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GENESIS AND HISTORICAL SENSE OF THE MOTTO “LIBERTÉ, ÉGALITÉ, FRATERNITÉ”

Abstract

The study is devoted to the formation of the motto of the French Revolution – Liberté, Égalité, Fraternité. The hypotheses as to its emergence are considered, notably the invention of the triad by J.Locke, F.Fénelon, French enlighteners and Masons. Based on the analysis of the texts pertaining to the alleged authors of the motto, it is concluded that its spread was taking place only during the Revolution. The meaning of liberty, equality and fraternity is seen as an expression of the fundamental values of the Modern Age; the interdependence of these concepts is demonstrated.

Keywords: liberté, égalité, fraternité, Enlightenment, Masonry.

Introduction

Known for the French Revolution, the triad “Liberté, Égalité, Fraternité” (Liberty, Equality, Fraternity) is still considered one of the most succinct expressions of the underlying values of modern European culture, a cornerstone for the legal regulation of social life (Inkova, 2006; Jimena Quesada, 2017). Although fraternity has turned into solidarity (Borgetto, 1993), revolutionary ideas, particularly the same fraternity, are generally subject to criticism, for example, from a feministic perspective (Gomez, 2017), the motto remains relevant and finds its application in the most unexpected areas (Chapelier, 2008). Its reflection in the works of authors with very little in common is studied (Lizárraga, 2020; Heller, 2018). The question of the triad origin has been repeatedly raised (Iacometti, 2017). In 2019, Ángel Puyol undertook a fundamental study on how the most mysterious third member of the motto was formed. However, the views on the specific historical circumstances of the triad origin differ, and the purpose of this study is to check the most common hypotheses.

The First Hypothesis. The English Roots of the French Motto

There is an opinion that the French borrowed the famous triad from John Locke (Gritsanov, 2002, p. 1103). One can confidently argue that Locke’s *Two Treatises of Government* does not contain such a phrase. However, there is no doubt that the idealization of the limited English monarchy and the concepts justifying it was very widespread in French society of the 18th century, and many statements of the figures of the Revolution are entirely in tune with Locke’s ideas. Therefore, it will be justified to turn to the legacy of the English philosopher to find out what he meant by those concepts.

“The natural liberty of man is to be free from any superior power on earth, and not to be under the will or legislative authority of man, but to have only the law of nature for his rule. The liberty of man, in society, is to be under no other legislative power, but that established, by consent, in the commonwealth; nor under the dominion of any will or restraint of any law, but what that legislative shall enact, according to the

trust put in it. Freedom then is not what Sir Robert Filmer tells us, *Observations*, A. 55. liberty for everyone to do what he lists, to live as he pleases, and not to be tied by any laws: but freedom of men under government is, to have a standing rule to live by, common to every one of that society, and made by the legislative power erected in it; liberty to follow my own will in all things, where the rule prescribes not; and not to be subject to the inconstant, uncertain, unknown, arbitrary will of another man: as freedom of nature is, to be under no other restraint but the law of nature” (Locke, 1689b, sect. 22).

Let us note that liberty is neither tied by any laws nor opposite to it, unlike what Robert Filmer was proclaiming, but liberty is the opportunity to abide by the law and only by it. “...For law, in its true notion, is not so much the limitation as to the direction of a free and intelligent agent to his proper interest, and prescribes no farther than is for the general good of those under that law...” (Locke, 1689b, sect. 57). Liberty, therefore, is contrasted with the desire of an individual. It is not antinomy, oxymoron or paradox. In this way, liberty is meant by an opportunity to follow the voice of reason. Limiting the desire, the law, no matter what it was (natural, innate, political one), is reasonable by definition.

Locke, however, does not declare any desire knowingly false. He suggests that there are some desires planted in man by God, namely those desires expressing the natural law in addition to any personal conscious intention. The judge determining the naturalness of the desire, i.e. its legitimacy, is the true mind: “...for the desire, strong desire of preserving his life and being, having been planted in him as a principle of action by God himself, reason, which was the voice of God in him, could not but teach him and assure him, that pursuing that natural inclination he had to preserve his being, he followed the will of his maker” (Locke, 1689a, §86). Otherwise, the mind makes it possible to discover how this or that desire is inherent in the entire human race. A positive answer leads to the recognition of the

desire as natural, reasonable, legitimate. To realize this desire is to be free. So the natural aspect is identified with the social one.

