and commentary literature in the Middle Ages.

It is clear that one of the main tools for interpreting any texts is a good knowledge and application of the laws of formal logic. The theory of syllogisms was most fully and comprehensively developed and passed on to his students (and subsequent generations) by Aristotle. Therefore, for the Middle Ages, God became an essence, and Aristotle - the first Teacher so to say. It is not without reason that experts believe that, to a certain extent, scholasticism is philosophizing in the forms of interpreting a text, and first of all - the Holy Scripture and the works of Aristotle. Scholasticism divided science into two types - absolute and relative. In fact, it was precisely such oppositions, very characteristic of the Middle Ages, that prompted Nicholas of Cusa in the XY century to a completely satisfactory explanation of the essence (but not the formulation) of the dialectical law of the unity and struggle of opposites. The text of the Bible was recognized as absolute knowledge ("revelation"), commentary, including on the Holy Scriptures, was recognized as relative (but also deserving of trust and respect), which was carried out by scientific authorities, and first of all by those who were recognized as such by religious leaders. The problem of all times - "what is truth is" - did not exist in the Middle Ages, it was officially removed: God, the Bible and their correct interpretation were declared to be the truth. The latter, or rather the interpreters, sought to make this truth understandable, explainable, accessible to the flock, i.e. to the broad masses.

It is impossible, however, to assert that antiquity disappeared in the European Middle Ages; this would be wrong and unfair to history. One can risk declaring that antiquity was partially preserved in the European Middle Ages, but in a very limited form and in a specific way. In the European Middle Ages, one of the best achievements of antiquity existed and flourished - formal logic. It was used on a large scale, and even supernatural powers were attributed to it, which determined the specific nature of the use of this achievement of antiquity by the European Middle Ages. This was mainly the sophisticated nature of logical persuasion.

Along with the negative consequences, the cultivation of formal logic by medieval thinkers had an important positive result. The categories and rules of formal logic were the subject of attention and respect of all authors. They were widely studied in schools, churches and universities. Society developed further. In the XIY century, after the work of Pierre Abelard "Dialectics", a "modernized", i.e. actually independent, non-scholastic logic was formed. This was also formal logic, but with an informal understanding of truth. In other words, philosophy was divided into two types - scholastic and non-scholastic. Scholastic formal logic understood truth as something predetermined in advance, and modernized (unorthodox, original) formal logic recognized only factual truth, but, again, factual not in the form of experience, empiricism, but in the form of universal general concepts. Against this background, the formation and development of the system of English empirical philosophy in the XIY-XYII centuries played an outstanding role in the history of world social thought.

Such great respect for logic as the medieval queen of sciences led to the fact that the scientists of this period completely preserved, and in nuances even expanded, the entire system



of formal logical concepts and terms created in ancient times. In other words, although the object and subject of logic changed in the Middle Ages, the apparatus of strict scientific thought itself (and, consequently, the language reflecting it) was preserved and even improved. Therefore, the philosophers and scientists of the Renaissance did not have to restore this most complex link of human thought and speech, they were able to obtain it in a ready-made form. Moreover, the scholastics developed numerous concepts and terms (including philosophical ones), an extensive system of lexical means that were used by scientists not only of the Renaissance, but also of later times. And today, when pronouncing the words “substance”, “essence”, “person”, “intellectual”, “rational”, “irrational”, “speculative”, “predicative”, “natural”, “formal”, “temporal”, “supposition”, “subsistence”, “accident”, “attribute”, “antecedent”, “consequent” and many other Latinisms, without which it is already difficult for our philosophical and scientific language to do, a modern European does not even suspect that he uses these terms precisely thanks to Boethius, who in that distant and now almost forgotten time partly invented them himself, partly defined them for the first time and introduced them into literary circulation almost in the same meaning in which we now use them [10, p.316]. It should be added here that the Middle Ages provided a detailed explanation of the relationship between many other categories and concepts, for example, “freedom” and “necessity”, the nature of general concepts (“universals”), etc. All this seriously expanded the stock of words that later became key in the English philosophical vocabulary of the XIY-XYII centuries.

