

О. С. Частник

**НЕГАТИВНІ СТЕРЕОТИПИ В АНГЛО-ІРЛАНДСЬКИХ
ЕТНІЧНИХ ВІДНОСИНАХ**

O. S. Chastnyk

NEGATIVE STEREOTYPES IN ANGLO-IRISH ETHNIC RELATIONS

Negative ethnic stereotypes are a standard set of simplified, sometimes distorted notions of another ethnic group's cultural and moral values. In this case, real (or fictitious) negative features of representatives of another ethnic group are hyperbolized, exaggerated. As a rule, such stereotypes arise as a result of complex interethnic relationships, distrust, and mutual misunderstandings. An impartial analysis of these phenomena may, in our opinion, contribute to a certain extent to a better understanding of another culture and to the improvement of relations between two ethnic groups - "the appraiser" (I. Losev) and "the appraised".

The aim of this report is to consider the case of "poor ethnic reputation" of the Irish in the eyes of their closest neighbors, the British, as well as to describe its causes and the dynamics of negative perceptions.

According to I. Losev, the most acute and irreconcilable conflicts arise between related or geographically close peoples. Ethnic Irish are not related to the British. However, ethnic differences in themselves do not always cause a desire to establish an independent state. A powerful separatist movement in Ireland arose because of the aggressive, contemptuous attitude of the British toward the indigenous population of the colony, to its language, traditions and customs. The apparent goal of the colonizers was to deny the uniqueness of the culture of the Irish nation, to justify their "superiority", and, consequently, their "right" to impose their rule on a foreign land.

Some prominent figures of English culture are also involved in creating a negative image of the Irish. The characters of Irish origin in the works of Shakespeare, Christopher Marlow, Thomas Decker, Ben Johnson are blood-thirsty, wild barbarians. Stephen O'Neill, a lecturer at University College Dublin, accuses Shakespeare of creating the first sample of a negative Irish stereotype in fiction. McMurrin, one of Shakespeare's characters, says with a peculiar Irish accent: "What ish my nation? Ish a villain, and a bastard, and a knave, and a rascal." Theatre performances at that time, according to O'Neill, were kind of "soap operas" and news providers and therefore had a great influence on the consciousness of ordinary Englishmen. Ch. Dickens was also biased towards the Irish as well as representatives of other ethnic groups.

One can observe that bursts of anti-Irish propaganda coincided in time with the intensification of the liberation movement in Ireland. In the nineteenth century, for instance, the British satirical magazine *Punch* repeatedly printed caricatures of Irish rebels, presenting them as ruthless, ugly monsters. British Prime Minister B. Disraeli (1874-1880) publicly labelled the Irish "wild, irresponsible, lazy." With the start of the struggle of the Irish Republican Army (1939) for the rights of the Catholic minority in Northern Ireland, the British media willingly picked up the subject of the Irish as militant rebels who do not recognize any laws.

In parallel with the robber stereotype the English cultivated the image of the an Irishman as a drunkard and hooligan. It is true that the pub is an important part of the traditional Irish culture. Here, people not only talk, but also socialise, exchange news, listen to folk music, and arrange family celebrations. According to the Department of Health and Youth in Dublin, only 2% of the population drink alcohol daily (the lowest rate in Europe), but the maximum amount of alcohol consumed is on weekends. Nowadays, however, young Irish men pay much attention to education, sports, professional careers and do not have as much time for pubs as their parents. Following the change of priorities in society and an improvement of the economic situation in the country, a new, more critical attitude towards alcohol is being formed. Nevertheless, pubs continue to be the subject of national pride in Ireland, but the stereotype of a excessive whiskey consumer has acquired humorous traits.

Colonial domination did not leave much choice for the indigenous population. One could fight and die, emigrate or just somehow survive, hence the popular image of the sly Irish. By the way, it seems that the Irish themselves are not too much concerned with this stereotype and often tell jokes in which the smart Celt fools the pompous Anglo-Saxon.

A self-ironic nation, the Irish know how to reduce negative stereotypes to absurdity. Everything concerning the Irish and their culture, the prejudiced English call 'Oirish', so the Irish themselves make jokes about the blood-thirsty Oirish, who, having drunk a lot of Guinness in a pub, go out onto the street to massacre Protestants. Thus, the target of ridiculing changes to the opposite.

Thus, a negative image in the relations between two ethnic groups emerges where one side has a complex of superiority, and another one suffers from a complex of inferiority. We can say that we are as bad in the eyes of our neighbors as we respect ourselves. The current reconciliation on the mentality level between the Irish and the British has not come about by itself but thanks to the advancements of the former colony in economy and education, to the increase of its prestige in the world, to the sound sense of humour. Today the Irish proudly say: "We are a nation once again". As a result, former negative stereotypes gradually lose ground and acquire a harmless, folkloric character.

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Н. М. Кушнарєнко

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