SOME CONSIDERATIONS OF DEMOCRACY AND SCIENCE IN THE POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY OF JEAN-JACQUES ROUSSEAU

by

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ABSTRACT

This thesis is a comparative study of Rousseau's Premier Discours and Du Contract Social. The essay will attempt to establish the thesis that science is both indispensable and dangerous to a democratic order. Democracy, we assume, presupposes self-restraint, more specifically, the self-restraint of the few best citizens. The question then is—does science support those virtues by which men may be persuaded to serve democracy or, quite the contrary, to destroy it?

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Vassilios Giannis
1976

PREFACE

As a footnote to the ongoing debate between the ancients and the moderns, this essay owes much to the work of Professor Leo Strauss. It is an attempt to pursue a few of the suggestions found in Professor Strauss' essay, On the Intention of Rousseau, and to clarify, wherever possible, important problems raised in Rousseau's democratic theory. Of course, the perspective we have adopted has presented us with several problems which, because of formal limitations, necessitate their resolution at a later date.

The emphasis of this essay is on the men of "stronger natures". This term, we recognize, was used by Professor H.V. Jaffa in Crisis Of The House Divided. Professor Jaffa's book was an invaluable source for insights and comparisons during the writing of this essay. For a variety of reasons, the most important of which were precision and style, we have also employed the terms "higher men" and "true philosophers" to distinguish between two types of superior men. The reader's indulgence is requried, though we have taken every precaution to indicate our meaning in each case.

But why should science and the role of the superior man be of interest to us? This is the fundamental question which this essay attempts to answer. For, as Rousseau tells us, in an age when the man of superior birth "can now point to nothing

within himself that sets him apart from other men and justifies his good fortune, no mark inseparable from his person that attests to his natural superiority—except for the qualities of mind and spirit", we must wonder to what extent he is willing to pursue his last and perhaps only avenue.

"This has been the special knack of pseudoscience, that terrible scourage of mankind, a scourage worse than plague, famine, and war, an evil that didn't exist until this century. Half-knowledge is a tyrant without precedent, one that is worshipped with unprecedented awe and adulation and before which science itself fawns and cringes."

Fyodor Dostoyevsky

The Possessed, Part II, Chapter I

"Of all the dispositions and habits which lead to political prosperity, Reason and Morality are indispensable supports. In vain would that man claim the tribute of Patriotism who should labour to subvert these great pillars of human happiness, these firmest props of the duties of Man and Citizens. The mere Politicians, equally with the pious man, ought to respect and cherish them. . . . Where is the security for property, for reputation, for life, if the sense of religious obligation desert the oaths, which are the instruments of investigation in Courts of Justice? And let us with caution indulge the supposition that morality can be maintained without religion. Whatever may be conceded to the influence of refined education on minds of peculiar structure; reason and experience forbid us to expect that national morality can prevail in exclusion of religious principle."

Washington's Farewell Address,

September 19, 1796

CHAPTER I

PARADOX AND POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY

The paradoxical nature of Rousseau's writing has often been noted but rarely accounted for. An explanation may suggest the fundamental nature of Rousseau's philosophy, and perhaps, of philosophy as a whole. The principles of philosophy, Rousseau is convinced, are of necessity paradoxical. They are paradoxical to the philosophically unenlightened, those who, by virtue of their opinions, are prohibited from seeing the true nature of things. Philosophy, by definition, considers matters outside the bounds of common opinion [para doxa] as its activity is oriented towards truth or wisdom. Thus, the principles of political philosophy are necessarily "contraire à l'opinion commune", and as an activity "va à l'encontre de l'opinion communement admise".[1]

Perhaps a definition of the word "paradox", taken from the Oxford English Dictionary, may adequately illustrate our meaning:

> The Bishop speaks of paradoxes with such scorn or detestation, that a simple reader would take a paradox either for a felony or some other heinous crime, . . . whereas perhaps a judicious reader knows that . . . a paradox is an opinion not yet generally received. (Hobbes, Liberty, Necessity and Chance, 1656)

The paradoxical nature of Rousseau's writings, we suggest, can be understood only as a function of philosophical

autonomy. They require the reader to transcend the limitations of his age in order to grasp the underlying unity and originality of "un solitaire".