Indeed the Enlightenment pathos is quite noticeable in the ideas of Locke: remove everything that interferes with the mind, and man will become free. As soon as he becomes free, he will become happy because what is other happiness than the opportunity to live by his mind? At least two controversial assumptions underlying this construct are apparent. The first one is the unity of the individual and collective mind. The second one is the unity of the nature of a person in his mind. One can say that both assumptions express the same conviction in the supremacy of the mind, and this supremacy automatically implies the unity of both the concept of mind and all manifestations of reason. For Locke, these assumptions are no less evident than for us. Moreover, their controversy is obvious to the English thinker. After all, if things were so simple, where would the unreasonableness, such a detrimental to a man, come from? The cause of all troubles is the limited individual human mind, which has yet to be introduced into the true mind.

This fundamental limitation of the individual mind leads to an entirely new understanding of the natural state that we accredit to Locke compared to both Thomas Hobbes and ancient thinkers. In the *Republic*, a Platonic dialogue, Socrates assumes a kind of initial state of man when people live separately and cannot provide themselves with everything necessary. Hobbes does not believe in any such historically rooted state, but he suggests it as a methodological principle. Locke, like a considerable number of his predecessors, states that the natural state did take place. Moreover, it still does. Besides, it is pretty relevant in actual existence. It is Locke who is just redefining the natural state. From a social perspective, the existence of a person is entirely public, not wholly autonomous, because only in social existence the mind can fully manifest itself. The natural state of man supposes a lack of

political power but the presence of a single society. “Men living together according to reason, without a common superior on earth, with authority to judge between them, is properly the state of nature” (Locke, 1689b, sect. 19). A natural state would be perfectly good if it were possible to introduce everyone into a true mind. Then political power would not be required. Hence originates Locke’s genuine interest in the education challenges. The pedagogical system is an alternative, but at the same time, it is an addition and the foundation of the political system. One can also recall that Locke (1728) does not suggest any “naturalness” in education: even the schedule for visiting the restroom is under regulation.

It is curious that as a result, the transition from a natural state to a political one by Locke is devoid of the ontological drama that Hobbes’s reasoning features. If the latter believes that a man needs to abandon himself to create himself, then Locke considers this transition as a refusal in one respect in the name of acquisition in another. Namely, a person refuses judicial and executive power in favour of guarantees of property rights. However, since a person renounces these types of power only to protect his property and some other relations (family, master, etc.), he retains his natural liberty, and then the political state brings him only benefit. In other words, it has been good in a natural state, and in a political state, it becomes even better.

Based on natural similarities, equality, according to Locke, is expressed in the fact that no one can be the ruler of another man without his consent. The clarification as to “without his consent” means that the master, even after becoming as such, i.e. acquiring certain rights to dispose of the servant’s actions, remains in an equal position with the servant since both are bound by the terms of a freely concluded contract. At the same time, Locke provides for the possibility of falling into service and slavery as a punishment for a crime. This provision contradicts the desire of the servant, but only his individual one. After all,

by committing a crime, violating a reasonable law, it knows or may know by its reasonable nature about the consequences. Therefore, the desire to avoid negative consequences for oneself is unreasonable, and this desire contradicts liberty. However, liberty is just about the punishment, including in the form of obedience to someone else’s will.

Thus, equality is an “equal right that every man hath to his natural freedom, without being subjected to the will or authority of any other man” (Locke, 1689b, sect. 54). However, there are unreasonable beings, including the human species, which, due to their unreasonableness, cannot be free, and therefore cannot be equal. They simply have no subject of equality. Reasonable men have power over unreasonable beings. It is hardly possible to call Locke’s position on this issue relatively consistent. He proposes to introduce some unreasonable beings into the true mind, and this introduction is the responsibility of a reasonable man. It is impossible to introduce others into the mind, but one can distinguish two categories among them. The feeble-minded should be taken care of, and the animals should be used. Locke does not justify such a division.

