TRADITIONS OF THE ENLIGHTENMENT AND ITS POLITICAL REFLECTIONS

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ABSTRACT

It is really difficult to make a full definition of the Enlightenment. This difficulty arises from the fact that the Enlightenment has penetrated into not only many but all aspects of life. The most common thing that will be spoken regarding the Enlightenment is that it is a mental activity. The roots of this mental activity sprang up in the West. This intellectual movement in the West formed different traditions of thought in diverse geographies of Europe. The Enlightenment was shaped in a "rationalistic" quality in France and "empiricist" character in Britain The distinction between the French Enlightenment and the British Enlightenment concurrently gave rise to the division between social structures. In this context, the British empiricism led to a "peaceful revolution" whereas the French rationalization resulted in a "bloody revolution". In this article, my aim is to deal with the distinctions between the French rationalization and the British empiricism, and to display how these differences influenced on social change.

Key words: *the French enlightenment, the British enlightenment, rationalism, empiricism, revolution*

Aydınlanma Gelenekleri ve Politik Yansımaları

ÖZET

Aydınlanmanın eksiksiz bir tanımını yapmak zordur. Tanımın zorluğu Aydınlanmanın hayatın her yerine nüfuz etmesinden kaynaklanmaktadır. Aydınlanma hakkında söylenebilecek en genel şey, Aydınlanmanın bir zihinsel faaliyet olduğudur. Bu zihinsel faaliyetin kökenleri Batı'da ortaya çıkmıştır. Batı'da olan bu zihinsel faaliyet

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Avrupa'nın farklı coğrafyalarında farklı düşünce geleneklerini oluşturmuştur. Aydınlanma Fransa'da "rasyonalist" bir niteliğe, İngiltere'de "ampirist" bir karaktere bürünmüştür. Fransız Aydınlanması ile İngiliz Aydınlanması arasındaki bu farklılık, aynı zamanda toplumsal yapılar arasındaki farklılığı da doğurmaktadır. Bu bağlamda Fransız rasyonalizasyonu "kanlı devrim"e yol açarken, İngiliz ampirizmi "kansız devrim"e neden olmuştur. Bu makalede amacım Fransız rasyonalizasyonu ile İngiliz ampirizmi arasındaki farklılıkları ele alıp, bu farklılıkların toplumsal değişim üzerinde nasıl etkili olduğunu göstermektir.

Anahtar kelimeler: *Fransız aydınlanması, İngiliz aydınlanması, rasyonalizm, ampirizm, devrim*

Introduction

Each definition made for the Enlightenment period leaves it without content since each one excludes its certain peculiarities. Generally speaking, the Enlightenment itself is a mental process and intellectual development across Europe. Despite its European basis, we may not speak of a single form of the Enlightenment. It is a mental process with very different forms in different geographies of Europe. It is divided into different forms such as the French Enlightenment, the British Enlightenment and the German Enlightenment, all of which possess different associations of ideas. This variation, concomitantly, brings about social and political differentiations.

Throughout this study, a discussion will be made on the identity of the Enlightenment. It will be carried out with two different points of view. The first one defends the uniqueness and authenticity of the Enlightenment. It is an age that is unique and authentic in terms of its effects. Both the French Enlightenment and the British Enlightenment are the direct results of this. After all, there is a claim that Enlightenment is not an idiosyncratic system but Enlightenment is the secularization of the previous age. One of the most eminent representatives of this view, Gray Alexandre studied the relation

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between the eras of the Enlightenment and the pre-Enlightenment in the sense of the secularization of liberation theology.

After examining the identity of the Enlightenment, two traditions of the Enlightenment will be observed. On one side of the discussion is the French Enlightenment, which was led by philosophers such as Rousseau, Montesquieu, Voltaire, Descartes, Condillac, d'Alembert, Diderot, and Turgot. The French Enlightenment has a rationalistic character. It attempted to replace the absolutism of religion with that of reason. On the other side of discussion we could see the British Enlightenment, which was inspired by thinkers such as Hume, Newton, Berkeley, Locke, Hutcheson, and Smith.