> Avant neanmoins de me décider tout à fait, je résolus de relire ses écrit avec plus de suit et d'attention que je n'avois fait jusqu'alors. J'y avois trouvé des idées et des maximes très paradoxes, d'autres que je n'avois pu bien entendre. J'y croyois avoir senti des inegalités, même des contradictions. Je n'en avois pas saisi l'ensemble assez pour juger solidement d'un système aussi nouveau pour moi. Ces livres-là ne sont pas, comme ceux d'aujourdui des aggregations de pensées détachées, sur chacune des quelles l'esprit du lecteur puisse se reposer. Ce sont des méditations d'un solitaire; elles demandent un attention suivie qui n'est pas trop du gout de notre nation. Quand on s'obstine à vouloir bien en suivre le fil il y faut revenir avec effort et plus d'une fois.[2]

But the radical autonomy of philosophy is by no means innocent in its consequences. Not only does philosophy contradict established morals and manners, but it also suggests new "truths" on which society should, or should not, be founded. That is to say, philosophy undermines men's opinions, upon which all institutions are ultimately founded. Thus, philosophy is inherently a revolutionary approach to politics—to the problems confronted by a political community. As a citizen-philosopher, Rousseau chose to disguise the fundamental principles of his philosophy.[3] Addressing himself to M. Bordes, Rousseau writes:

> Ce n'est que successivement et toujours pour peu de Lecteurs, que j'ai developpé mes idées. Ce n'est point moi que j'ai ménagé, mais la vérité, afin de la faire passer plus sûrement et de la rendre utile. Souvent je me suis donne beaucoup de peine pour tâcher de renfermer dans une Phrase, dans une ligne,

> dans un mot jetté comme au hasard, le résultat d'une longue suitte de réflexions. Souvent la pluspart de mes Lecteurs, auront du trouver mes discours mal liés et presque entierement décousus, faute d'appercevoir le tronc dont je ne leur montrois que les rameaux. Mais c'en étoit assez pour ceux qui savent entendre, et je n'ai jamais voulu parler aux autres.[4]

Rousseau's writings, therefore, are constructed in a manner which necessarily distract the average reader from truths which may jeopardize his political loyalties. On the other hand, Rousseau's paradoxes, being anything but clever conversational pieces, teach the serious minded to ignore superficial inconsistencies while availing themselves to the unified logic of the whole. If, as Rousseau claims, they coincidentally serve to preoccupy the criminally minded from their usual pursuits, so much the better.[5]

As indicated in the Lettre à M. Bordes, as well as in the Préface à Narcisse, Rousseau recognized that few would support his theory of the disproportionate demands of science and society. The philosophy of his century, Rousseau was aware, was animated by a strong commitment to the vigorous participation of science and philosophy in politics. It was, philosophers believed, the duty of all learned men to bring the advances of science before all mankind, to expose the foundations of error, and, therefore, to demonstrate the true nature of a rational, just and free society. For seventeenth and eighteenth century philosophers, the discrepancy between men's opinions and philosophers' knowledge did not represent, nor suggest, a permanent or natural division among men. As a matter of fact,

philosophic reflection revealed the possibility, if not the desirability, of eliminating the antagonism between philosophy and politics through popular enlightenment.[6] Accordingly, a philosopher such as Hobbes could complete the Leviathan with the following remarks:

> To conclude, there is nothing in this whole discourse, nor in that I writ before of the same subject in Latin, as far as I can perceive, contrary either to the Word of God, or to good manners; or to the disturbance of the public tranquility. Therefore I think it may be profitably printed, and more profitably taught in the Universities, in case they also think so, to whom the judgment of the same belongeth. For seeing the Universities are the fountains of civil and moral doctrine, from whence the preachers, and the gentry, drawing such water as they find, use to sprinkle the same (both from the pulpit and in their conversation), upon the people, there ought certainly to be great care taken, to have it pure, both free from the venom of heathen politicians, and from the incantation of deceiving spirits. And by that means the most men, knowing their duties, will be less subject to serve the ambition of a few discontented persons, in their purposes against the state; and be less grieved with the contributions necessary for their peace and defence; and the governors themselves have the less cause, to maintain at the common charge any greater army, than is necessary to make good the public liberty, against the invasions and encroachments of foreign enemies.[7]

Rousseau, alone amongst the progenitors of modern political theory, attempted to refute the argument that the dissemination of knowledge, that is, the popularization of philosophy and science, was essential to a free society. He did so on the grounds that a free society presupposes virtue and not science as fundamental to its being. This thought, though it approximates the teachings of the classical theorists,

was completely alien to the temper of the modern "rationalistic movement".