Locke’s reasoning on this topic, as in some other issues, strongly resembles the Aristotelian approach. Aristotle also links liberty, equality and the mind. The Greek thinker distinguishes between master and political power. The master power is exercised over creatures relating to the mind only so much as to understand orders (slaves), and the political power is exercised over intelligent creatures as such. In the latter case, we deal with equality since the one who manages and the one who subordinates are the same person with the correct form of politics. According to Aristotle, the whole always precedes the part, and society is primary in relation to man. Only in society does a man become himself; Aristotle coined the famous definition of a man as a political being – only in a free society, a man can be free. Hence a potential natural slave with a potential natural master is freed only by entering

into mutually beneficial symbiosis. Together with Aristotle, Locke sees the unity of human relations as the basis of a person's intelligent and free existence. However, according to Christian and new European views, Locke ultimately distinguishes a person from the world around him. For him, the fact that Aristotle puts pets and women on the same level of reasonableness is incomprehensible. In other words, one can say that Locke stands for women's rights and, in this regard, is "more open-minded". Although, on the other hand, Aristotle connected all elements of the world with "friendliness" and love, Locke considered that similar feelings could take place only between people, and the rest of the world was given to men for use. From here, it seems that there is one step to the murder of an illegitimate child proclaimed by Immanuel Kant because the born is not in the law, not in mind, and not a person at all. Note that neither Locke nor Kant is usually accused of inhumanity.

Summing up, one can say that all reasonable beings are free and equal (at least, humans), and the degree of reasonableness is determined by the readiness to consider the other as free and equal to oneself. Locke says nothing about the fraternity, although, in our opinion, such a concept would quite fit into his construct. Nevertheless, since for the English philosopher, in the end, to justify the right to property, which does not have much in common with fraternal relations, matters most, there is no place for reflection on this topic. Thus, although John Locke can be recognized as the spiritual father of the Enlightenment, the famous formula does not belong to the English philosopher.

The Second Hypothesis. The French Roots of the French Motto

Some sources call François de Salignac de La Mothe-Fénelon as the author of the formula of Liberty, Equality, Fraternity (Inkova, 2006, p. 3). Unfortunately, we could not find an exact reference to where the archbishop of Cambrai cites

this phrase. Our search did not give a positive result. Moreover, it seems that the thinker, famous throughout the world in the 18th-19th centuries, was not very fond of triads of various kinds, preferring much more extensive lists to them.

Perhaps, in *The Adventures of Telemachus*, the most famous work of Fénelon in secular circles, there is a fragment that allows us to talk about some tripartite grounds for the correct organization of society. Telemachus participates in an intellectual contest: competitors must answer three questions. Questions, like the answers to them, are contained in the book of laws of Minos, and only the judges have access to it. The winner will become a king; that is, it is assumed that questions affect the very essence of government. The questions are the following: "Which man is the freest?"; "Who is the most unhappy?"; "Which of the two ought to be preferred – a king who is invincible in war, or a king who, without any experience in war, can administer civil government with great wisdom in a time of peace?" Thus, it turns out that liberty is the very beginning of public life. The correct answer is the following: "The freest of all men, ..., is he who can be free even in slavery itself. ... In a word, the truly free man is he, who, void of all fears and all desires, is subject only to the Gods and reason" (Fénelon, 1806, p. 72). It may seem that Fénelon does not care about the issues of political or social liberty.

However, Fénelon is not indifferent to social challenges at all. Recall that the question of "internal liberty" is posed precisely in connection with establishing the principles of governance. The monarch, just like his subjects, must be free (in the specified sense). According to Fénelon, the fact that there is parity is clear from the answer to the second question – "Who is the most unhappy?" "The most unhappy of all men is a prince who thinks to be happy by rendering other men miserable" (Fénelon, 1806, p. 73). One can cite *The Adventures of Telemachus* and other works of the archbishop multiple times to confirm his commitment to the idea of equality. Let

us cite only an extract from one letter from Fénelon: “If you want to be the father of the little ones, be as follows: belittle yourself and become equal to them, go down even to the lowliest sheep of your flock, in the ministry that is higher than a person, nothing can be mean” (Fénelon as cited in *The life of Fénelon*, 1801, pp. 299-300). We are talking about Fénelon treats a church ministry as a secular service. Thus, equality lies primarily in the equality of “liberty of the heart”. However, for the Cambrai teacher, property equality is evenly important.