Both the French Enlightenment and the British Enlightenment centered upon reason, the unique peculiarity of the Enlightenment. However, there is a quantitative difference between both of them. While reason is absolute truth in the French Enlightenment, it is one of many realities in the British Enlightenment. Referring to Heidegger, we can articulate this difference as the one between "Reason" and "reason". While the French Enlightenment grounded on the former, the British Enlightenment based on the latter.

Ultimately, a study will be made over social and political consequences of these two diverse traditions of the Enlightenment. Within this framework, there will be made an inquiry first about the relation between the Enlightenment and revolution, and then about the way these two contrasting opinions gave rise to two different revolutions.

1. The Enlightenment as "Great Separation" and "Secularization"

The difficulty of social studies lies under their definitions. We already stated that it is almost impossible for us to make an exact definition that encompasses all the features of the Enlightenment, but

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the Enlightenment is by common expression an intellectual development, the laid in Renaissance and carried away through Reformation movement to its summit with the subsequent emergence of the revolutions in Britain and France. Humanism of Renaissance is based on the idea that a perfect society might be established by means of reason, delivering people from the notion of original sin. It centered upon human being and human reason. The Reformation can be defined as the open expression of dissatisfaction with the abuses within the Church, with the role of the priesthood and with the ecclesiastical hierarchy itself (J. Lee 1984: 8). The idea resulted from Renaissance and Reformation gained practice with the help of the Enlightenment, and reached its peak point with the ultimate occurrence of the French Revolution. There are plenty of definitions made for the Enlightenment. According to one of these definitions, the essentials of the Enlightenment are to be redeemed from the "outdated system" which is represented by myths, superstitions and prejudices that are believed to be evil and enslaving, and to be orientated towards a rational system which is believed to be essentially beneficial and emancipatory (Çiğdem 2015: 13-15). We can find a more conventional definition of the Enlightenment offered by Kant. For him, the Enlightenment is man's deliverance from the state of immaturity into which he fell through his fault. This state of immaturity is human's failure to use his reason without looking to anyone else for guidance. The Enlightenment is cultural expression of historical age or period determined by a widespread and fundamental change that took place with the occurrence of the bourgeoisie or middle class through merchandising and industrialization in the West. In other words, it is the whole of scientific, social and political processes in this period of time across Europe (Hobsbawm 1996: 20). The question about what the Enlightenment is might be given a plenty of definitions that attract attention to different factors. Yet, the general qualification available in

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all definitions is the disappearance of God's centralism and dominant positioning of reason.

The idea of the Enlightenment is grounded on intellect. God's predestination of Middle Ages was replaced with the determinism of reason. The idea of the Enlightenment advocated the power of reason – a universal category which was more acceptable for all subjects than a conception which was identified as historical and social – against myths, bias and superstitions embodied in tradition and religion. The source of knowledge is reason, not divine revelation. It follows a deductive method, and the criterion of truth is logical consistency. The Enlightenment period is also known as the age of reason. Universality of reason is defended and it is demonstrated that each person can attain reality.

There are two dissimilar explanations about the periodization of the Enlightenment age. According to one of these explanations, the Enlightenment is a great separation and an exceptional age in respect of its effects on philosophy and society. It is an age when science and social order were rebuilt under the sovereignty of reason. We can easily notice the effects of the detachment by the Enlightenment on many thinkers such as Descartes, Voltaire, Newton, and Hume. All kinds of social and philosophical projects must depend on the idea of the Enlightenment. The Enlightenment is authentic and matchless since it was based upon completely new discourses under the dominance of reason (Çiğdem 2015: 18). On the other hand, there is an assumption that the Enlightenment is secularization. Becker and Gray are among the most significant representatives of this approach. Becker claims that the most important thing the Enlightenment thinkers did was to secularize a legacy from medieval times. Although they disapproved of the notion of created universe, they approved of the conception of universe and nature as a mechanism that operates by itself as a mechanism. Though they rebelled against the authority of the Church