According to Professor Leo Strauss, Rousseau's attack on modern political science can be understood only as a restatement of the underlying premises on which classical political philosophy was built. Classical political philosophy, and especially that of Plato, was forged at a time when common citizens had a strong distaste for philosophy, and its probable effects on the morals of the state. Rousseau, on the other hand, had to fight against an age when science and government were wed through a favourable social prejudice which, as Professor Strauss has pointed out, is perhaps a more dangerous opinion.[8]

Classical political philosophy is founded on the theoretical proposition that the best state is one in which "rulers become philosophers" or "philosophers become rulers". This proposition, however, is reluctantly dismissed and replaced with the theory of "government by discussion". But classical political philosophy works with the assumption that the natural inequality of intellectual powers is a decisive factor in the delegating of power in the community. That is, classical theorists assumed that most men could do no more than appeal to their opinions, while only a small proportion could attain scientific knowledge. Thus, classical political philosophy, which has always supposed that the problem of the community can be solved only by philosophy, alots political authority

to those few men whose personal qualities and social position permit them to enjoy the contemplative life. Therefore, classical political philosophy is anti-democratic by modern standards, as it is premised on aristocratic, or at best "mixed", rule.

Modern democratic theory is founded on Rousseau's distinction between "Le Souverain du Gouvernement et la Puissance Législative de l'éxecutive". This distinction is necessary as it alone assures that supreme political authority rests with the body politic as a whole and not with any constituted element. It assures that all men will be free--in the sense that men will govern themselves. The genius of Rousseau is that he can make this distinction while still asserting, as the classics had done, the "natural inequality of men in the most important respect". The classical theory of politics relied heavily on the principle adumbrated above, namely, that an intellectual or scientific elite is the most prudent solution to the problem of politics. Rousseau, on the other hand, by appealing to the disproportionate requirements of science and society can construct a "fundamentally egalitarian" political system without in any way being inconsistent with his philosophical findings. In Le Discours sur les Sciences et les Arts, (hereafter cited as Premiere Discours), Rousseau supported the requirements of science by insisting on its social prohibition. This, Rousseau argues, is a prudential measure as it serves the interests of society and science as well. But in the Du Contract Social we

find Rousseau appeals to a different principle, which can indeed explain his opposition to the conclusion drawn by the ancients. This principle is moral freedom.

The disproportion between the needs of science and society is reconciled in the classical formulation of virtue. The state, the classics argued, is founded on virtue and not freedom. Virtue is a moral property, it is the culmination of a certain form of education whereby a man becomes a responsible citizen. Thus, virtue is essentially self-restraint, it is the formation of a civic character. But virtue and philosophy are premised on two contradictory principles, principles which threaten to destroy the state. Virtue is premised on a complete submission to the state and its laws, while philosophy must appeal to a higher principle. The principle which transcends political loyalties, indeed, all civic responsibilities, is the quest for truth. Thus, it is the virtuous citizen-philosopher who represents the reconciliation between science and society.

The publication of Rousseau's Premiere Discours in 1750 was perceived as nothing less than a full scale assault on the twin pillars, science and reason. To say that it was considered sheer folly is, at best, an understatement. For, as we earlier suggested, Rousseau's contemporaries casually assumed that the popularization of science and philosophy could serve to better a people and to secure its civil liberties. Rousseau, however, claimed that his readers had misunderstood him. It is not,

Rousseau replied, a question of deciding if science and philosophy are evil in themselves, but if their dissemination is a curse or a blessing.[9] For Rousseau, the popularization of science is bad because it erodes a people's dogmas and, therefore, the very fabric of the state.[10] Rousseau's assault on the dissemination of science, that is to say, the rationalism of the Enlightenment, is not as preposterous as may first appear to contemporary readers—or, indeed, as it certainly did appear to Rousseau's contemporaries. Rousseau's rejection of modern rationalism, Professor A. Bloom points out, as it is often misunderstood, may be explained as follows:

> . . . in opposing the rationalism of the Enlightenment, Rousseau does not reject rationalism but supports his position by an older rationalism which did not share the political and moral optimism of the moderns, but which still regarded human reason as the only standard.[11]

The older rationalism belongs to the teachings of the classics, for whom a good society is administered by a scientific or philosophical elite. A state, the Greeks generally believed, was an aggregate of the disproportionately gifted men who, when assigned to their proper station, duplicate in the state the harmony, or symmetry, that is in nature. But, as was noted, the good state is not a work of chance, it is the product of a highly trained intelligence which will award to each its due. This presupposes that, in general, man's immediate disposition is to rebel against nature, that is, to follow his passions to the extreme. Thus, it is the judicious

acts of the philosophers, through the organs of the state, which fix men's opinions to those truths which obviate their hubristic desires.