Fénelon recognizes only one form of inequality between people – inequality in education. Nevertheless, it exists so that the educated should be the wise leaders and mentors of the uneducated, not being a source of additional benefits for the first ones. Here are the words he addresses to his very young pupil – the grandson of Louis XIV, Duke of Burgundy: “You imagine that you are greater than me; ...; but as for me, I am not afraid to say, as you force me to this, that I am greater than you... You would have found it insane if someone had taken credit for the fact that the heavenly rain had made his harvest fruit-bearing without irrigating the crop field of his neighbour; you would no longer be prudent if you wanted to praise your birth, which adds nothing to your dignity. You cannot doubt that I am not superior to you in enlightenment and knowledge” (Fénelon as cited in *The life of Fénelon*, 1801, pp. 32-33). A similar idea can be found in *The Adventures of Telemachus*. When describing another ideal society, which should serve as a model for the heir to the French throne, Fénelon (1806) writes: “They are all free, and all equal. There is no distinction among them, but what is derived from the experience of the wise old men, or the extraordinary wisdom of some young men...” (pp. 121-122).

So if one tries to express in two words the meaning of the first questions from the book of laws of Minos, then only the following ones come to mind – liberty and equality. How about fraternity? Nowhere to be seen. If we turn to the

wording of the third question, it will become clear that fraternity has nothing to do with it. Who is better: a king who knows how to fight or the one who wisely rules in a time of peace? None of them is ideal, according to Fénelon. However, the king that can wisely rule in a time of peace is still better. At least he knows how to support those of his generals skilled at waging wars. This third question is not easy to narrow down to one word, yet it seems that there is such a word – enlightenment. In *The Adventures of Telemachus*, one can find clearly trace the path from one element to another. Telemachus goes through various hardships and understands that being a slave by social status does not yet mean being a slave in the soul, and vice versa – to be called free does not mean to have true liberty. Having perceived liberty, Telemachus learns the equality of people regardless of their social status and well-being, equality of human dignity. After this stage, the future king of Ithaca acquires knowledge of the art of governance.

So does Fénelon speculate on fraternity? The archbishop speaks a lot about the relationship between parents and children as the basis of society. Parental relations connect the pastor and the flock, ruler and subjects. Love is one of the central elements of Fénelon’s theological views (Fénelon, 1820-1821), and this love, first of all, is parental. Hence, indeed, it is easy to conclude that the flock and subjects have fraternal relations, and since people are equal in dignity, those who, in a sense, are fathers, in some sense, are brothers as well. However, as our research shows, Fénelon neither brings the fraternity to the fore nor makes it the third member of the triad of fundamental social values.

Researchers often point to the common ideas of enlighteners who, in one way or another, refer to all members of the famous triad (Ozouf, 1997). Let us see what *L’Encyclopédie ou Dictionnaire raisonné des sciences, des arts et des métiers* – “sum of the French Enlightenment” – and Jean-Jacques Rousseau, the enlightener who gained the highest reverence among French

revolutionaries and created the most integral social teaching.

L'Encyclopédie contains articles on each of the members of the triad. The texts that interest us almost entirely belong to Louis de Jaucourt. Thirteen articles are devoted to different meanings of the word “liberty”: here is liberty in painting, liberty in commerce, and liberty in iconography, etc. Jaucourt focuses on its meaning in the field of morality. At the same time, morality, based on the text of the article, should be understood in the sense that Georg Hegel will give it in contrast to ethics. This liberty has little social significance. Moreover, according to Jaucourt, people are not “born and remain free,” as *La Déclaration des Droits de l'Homme et du Citoyen* (the Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen, hereinafter – The Declaration) stipulates. “La liberté réside dans le pouvoir qu’un être intelligent a de faire ce qu’il veut, conformément à sa propre détermination” (*L'Encyclopédie*, n.d., liberté). The mind is both the basis and the limiter of liberty. However, different beings are reasonable in different ways. The mind may not take place yet – this state relates to children (Jaucourt associates it with the physiological immaturity of the brain), the mind can sleep (the brain needs it from time to time), the mind can be sick (speaking about mentally disordered people). All of them are not free.