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and the Bible, they yielded to demands of nature and reason. For Becker, the dominant ideas held by the Enlightenment thinkers are concepts detached from their religious contents (Çiğdem 2015: 20). As stated by Gray, it is possible to find the characteristics of the Enlightenment in the previous times as well. Motivated by the "Teaching of the Millennium", Gray builds up a connection between the ideologies of the Enlightenment and Christianity. Gray is of the opinion that Christianity grounds on the liberation theology. It is a religion that bears the ideal of a perfect society. The belief that the end times will come with the advent of Jesus Christ is prevalent in this theology. The end time theory in Christianity turned into a utopian idea based on the belief that things would be made perfect by human action. There is a common idea that, by way of the Enlightenment, humanity and societies will be reconstructed in a perfect way (Gray 2013: 20-40).

The roots of the belief of "light", which is a resource for the conception of the Enlightenment, date back to Christianity of the early nineteenth century (Güngörmez 2014: 43). As stated by Critchley, at the very roots of concepts that formed the Enlightenment and the Modernity lies the ideal of transformation into holiness (Critchley 2012: 93-99). Schmitt asserts that all the conceptions in modern state theory are secularized theological concepts. For him, the notion of the Omnipotent God changed into that of the omnipotent monarch. The omnipotent God became the omnipotent lawgiver (Schmitt 2005: 36). Likewise, "improvement", which is one the basic concepts of the Enlightenment, is the secularized form of "grace" in Christianity.

2. The French Enlightenment

The French Enlightenment is both the body and the spirit of the Enlightenment philosophy. In the French Enlightenment, we can find the best expression of the universality of reason and sovereignty which are the main characteristics of the Enlightenment. Reason is central point. Reason is the ability to go through the experiences and use them

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in presumptions so that we can, while attracting the useful ones, keep ourselves away from their harmful targets in order to achieve a feeling of perfect happiness which is the unique goal of our existence and experiences in this life (Ewald 2013: 13). It was rendered possible to reach the dominant stage of reason in the Enlightenment after going through some distinct transition phases. We can categorize these stages as mysticism, suspicion and reasoning. The center of gravity held by mysticism and religion underwent a deviation; with the breaking down deep-seated dogmas in religion emerged the concepts of independence and freedom. Suspicion tried to fill the huge gap between reason and faith, and the former came to be a dominant element throughout this process (Ewald 2013: 10-12).

The Enlightenment in general and the French Enlightenment in particular approved of the existence of a Supreme Being, but they emphasized on the significant authoritative role of reason in transforming the nature and the society. The Enlightenment replaced God with reason, positioning it in the central point. During the pre-Enlightenment period, God was believed to be the source of knowledge and occupy a central point in the whole of reality. The notion of God as the Only Truth had supreme authority over individuals. With the occurrence of the Enlightenment, the source of knowledge went through a fundamental change and reason came to be the only source of knowledge (Çiğdem 2015: 61-62). Unlike the uncertainty during the Middle Age, there was certainty in the Enlightenment period. We can find the best expression about the understanding of the certainty in the works of Descartes. The language of science is that of mathematics. Descartes suggested that mathematics is the structure built on the sure and solid foundations (Descartes 2006: 9).

The fact that the language of the Enlightenment is the language of certainty and thus the skepticism is the basic character held by the Enlightenment itself came to light through the importance given to

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mathematics by Descartes. The rules for the studies of mathematics and geometry are the methods applied by Descartes himself. In his opinion, evidences are available only in mathematics. Within this framework, he made use of Cartesian method. Clearly and distinctly both form the criterion for the Cartesian accuracy (Descartes 2006: 9). Descartes repeatedly insisted on the fact that we should get rid of our prejudgments since they are the main obstacle to the acknowledgement of certain knowledge. According to Descartes, if we really desire to reveal the whole truths, first we should eliminate the prejudices and accept as false all the views and opinions, which were once believed to be true and accurate, until a further review is made. Then we should examine all the conceptions in the mind all over again, and receive them clearly and distinctly by way of understanding (Descartes 2014: 72).