Rousseau's attack on modern rationalism is pursued on two levels. First, science is responsible for the dissemination of dangerous truths. Second, and this follows directly from the first, science cultivates a dangerous disposition in regard to all truths. Now, Rousseau does not accept the thesis that truth can ever be known. Speaking through his Savoyard Vicar, Rousseau asks the following set of questions:

> Quand les philosophes seroient en état de decouvrir la vérité, qui d'entre eux prendroit intérest à elle? Chacun sait bien que son sistême n'est pas mieux fondé que les autres; mais il le sontient parce qu'il est à lui. Il n'y en a pas un seul qui venont à conoitre le vrai et le faux ne préferât le mensonage qu'il a trouvé à la vérité decouverte par un autre. Où est le philosophe qui pour sa gloire ne tromperoit pas volontiers le genre humain? Où est celui qui dans le secret de son coeur se propose un autre objet que de se distinguer? Pourvu qu'il s'élêve an dessus du vulgaire, pourvu qu'il efface l'éclat des ses concurrens, que demande-t-il plus? L'essential est de penser autrement que les autres. Chez les croyans il est athée, chez les athées il seroit croyant.[12]

A little later on Rousseau answers his own questions by pointing out the insoluble objections that can be raised with regard to all philosophical or scientific knowledge.

> Je me disois: les objections insolubles sont communes à tous, parce que l'esprit de l'homme est trop borné pour les resoudre, elles ne prouvent donc contre aucun par préférence; . . .[13]

Rousseau repeats this theme in the Premiere Discours when he states:

> Que de dangers! que de fausses routes dans l'investigation des Sciences? Par combien d'erreurs, mille fois plus dangereuses que la vérité n'est utile, ne faut-il point passer pour arriver à elle? Le désavantage est visible; car le faux est susceptible d'une infinité de combinaisons; mais la vérité n'a qu'une maniére d'être. Que est-ce d'ailleurs, qui la cherche bien sincérement? même avec la meilleure volonté, à quelles marques est-on sûr de la reconnoître? Dans cette foule de sentimens différens, ques sera notre Criterium pour en bien juger? Et ce qui est la plus difficile, si par bonheur nous la trouvons à la fin, qui de nous en saura faire un bon usage?[14]

But if no one can definitively state to have found the truth, how is it, Rousseau asks, that many claim in fact to know it? In other words, assuming that science can not determine the absolute truth or its criteria (and certainly this is a reasonable assumption to make if only from the fact that countless conflicting theories are published almost daily) what effects does its dissemination have on man's morals, indeed, on a free society as a whole? If we take the first proposition, that being, that science reveals dangerous truths, we might then ask which truths did Rousseau consider to be dangerous? It is not at all clear from reading the Premiere Discours precisely which truths are harmful, and of which, according to Rousseau, nature deprives man, "just as a mother wrests a dangerous weapon from her child's hand". Although Rousseau describes the effects of science on the community--and it must be remembered that science which is diffused to all members of the community becomes popularized, or pseudo-science--it is only in his later work, i.e., Discours sur l'Origine et les Fondemens de l'Inégalité

Parmi les Hommes (hereafter cited as Seconde Discours), that Rousseau accounts for one of the "dangerous doctrines" of modern science. Modern science has, Rousseau claims, for the most part, accepted certain preconceived assumptions of natural man, and therefore of natural law. These assumptions can be traced to the writings of Hobbes, and they describe man as he is at present rather than as he was in the state of nature. The findings of Hobbes may be summarized as follows. Man in the state of nature is aggressive and vain. Furthermore, natural man has foresight and fears violent death. Modern science, Rousseau argues, though certainly not uniformly consistent with Hobbes' theory, has judged natural man from the constitution of civil man. Therefore, scientists and philosophers have assumed that man's evil is derived from the state of nature and the attributes of his earliest ancestors.