A completely different approach is demonstrated by Jaucourt when it comes to natural, civil and political liberties, that is, when the analysis of liberty begins not with the qualities of a free subject but with the conditions of its existence. These four types of liberty are logically related and imply equality of subjects in liberty. Natural liberty consists in the possibility of not obeying any master. This has long been a blissful state. Civil liberty is the transformation of natural liberty in society and consists in the ability to abide only by the law. The best laws are those that guarantee the safety of every citizen, which is expressed not only in criminal prosecution for crimes but also in the fact that no one, including

the ruler, can intimidate another. This is political liberty. In other words, the loss of absolute natural liberty can be compensated only under conditions of equality before the law, ensuring the inviolability of the person and his property. The English roots of Jaucourt’s approach are apparent, although he directly cites Charles-Louis de Secondat, Baron de Montesquieu, but not John Locke. The encyclopedist writes about the country in which the primary goal of the constitution is to establish political liberty, about the beautiful genius of England. Compared to Locke, in *L'Encyclopédie*, one can note a more differentiated approach to the concept of liberty. (This approach, however, was not merit of Jaucourt alone. For example, Guillaume-Thomas François Raynal distinguished between natural liberty (human liberty), civil liberty (liberty of a citizen) and political liberty (liberty of the people). A little later, we will consider a similar difference in the reasoning of J.-J. Rousseau.) On the other hand, *L'Encyclopédie* does not provide a single and consistent idea of liberty, even though one person wrote articles about it. “Liberty of the soul,” which, we repeat, is of primary interest for Jaucourt, does not relate to the types of “social” liberty.

The fraternity acts as a civil correlate of natural equality. According to Jaucourt, the natural people’s affinity for each other is based on natural equality: “the duty of mercy, humanity and justice” (*L'Encyclopédie*, n.d., Egalité). Fraternity, on the other hand, is associated with a natural factor and moral liberty. The appearance of this concept demonstrates how in the “naturalistic symbolism of unity” (Iavorskii, 2007), under the guise of “naturalistic symbols,” the destruction of a pan-natural idea was happening in the heart of educational ideology. Nature with all its symbols, including fraternity, was not really decisive for new thinking. It was needed to justify the possibility of a different reality – Communication. While the idea of Nature was working for Communication, it was developing to become rich in detail. As soon as Nature made Commu-

nication redundant or began to contradict it, it was mercilessly discarded. The filling of the concept of fraternity with no consanguineous and affinitive content and even its implicit opposition to natural equality by Jaucourt is a vivid but by no means the only example. One can find the same motives, sometimes even tragic (or tragicomic), in the reasoning of J.-J. Rousseau.

In *Du Contrat Social ou Principes du Droit Politique* (The Social Contract), Rousseau makes a remarkable conclusion from the reasoning on the critical topic of his predecessors. Since the political state is essentially different from the natural state, all fundamental social characteristics of a person cannot be considered as the constants independent of these states' change. In other words, if Locke believes that the political state should guarantee the observance of natural liberty, then for Rousseau, such a thesis is meaningless. According to Rousseau, the political, civil state gives rise to political, civil liberty, which is not identical to natural ones. By concluding a social contract, people exchange their natural liberty for a political one. On the one hand, Rousseau's logic follows that of Locke, who claimed the historical existence of the natural state. On the other hand, Rousseau returns to the complexity of Hobbes with his dialectic of physical and political bodies. “The total alienation of each associate, together with all his rights, to the whole community” (Rousseau, 2017, p. 7). Removing oneself from this whole, that is, acting by one's own will, turns out to be a crime, a violation of the terms of the contract and civil liberty. Hence, a well-known consequence is inevitable: such a violator “will be forced to be free” (Rousseau, 2017, p. 9).

Accordingly, both equality and unity arise here. Rousseau does not consider natural equality as a compelling argument. Rousseau reasonably observes that in a natural state, people are not equal – neither in their physical capabilities nor in their mental ones. Equality can only arise in a civil state. Note that Rousseau brings to the end this Locke's thought and expresses one of the

fundamental provisions of the new European civilization: people are equal in rights because they are equal in law. Here comes another consequence indicating not the main path of European thought but often a branch. Equality means that an individual possesses nothing – no property, no rights, not even his own life. However, as Rousseau liked to say, no one would sanely agree to such terms of the contract. The agreement concluded by the madmen is not valid. Moreover, “ascending to the original contract” is the principle that Rousseau makes the methodological basis for checking the reasonableness of existing laws. (In two hundred years, John Rawls will apply this principle.)