In the French Enlightenment, Voltaire was another philosopher who had emphasized the centrism and the confirmation of rational thinking as the only reality. Voltaire's aim was to eradicate every idea that is not based on a rational line. However, this does not mean he did not have faith in the existence of God. In general the enlightened philosophers had the notion of God. Voltaire was among the philosophers who devastatingly dispelled the misconception that the enlightened thinkers are theistic. Based on the watchmaker analogy made by Isaac Newton, Voltaire stated that design of creation (like a watch) implies a designer (Creator). He was sure about the existence of God (Goldman 1999: 93). The point that Voltaire objected to was the church with a kind of fanaticism, and her dogmatic conception of revelation (Voegelin 1975: 23-24). Voltaire's hostility towards the church and Christianity is not that of a kind restricted with the loss of faith resulted from scientific and social developments during the seventeenth century. He attacked on Christianity fundamentally by way of social and human motives. The very point he opposed to was this habitual state of mind including the religious fanaticism and bigotry (Voegelin 1975: 23-24). In contrast to this teaching of the church, the

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Enlightenment produced the concept of beneficence. The concept of original sin held by the church was replaced with that of innocence, a notion that defends the innocence of human being at birth. Voltaire tried to prove this concept. Thus, God was excluded from nature by human rational thinking (Hampson 1991: 73-77). Voltaire opposed not only the views of the church but also to the atheistic view, the rejection of belief in the existence of deities. For him, there must be the existence of deities since there cannot be a perfectly conscious understanding being, or mind, existing of itself from eternity. In this context, he rejected two examples of fanaticism – revelation and atheism – but he accepted the concept of deism holding a set of elements from both of them (Ewald 2013: 65-67). Classical deism is the belief that at least one deity exists and created the world, but that human being, by way of reason, attempts to change the society and to rule over the world.

The best symbol of the French Enlightenment rational thinking is the works on Encyclopedia. Encyclopédie edited by Diderot and d'Alembert is most famous for both representing the thought of the Enlightenment and being the program of this enlightened rational thinking. Goldmann suggests that there are two reasons why Encyclopédie was regarded as the special representative of the enlightened rational thinking: Encyclopedia incorporated all the world's knowledge, and this knowledge was agreed to be the total of data items (Ewald 2013: 14). Philosopher d'Alembert, a pioneer of positivism, regarded knowledge as the force and the key to progress (Voegelin 1975: 76-68). The same manner, Marquis de Condercot emphasizes impotance of knowledge and science. For him, science makes humanity endless excellence[1]. d'Alembert placed a special emphasis on rational-emotive reality. We can easily observe the powerful influences of

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[1] For more information about thoughts of Condercot's based on knowledge and science, look at 'Freedom in French enlightenment Thought' of Mary Efrosini Gregory.

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Descartes on d'Alembert. Like Descartes, d'Alembert was also deeply committed to mathematics and mathematical physics. Diderot, the other editor of Encyclopédie, asserted that nature is a combination of its elements and not just an aggregate, and that it is possible to explain all the spectrums in conformity with the laws of nature (Diderot 1992: 23-24). Diderot also harshly criticized the dogmatic belief in revelations. For him, religious belief causes clouding of consciousness. Thus arbitrariness, instead of perpetual realities, steps in. As a result, Diderot completely discarded theology in favor of the observation and examination of nature (Diderot 1992: 38). Another factor that played a very important role in developing and opening the enlightened rational thinking to the general public was "salons" that were held in an unorganized fashion. They were independent public gatherings for conversation. Salon is a public sphere in which thinkers and scientists came together in a house or a salon to discuss all kinds of cultural, scientific and philosophical issues. They are informal academic units of small scale. Philosophers such as Montesquieu, Mabbly, Helvetius and others held debates in the house of one of thinkers such as Condillac, d'Alembert, Condercot and Turgot. The debates carried out in these salons had a great influence on the public sphere.

3. The British Enlightenment

While the French Enlightenment gave prominence to the universality of reason, the British Enlightenment pointed to other elements as well as its attribution to reason. In its individual and social analysis, the British Enlightenment drew attention to the experience and expertise in addition to the strength of mind. While rationalism searched for the source of knowledge in mind, empiricism tried to find it in the outside world.