The general conditions of existence in the Middle Ages (and especially the serfdom, forced labor of the majority of the population) led to the fact that in the depths of European society there were growing contradictions between the mass character of labor and the unfair nature of the appropriation of its results. These contradictions gradually weakened the moral and legal categories, the church foundations of the Middle Ages. The development of agriculture, the growth of the number of cities, the concentration of the population in cities, the increasing division and the beginning of the mechanization of labor led to the fact that the containment of productive forces within the framework of feudal relations became increasingly problematic. The results of these processes were multifaceted, one of which, the identification of a modernized trend in scholastic logic, we have just mentioned. The moral ideals of the Middle Ages fell into a period of prolonged crisis in the philosophical and cognitive respect. Formal logic, even the most brilliant in form, could not compensate for the actual absence of the content of the values propagandized. Real existence was lost, eluded those philosophers who adhered to the previous ideals oriented toward God and the Holy Scriptures, as a result of which disagreements between them intensified. All this led to a split in the spiritual life of the late Middle Ages. The most striking expression of this split, which directly influenced the formation of the philosophical idea and vocabulary of the Renaissance (including English), was the struggle between the two main trends of scholasticism - nominalism and realism.

The leading feature of nominalism as one of the philosophical trends known in the history of mankind was that it denied the practical existence of the so-called “universals”, i.e. general concepts of being and the real. Nominalists believed that universals exist not in life, not in practice, but in the imagination. Representatives of nominalism believed that in reality only individual things exist (and, accordingly, concepts about them). There are no general concepts, these are only names of things, their abstract understanding. Nominalism gained particular popularity in the XIY century, during the struggle with realism. English philosophy became one of the arenas where the problems of both trends were actively discussed. In the XYII century, such famous English scientists as Hobbes, Locke, as well as Berkeley and Hume,

adhered to nominalist positions. True, Hobbes and Locke denied the main premise of medieval nominalism - the theorization of universals. As for Berkeley and Hume, they went in the direction of subjective idealism. For example, nominalists did not agree that universals have a real, practical character. Berkeley and Hume took advantage of this and argued that such concepts as "causality" and "substance" in particular cannot really exist.

Representatives of realism, unlike nominalists, believed that reality existed outside of consciousness, and objects of knowledge are absolute and do not depend on man, he can only comprehend them. A distinctive feature of medieval realism was that in a dispute with nominalism (as well as with conceptualism), its representatives defended the following idea - universals, i.e. general concepts of objects of reality, exist in reality, regardless of whether a person was aware of them or not. It is essential that in the course of these disputes, the conceptual and terminological apparatus of philosophical science was repeatedly used, i.e. a wide range of terms expressing fundamental philosophical concepts was cited and discussed. Thus, a single scientific philosophical language was developed, which was later borrowed by thinkers of the Renaissance.

In the history of scholasticism, realism was divided into two types - extreme and moderate. By the way, both of them went back to the ancient tradition - Plato was an extreme realist, Aristotle - moderate. The Church, and with it all official theology and philosophy, supported the moderate realism of Albert the Great and Thomas Aquinas. Thomism combined a number of positions of Aristotle, Ibn Sina, Christianity and created triply existing universals: "before things", "in things" and "after things". The problem of realism, its trends and features were actively discussed in English philosophy of the XIY-XYII centuries, seriously enriching its conceptual system and vocabulary.

Conclusion

Thus, the analysis of the concepts of being, consciousness and language in their transformation from European Middle Ages to the English Renaissance brought us to the following conclusion: the steady development of production and public consciousness in the Middle Ages, certain achievements of science and technology led to the fact that the cultivated ideological postulates began to restrain the further progress of mankind. Various forms of medieval asceticism did not justify themselves. A kind of reorientation was required towards the restoration of the corporeal-material ideal of being of antiquity, accompanied by a gradual rejection of the ascetic-quietist ideals of the Middle Ages, which was reflected in the self-awareness of the coming early bourgeois era - the Renaissance.

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