People alienate their property and life only on the terms of receiving them back. However, like liberty, these acquired gifts are no longer identical to the donated ones. The political body creates guarantees for a person's life in ordinary conditions, but in extreme ones, this life may be taken since, in essence, it belongs not to a person but to political society. The same happens to things. Everyone is guaranteed property, but it completely differs from that one in a natural state. If all property belongs to society, then equality of rights means that society will allocate an equal amount of this property to everyone. Rousseau replaces the formal equality of Locke with the material one. At the same time, Rousseau justifies material equality not based on the principles of law, with all due respect for them, but taking into account the suitability of such a division for society. “Do you want the state to be solid? Then make the wealth spread as small as you can; don't allow rich men or beggars. These two conditions are naturally inseparable: any state that has very wealthy citizens will also have beggars, and vice versa. And they are equally fatal to the common good: one produces supporters of tyranny, the other produces tyrants. It is always between them that public liberty is put on sale: one buys, the other sells” (Rousseau, 2017, p. 26).

Finally, let us turn to the concept of fraternity.

Rousseau constantly uses the word “unity.” The unity of the people is both a prerequisite and the result of a social contract. However, for all the importance of unity, it cannot claim status equal to liberty and equality, which Rousseau declares as the basic principles of the state. The word “fraternity” in *Du Contrat social* is not actually used. However, one can find the expression “all men are brothers” when it comes to Christianity. “By means of this holy, sublime, and genuine religion all men, as children of one God, acknowledge one another as brothers, and the society that unites them isn’t dissolved even at death” (Rousseau, 2017, p. 71). However, from Rousseau’s point of view, the challenge is that such a perception of fraternity does not correlate with political unity. Rousseau expresses the idea that after a century gained scandalous fame thanks to Friedrich Nietzsche – Christians are slaves. However, Rousseau spoke about slaves only in the social sense. People become slaves because they do not worry about the political system, which is what tyrants of all stripes enjoy. Christianity is “a holy, sublime, and genuine religion,” and the Kingdom of God is beautiful, except it is not of this world. Furthermore, like all the above-mentioned figures, Rousseau is concerned about the possibility of liberty and equality already in this world. Thus, he was not the one who introduced fraternity into the revolutionary formula.

Our study again leads to a negative result. However, French thinkers are much more interested in a fraternity than their English colleagues and predecessors, the idea that enlighteners or even F. Fénelon himself coined the motto “Liberty, Equality, Fraternity”, which turns out to be a myth.

The Third Hypothesis. The Masonic Roots of the French Motto

It is widely claimed that the motto “Liberty, Equality, Fraternity” has Masonic roots (Webster, 2001; Porset, 2012). Nesta Helen Webster believes that this phrase was born in the secret

society founded in France by Martinez de Pasqually, a native of Portugal (Spain?). According to the English researcher, the formula “Liberty, Equality, Fraternity” is mentioned as the “holy trinity” in *Des Erreurs et de la Vérité* – the book published by Louis-Claude de Saint-Martin, a Pasqually’s disciple, in 1775 (Webster, 2001, p. 6).

The book published in France under the pseudonym “Le Philosophe inconnu” made a great impression on contemporaries. We are not interested in a complete set of studies of Louis Claude de Saint-Martin, including revelations about mathematics, physics, pharmaceuticals, philology, music, etc., but only his ideas on the subject of our research.

Saint-Martin liked triads. He has many of them, starting from the fact that he rejected the universal misconception about the existence of four elements (a controversy with Jakob Böhme), having left only three. However, one requires a remarkable ability to read between the lines to find the ideas of liberty, equality, fraternity, even elevated to the rank of the Holy Trinity, while analyzing the legacy of Saint-Martin. Either the reasoning of the free philosopher does not contain such expressions (Amadou, 1974), or the very spirit of his teachings completely rejects these principles.

De Saint-Martin is, indeed, interested in liberty, and at the very beginning of his work, he already gives it a definition: “The true particularity of the free creature is the power to stay self-intentionally in the law prescribed to it, and maintain its strength and independence, resisting by goodwill those obstacles that seek to divert it from the exact implementation of this Law” (About Misconceptions, 1785, p. 21). This refers to the Single Law expressing the Universal Beginning. Freedom is autonomous. Where external circumstances determine acts, there is no liberty. That is, by freely refusing to follow the Law, without resisting external temptations, we lose our liberty. So, in fact, this happened in the act that since the time of the Blessed Augustine

of Hippo is called “the Original Sin”. From that moment, a person was plunged into the Evil Beginning. Being in the material world is a punishment. Furthermore, here there can be no liberty – what kind of liberty the prisoner has! Since there is no liberty, then, according to Saint-Martin, all the assumptions of supporters of the theory of social contract collapse. (Saint-Martin’s work does not mention a single name, but it seems that he mainly criticized Rousseau.)