Empiricist philosophers such as Hume, Hutcheson and Locke agreed that all of human knowledge is based on senses in the final analysis. They do not believe in a priori knowledge. As stated by

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Locke, human mind is a "*tabula rasa*", neither principles nor ideas are innate (Locle 1999: 27-30). On the other hand, rationalists who opposed to his idea suggested that knowledge is a priori present before experience or perception. Empiricists defended a posteriori knowledge whereas rationalists advocated a priori knowledge. Classical empiricism is founded on a radical and seductive conception of experience and the self (Gupta 2016: 13).

It is Hutcheson himself who showed us the empiricist point of view in a systematical way. He built up ethics upon the concept of "moral sense". (Hutcheson 2004: 85-89). Hutcheson implies that form and uniformity cannot be perceived by the normal senses but by a special sense only. Therefore he expands the notion of experience beyond the confines of the ordinary five senses (Hutcheson 2004: XI). As we discern perceivable features of objects by means of these senses, we can perceive moral peculiarities of things around us using moral senses. In his conceptualization of "moral sense", we can clearly see Hutchinson's criticism of reason in rationalism. In his understanding of ethics, individuals can be glad to approve and adapt certain behaviors and actions, despite the fact that they (behaviors and actions) will not offer advantage.

Hume continued to use the methods of Locke and Hutcheson in epistemological field. Hume enabled the British empiricism, suggesting that knowledge cannot be attained from innate ideas and traditions, to gain depth. For Hume, cognitive senses can be divided into two distinct categories: Ideas having less vivacity or idée and impressions having more liveliness when compared to ideas. Ideas, even if they are thought to be unlimited, indeed have rather narrow restrictions. The only function of an idea is to merge transpose materials given by senses and experiences. All data for thinking come from senses, interior or exterior. Philosophically speaking, ideas are ultimately all copied from some original impression, whether it will be a passion or sensation, from

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which they derive (Hume 1976: 13-16). Therefore it seems that Hume eliminated the universality and dominance of rationalistic reason as single reality.

Hume claimed that Descartian understanding of mathematical knowledge does not give anything about the outside world. The cause and effect relation in Descartes's Cartesian is not necessary. Causality relationship cannot be either proved by reason or attained by expertise. He suggested that the only way to explain objects is by way of symbols or images. He maintained his discredit for reason in knowledge and also in action. For him, reason cannot be a motive for voluntary actions. Reason cannot be a rival in governing willpower and desire. Human reason can, at the utmost, be enslaved by passion.

4. Traditions of the Enlightenment and Their Political Reflections

So far we have tried to make a brief explanation about intellectual traditions of the French Enlightenment and the British Enlightenment. The point both traditions had in common was the decentralization of the theocratic administration. In this respect, they found the lowest common denominator on this point. We can make a clear observation, in the works of historians on the revolution, of the dimension of the relations between the Enlightenment and politics. For Rude, one of the historians of the Revolution, the Enlightenment gave birth to the revolution (Rude 2015: 232). A. Aulard, a French socialist historian, explicitly made known the relations between the Enlightenment thinkers and the revolution. Montesquieu's principle of "separation of powers", Rousseau's view of "fraternity", and Voltaire's claim that "human beings should govern themselves by reason, not submitting to a mystical power", all these ideas shook the monarchism to its foundations and played an active role in improving the necessary conditions for the realization of the revolution (Aulard 2011: 18-24). As far as Hobsbawm was concerned, there was a very close relation

between the ideology of the Enlightenment and two concurrent revolutions. Hobsbawm suggested that two countries, which adopted the ideology of the Enlightenment, managed to carry out the revolutions. Liberty, equality and (it followed) the fraternity of all men were its slogans (Hobsbawm 1996: 21). In this context, as a matter of fact, there is an extremely close relation between the Enlightenment and the revolution thought

It has been observed that there is some dissimilarity between the ideas of both, particularly within political and social aspects. The British Enlightenment ascribed a finite meaning to reason whereas the French Enlightenment accepted reason as the only universal reality. In the French Enlightenment, there was an idea that human reason has supreme power so as to make a thorough reconstruction of all institutions – social, judicial, or moral – that are legacies from the antecedent system. On the other hand, the British Enlightenment took into considerations the other elements such as traditions, experiences, practices, as well as reason itself. In the French Enlightenment, reason is universal and all but one truth. Yet, in the British Enlightenment, reason is not universal but accepted as one of many other realities.

The nuance between "Reason" and "reason" enables us to see the clear difference between the rationalistic view of the French Enlightenment and the empiricist one of the British Enlightenment. Rationalization bespeaks of "Reason", and empiricism corresponds to "reason". In rationalistic view, "Reason" is universal. Reason is the only reality in the universe. The only source of knowledge is the mind. A change in the world is possible with the change in the antecedent form of reason. From the point of empiricist view, reason is not universal. The mind is not the only source of knowledge; knowledge is somewhere in the outside world. "Reason" in capitals bespeaks of universal reason; "reason" in small letters points to the fact that reason is one of many other determining factors.

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If the need arises to name these two different traditions of thought, we may call the French Enlightenment as "Age of Reason", and the British Enlightenment as "Age of Common Sense", a term used by Hampson. Hampson's "Age of Common Sense" is nothing but the Enlightenment itself. In his opinion, the most important thing is not the pursuit of reason to its extremes but the recognition of peaceful social relations (Hampson 1991: 100-105). His conception of "Age of Common Sense" corresponds to the British Enlightenment. In respect of its emphasis on the role of historical process, traditions and mores in social transformations, the British Enlightenment might be termed as "Age of Common Sense".

Every social system has its own intellectual tradition. It is out of the question to speak about the existence of such a society that does not possess its own intellectual tradition. Every social structure and elements that give shape to this structure hold way of thinking as their byproduct. In two diverse geographies, which were the birthplace for the tradition of the enlightenment ideology, occurred two great revolutions that shaped the world. Therefore, there is a completely close relation between the Enlightenment and those revolutions. Furthermore, we can claim that the Enlightenment is the ideology of the revolution.

Different traditions of the Enlightenment lead to different revolutions in countries having dissimilar traditions and ways of thinking. It is prevalent tradition of thinking that determines the political and social structure. The reason of differences between the revolutions in France and Britain is that they have different political and social structures and traditions. Therefore, the French Enlightenment and its rationalistic idea paved the way for the "bloody" French Revolution; the British Enlightenment and its empiricist idea gave rise to the "bloodless" British revolution. The 1789 French Revolution ended in a bloodshed as a result of the understanding of "destructive and reconstructive reason" held by the French Enlightenment. The fact

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that reason is the only reality in rationalistic idea required it (reason) to be the only guidance in social transformations. "Reason" in France has been the only source for the transformation of all social and legislative institutions. That is why the revolution there ended up a bloody way.

Unlike the French Enlightenment, the British Enlightenment endued an evolutional transformation. The most significant factor in this is the British Enlightenment and its empiricist understanding of reason. The British Enlightenment gave place to elements such as traditions, customs, spontaneous rules that emerged during the historical period, and human emotions as well as reason. It brought about an evolutional transformation with regard to its emphasis on traditions and historical process in social and political changes. This changeable period in Britain is an "age of common sense" as termed by Hampson himself. Transformation came out, taking the social structure into consideration and being in compliance with it. This fact made the evolutional realization of the revolution in Britain possible.

Conclusion

The Enlightenment is one of the greatest fragment of history. With the coming of the Enlightenment, Middle Ages ended and modernity made a start; reason took the place of God and became truth itself. The Enlightenment, which is a new reality, led a variety of opposing factions. Although reason was the central point of all these factions, their appreciation of it displayed important differences from one another. The French Enlightenment and the British Enlightenment, both of which are different divisions of the Enlightenment, showed dissimilarities from each other. While the French Enlightenment was laid on a rationalist foundation, the English Enlightenment grounded on empiricism. Reason is the only reality in the rationalistic understanding of the French Enlightenment, but traditions and emotions as well as reason played a significant role in the empiricist understanding of the British Enlightenment.