A similar story occurs with equality. In the primitive state, people did not have power over each other, but they owned creatures of the lower order. The fall from the Beginning deprived them of power, which may belong to free beings. However, on the other hand, it made it possible to establish power similar to the prison order. “However, in the state of purification, to which man is now exposed, not only does he have the convenience to regain his ancient power, which would be enjoyed by all men, without having a kind of creature in his allegiance; he also may acquire another right which he was not aware of in a primitive state, that is, the right to rule over other people...” (About Misconceptions, 1785, p. 277). People more intelligent, closer to the Beginning, should become overseers of those who are completely captured by physicality. The king “must use over them all the rights of slavery and succumbing; rights as righteous and essential in this case as incomprehensible and insignificant in any other circumstance...” (About Misconceptions, 1785, p. 278). Of course, in this state, neither the subjects have the right to resist oppression, however cruel and unrighteous it may be, nor the rulers have the right to cross the boundaries defined by the Beginning. It is utterly unimportant for us that Saint-Martin has apparently believed that the true rulers are Masonic masters, not ruling monarchs at all. This does not change the substance of the matter, which can be expressed by the formula “lack of liberty and inequality”.

As for fraternity, concluding his work, Saint-Martin deeply observes that “all people are C-H-

R” (About Misconceptions, 1785, p. 534). However, the discovery of unity in Jesus Christ, whom he called the Great Reasonable Cause from the very beginning, did not add anything to the reasoning already given. Here one can instead see the connections with the Gnostic motives of unity in the primal man than the rationale for the idea of fraternity.

Curiously, Pasqually’s disciples did not accept the Revolution. Saint-Martin himself spent the time of the “triumph of Liberty, Equality, Fraternity” in Switzerland and returned to his homeland only shortly before his death in 1803. Here is how Arthur Edward Waite, a Martinist of the 20th century, assesses the Revolution: “...Suddenly the doors slammed, the meat grinder of the French Revolution put an end to all dreams and the era itself...” (Leman & Waite, 2005, p. 145).

Michel Borgetto (1993; 1997) believes that the revolutionary formula gained popularity only by 1793. “However, this triad never represented an exclusive and a fortiori official motto of the regime, and the revolutionaries always refused to single out a single motto to express the spirit of the institutions they created” (Borgetto as cited in Latour & Pauvert, 2007, p. 269). At the same time, one should note that already in 1790, during the feast of the federation on July 14, soldiers, according to Camille Desmoulins, promised each other liberty, equality, fraternity (Bosc, 2010), and in December of that year, Maximilien Robespierre (1866), as a matter of course, invites the National Assembly to draw this phase on the chest and banners of the National Guards. In the documents of the Revolution, only fraternity remained an unofficial element.

Conclusion

In summary, whatever the ideological sources of the formula “Liberty, Equality, Fraternity” – English political thought, modernist views of the Catholic clergy, the philosophy of enlighteners, Freemasonry or spontaneous folk creativity – the values of liberty and equality were extremely

common in the 18th century. The diversity of approaches to understanding liberty is not only not surprising but simply inevitable. This was remarkably noted by Charles-Louis de Montesquieu (1955, p. 283): “No word receives so many different meanings and makes such a different impression on minds as the word “liberty”. The first call it an easy opportunity to depose the one they endowed with tyrannical power, the second defines it as the right to elect someone to whom they should obey, for the third, it constitutes the right to bear arms and to commit violence, the fourth see it as a privilege to be under the rule of a person of their nationality or abide by their own laws. For a long time, certain people took liberty for the custom of wearing a long beard. Some understand it as the known form of government, excluding all others”. Obviously, such diversity could not but lead to a split between the advocates of liberty regarding its implementation in life.