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Two different traditions of the Enlightenment introduced two separate structures. The French Enlightenment caused the revolution in France to break out in a bloody way. Centering upon reason, all the last remnants from the previous system were abolished. Reason put an absolute end to the old regime. During this transitional period reason came to be the one and only guidance. On the other hand the British empiricism allowed a bloodless revolution to take place. The importance given to traditions by the British Enlightenment enabled the changes to develop in a steady and peaceful way. Reason was not the only accurate guide and there were also other factors. The significance of traditions, appreciated by the British empiricism, made it possible to bring about a structurally compatible, not so radical, transformation of the old system. Centered upon the centralization of reason, the French rationalism, however, disregarded any compatibility with the outdated system, and within this scope, it took a drastic action to stamp out all the institutions connected with the previous regime.

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Generally speaking, the Enlightenment itself is a mental process and intellectual development across Europe. Despite its European basis, we may not speak of a single form of the Enlightenment. It is a mental process with very different forms in different geographies of Europe. In here, we have tried to focus on the French Enlightenment and the British Enlightenment. But, before considering the difference between them, we need to examine what Enlightenment is. Therefore, firstly, we have tried to examine the enlightenment itself. According that, we can think the Enlightenment as both "great separation", and "secularization".

General speaking, the Enlightenment advocated the power of reason against myths, bias and superstitions embodied in tradition and religion. The source of knowledge is reason, not divine revelation. The Enlightenment period is also known as the age of reason. The Enlightenment is generally thought of the two ways. According to one of them, the Enlightenment is a great separation and an exceptional age in respect of its effects on philosophy and society. Social order was rebuilt under the sovereignty of reason. According to the other, Enlightenment is secularization. Enlightenment thinkers did was to secularize a legacy from medieval times. Although they disapproved of the notion of created universe, they approved of the conception of universe and nature as a mechanism that operates by itself as a mechanism. Though they rebelled against the authority of the Church and the Bible, they yielded to demands of nature and reason. After considering what Enlightenment is, we tried to examine the French Enlightenment and the British Enlightenment and their political consequences.

The French Enlightenment is the soul of the Enlightenment philosophy. Reason is central point. According to the French Enlightenment, reason is one way to transform the nature and society. Reason is replaced God. During the pre-Enlightenment period, God was believed to be the source of knowledge and occupy a central point in the whole of reality. The notion of God as the Only Truth had supreme authority over individuals. With the occurrence of the Enlightenment, reason came to be the only source of knowledge. The best symbol of the French Enlightenment rational thinking is the works on Encyclopedia. Encyclopedia regarded knowledge as the force and the key to progress. Condorcet is the best examples of Encyclopedia. For him, science makes humanity endless excellence

Reason is only determinant in the French Enlightenment. But, British Enlightenment pointed to other elements as well as its attribution to reason. British Enlightenment drew attention to the experience and expertise in addition to the strength of mind. Hutcheson and Smith tried to draw attention. They eliminated the universality and dominance of rationalistic reason as single reality. According to that,

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Descartian understanding of mathematical knowledge does not give anything about the outside World. Reason cannot be a motive for voluntary actions. Reason cannot be a rival in governing willpower and desire. Human reason can, at the utmost, be enslaved by passion.

This difference between the French Enlightenment and the British Enlightenment emerges in their political conclusion. In the French Enlightenment, there was an idea that human reason has supreme power so as to make a thorough reconstruction of all institutions. In the French Enlightenment, reason is universal and all but one truth. But, the British Enlightenment took into considerations the other elements such as traditions, experiences, practices, as well as reason itself. French Enlightenment and its rationalistic idea paved the way for the "bloody" French Revolution. The 1789 French Revolution ended in a bloodshed as a result of the understanding of "destructive and reconstructive reason" held by the French Enlightenment. But, the British Enlightenment and its empiricist idea gave rise to the "bloodless" British revolution. Because the British Enlightenment gave place to elements such as traditions, customs, spontaneous rules that emerged during the historical period, and human emotions as well as reason.

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