However, let us note that Montesquieu, in his list, which should give an idea of differences in the understanding of liberty, provides only the characteristics of political liberty. His thought cannot leave the main path: liberty requires a specific organization of society. François Guizot wrote about this epoch: “A man is not occupied by personal liberty but by a citizen’s liberty; he belongs to the association, he is dedicated to the association, he is ready to sacrifice himself to the association” (Guizot as cited in Gérald, 1981, p. 26). Ideas, like Fénelon ones – a man is free in God – look hopelessly outdated. However, the same atavism is the recent calls to preserve the liberty of the Gallican Church, the liberty of cities or the liberty (privilege) of the nobility. The meaning of association is changing, the subjects of liberty are changing, and liberty is presented as one for all. Two fundamentally different understandings of freedom now provide two answers to the question: what is the value of civil status – human liberty or the liberty of society? Their unity in social practice is beyond doubt. Hobbes described their conceptual inseparability.

However, theoretically and even practically, it is evident that these values are still different. Locke defends the priority of individual political liberty; Rousseau champions that of public liberty. There is no doubt that revolutionary reality was oriented towards the ideals of the Swiss philosopher. Moreover, the figures of the Jacobin terror, his victims and his heirs unequivocally preferred public liberty (Pimenova, 1992). In this sense, Guizot was undoubtedly right.

Nevertheless, from our point of view, we are talking about the necessary stage of self-denial, which passed individual liberty. The fundamental texts of the era prove the fact that this is true: “The aim of every political association is the preservation of the natural and imprescriptible rights of man. These rights are liberty, property, security, and resistance to oppression” (Art. 2 of the Declaration). Even the Feasts of Reason (*Les Fêtes de la Raison*) became a reminder that the only reasonable law of liberty is not to affirm universal unity but to stipulate that “liberty consists in the power to do anything that does not injure others” (art. 4 of the Declaration). The revolution began when the deputies of the Estates-General refused to vote on the principle “one estate – one vote”, strongly preferring the individual’s liberty to the liberty of the corporation, affirming the equal dignity of all deputies, as well as those whom they represented.

So, it seems to us that, in the Modern Age, we are talking about individual liberty, which, as a prerequisite, implies a complex of political and social and economic freedoms. Liberty substantially means the possibility of choosing himself and formally (in terms of expression) – the opportunity to do everything that does not violate another person’s liberty. The formal side of liberty requires recognition of the equality of all human beings. Equality is, therefore, the same opportunity for all people to act. The substantial sameness is taken out of consideration; that is, the so-called material or actual equality can be recognized only if it is qualified as an external condition for the realization of liberty, in other

words, during formalization. For example, for Aristotle, the inequality of reasonableness entails different degrees of liberty. For the Modern Age, the inequality of reasonableness must be overcome wherever possible: through compulsory free education, equal access to information sources, etc. This is necessary so that a relatively less reasonable person should enjoy the same liberty as a relatively more reasonable person. Thus, liberty and equality, in this understanding, are completely inextricable, while they may be substantially incompatible with other concepts.

At the same time, one should not be surprised that the statement of liberty and equality, the pathos of individualism, both in philosophical texts and revolutionary practice, usually took place without the fraternity. A. Gérald (1981) emphasizes that the Jacobins were the Society of Friends of Liberty and Equality, but not brotherhood, fraternity trees were planted separately from liberty trees, and fraternity is generally associated with terror. Louis Blanc, not without reason, argued that the bourgeois revolution was much closer to the motto “Liberty, Equality, Property”, and supporters of the Christian origin of the concept “fraternity” speak about such words as almost prohibited for revolutionaries (Ozouf, 1989, p. 160). Nevertheless, we claim that the third member of the formula appeared there by no means accidentally, and over time its meaning was only crystallizing. The reasons were repeatedly said: the realization of liberty and equality is impossible alone. It is not that people need each other to survive. Fraternity is necessary because free and equal people from nature are not brothers at all. The extraordinary reasoning of Locke, becoming the official ideology of Europeans, could displace, but not destroy, the Hobbesian (Calvinian, etc.) confidence that a man is a wolf to another man (*homo homini lupus est*) in the natural state. A free person will surely use his liberty to deprive another man of it and take advantage of his equality to receive privileges. For Locke, a social contract is an opportunity to avoid some “inconveniences” of the natural

state; for Rousseau, it is an opportunity not to degrade entirely compared to the natural state; for Hobbes, it is the need for self-preservation in artificially created unity, in which, let us recall, “a man is God to another man”. This closely resembles the reasoning of K. Lorenz that we are doomed to become moral precisely because we are not taking care of each other by nature. The only fraternity can save liberty and equality.

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