But how, one may ask, is the conclusion that man is naturally evil, or better yet, that man is solely motivated by selfishness, a dangerous doctrine? How can Rousseau insist that science "undermines the foundation of faith and annihilates virtue" by disclosing theories that may and may not be necessarily true? Science, Rousseau argues, is by its very nature an activity within which contradictions are inevitable. Just as Rousseau can demonstrate that man is naturally good, others have, and can, argue that man is naturally evil. The dissemination of science, therefore, spawns social uncertainty. It creates a "culture of science" where certain theories--let us call them

truths because they can be neither proved nor disproved—are taught and necessarily distorted by a vulgar audience. To judge, Rousseau argued, is to compare. As the "culture of science" teaches men to compare between truths which are equally probable, or unprobable, its only success is in teaching all men the truth about scepticism. But fixed ideas, Rousseau insists, are indispensible to the daily practice of men's lives. The "laws of humanity" and the "duties of a citizen" demand that the common man be absolutely certain about the most important truths on which his society rests. The example of man's natural goodness is a good case in point. If man's goodness can not be assumed to be "unquestionably true", then such virtues as altruism, beneficence, or disinterestedness may also be but illusions, that is, they may be a façade for selfishness and vanity. By the dissemination of science, we suggest, Rousseau believes certain moral properties—properties in which all men must have absolute faith if their freedom is to be mutually assured—are put into jeopardy. The common man, we have stated, has only his opinions. If these opinions are shaken, his faith in humanity, in law, and in the institutions of the state is destroyed and society as a whole is weakened.

This theory may be applied also to Rousseau's rejection of the arts. Ostensibly, Rousseau's criticism of the arts is an attack on "Ovid, Catullus, Martial, and that crowd of obscene authors whose names alone alarm decency". Implicitly, it is an attack on all art forms which divert citizens' attention from

duties to vain and sterile pleasures. As this theme is discussed in the following chapters, we need only content ourselves with a brief note on the parallel effect between art and science. Rousseau draws our attention to this parallel by comparing the "obscene authors of Rome with the "impious" writings of Leucippus and Diagoras. Like the impious Leucippus and Diagoras (of whom Diderot wrote, ". . . avait banni le nom de Dieu" and "à nier l'existence des dieux")[15] the Art of Love by Ovid, the erotic poetry of Catullus and the satirical epigrams of Martial enervate citizens' self discipline by introducing pleasures which contradict republican austerity and forbearance. For Rousseau, art, like science, is principally an introspective study which can undermine established virtues by exposing men to their inexhaustible appetites. The paradox in this is, as Rousseau so aptly puts it, "Until then, Romans had been content to practise virtue; all was lost when they began to study it". Thus, the naming of an "Arbitrar of Good Taste" is evidence of corruption as it implies a universal repudiation of morals and dogmas in favour of social license.

Rousseau's rejection of science, therefore, is predicated implicitly on the classical distinction between reason, or scientific knowledge, which only a few possess, and are capable of safely directing, and the opinions of the many, which, if threatened, can literally dissolve society. Perhaps we would do well to compare the above with the following statements from de Tocqueville and Madison to illustrate more clearly our view.

In his book Democracy in America, de Tocqueville insists that a free society presupposes a religion (or faith), as opinions are insufficient supports to republican institution. More importantly, reason or science is pernicious to a free people, as it "prepares them for servitude".

> This is more especially true of men living in free countries. When the religion of a free people is destroyed, doubt gets hold of the highest portions of the intellect, and half paralyses all the rest of its powers. Every man accustoms himself to entertain none but confused and changing notions on the subjects most interesting to his fellow-creatures and himself. His opinions are ill-defended and easily abandoned: and despairing of ever resolving, by himself, the hardest problems of the destiny of man, he ignobly submits to think no more about them.
>
> Such a condition cannot but enervate the soul, relax the springs of will, and prepare a people for servitude. Nor does it only happen, in such a case, that they allow their freedom to be wrested from them; they frequently themselves surrender to it. When there is no longer any principle of authority in religion any more than in politics, men are speedily frightened at the aspect of this unbounded independence. The constant agitation of all surrounding things alarms and exhausts them. As everything is at sea in the sphere of the intellect, they determine at least that the mechanism of society should be firm and fixed; and as they cannot resume their ancient belief, they assume a master.
>
> For my own part, I doubt whether man can ever support at the same time complete religious independence and entire public freedom. And I am inclined to think, that if faith be wanting in him, he must serve; and if he be free, he must believe.[16]

Madison, like de Tocqueville, reaffirms the need for a society to maintain its "prejudices" in face of reason:

> If it be true that all governments rest on opinion, it is no less true that the strength of opinion in each individual, and its practicle influence on his conduct, depend much on the number which he supposes to have entertained the same opinion. The reason of man, like man himself, is timid and cautious, when left alone; and acquires firmness and confidence, in proportion to the number with which it is associated. When the examples, which fortify opinion, are antient as well as numerous, they are known to have a double effect. In a nation of philosophers, this consideration ought to be disregarded. A reverence for the laws, would be sufficiently inculcated by the voice of enlightened reason. But a nation of philosophers is as likely to be expected as the philosophical race of kinds wished for by Plato. And in every other nation, the most rational government will not find it a superfluous advantage, to have the prejudices of the community on its side.[17]

Rousseau's position, like that of de Tocqueville and Madison, is neither fanciful nor unintelligible. The popularization of philosophy and science, Rousseau argues, leads to disasterous social consequences, as it provokes a universal rejection of political and moral principles. Philosophy and science corrupts man's judgements at the expense of developing their wit. Modern men, Rousseau suggests, may indeed be more clever than their ancestors; the culture of science has made men sophisticated and knowledgeable about finance, astronomy, physics, and the like. But, on matters of principle, modern man is not only a sceptic but, indeed, a cynic. Philosophy and science, as we have seen, lead men to conclude that on matters of principle one choice is as good, or as bad, as the next, and there is no justifiable standard to judge morality, loyality, sincerity, and reverence--except, on the basis of selfishness. Selfishness, we may infer from Rousseau's argument, is the

consequence of a "dangerous Pyrrhonism". Selfishness, in turn, fosters cynicism; it is responsible for the dishonest manners and subtle perfidious calumnies of modern society. To put the matter in Rousseau's own words:

> Quel cortége de vices n'accompagnera point cette incertitude? Plus d'amitiés sinceres; plus d'estime réelle; plus de confiance fondée. Les soupçons, les ombrages, les craintes, la froideur, la reserve, la haine, la trahison se cacheront sans cesse sous ce voile uniforme et perfide de politesse, sous cette urbanité si vantée que nous devons aux lumieres de notre siécle. On ne profanera plus par des juremens le nom du Maître de l'Univers, mais on l'insultera par des blasphêmes, sans que nos oreilles scrupuleuses en soient offensées. On ne vantera pas son propre mérite, mais on rabaissera celui d'autrui. On n'outragera point grossiérement son ennemi, mais on le calomniera avec adresse. Les haines nationnales s'éteindront, mais ce sera avec l'amour de la Patrie. A l'ignorance méprisée, on substituera un dangereux Pyrrhonisme. Il y aura des excès proscrits, des vices deshonorés, mais d'autres seront décorés du nom de vertus; il faudra ou les avoir ou les affecter. Vantera qui voudra la sobrieté des Sages du tems, je n'y vois, pour moi, qu'un rafinement d'intemperance autant indigne de mon éloge que leur artificieuse simplicité.[18]

Thus, in a corrupt society, Rousseau argues, philosophy is but the means by which men may authorize their vices. The popularization of science teaches men selfishness—it is immoral because it allows men to say one thing while doing another. To reason is not to desire; to know the good is not necessarily synonymous with desiring it, for if society is so constituted that one man may gain more by doing evil rather than good, it is not at all unreasonable to assume that men's "amour propre" will not restrain them from profiting at another's expense.

> En même tems que la culture des sciences retire en quelque sorte de la presse le coeur du philosophe, elle y engage en un autre sans celui de l'homme de lettres et toujours avec un égal préjudice pour la vertu. Tout homme qui s'occupe des talens agréable veut plaire, être admiré, et il veut être admiré plus qu'un autre. Les applaudissemens publics appartiennent a lui seul: je dirois qu'il faut tout pour les obtenir, s'il faisoit encore plus pour en priver ses concurrens.[19]

As it is, Rousseau does not believe that the popularization of philosophy and science necessarily persuades men to obey the public good where the good is not clearly known. In other words, because the study of philosophy and science teaches men to be selfish, they are led to assume the primacy of their natural liberty. By philosophizing, men are released from their moral commitments--they may perceive that there is no ultimate reason for them to obey any will other than their own. Thus, morals which are grounded in science are dangerous to a free society and to virtue, for men, at least consciously, recreate a state of nature of the most puerile sort. Again, speaking through the Savoyard Vicar, Rousseau states:

> Chacun, dit on, concourt au bien public pour son intérest; mais d'où vient donc que le juste y concourt à son préjudice? Qu'est-ce qu'aller à la mort pour son intérest? Sans doute nul n'agit que pour son bien; mais s'il n'est un bien moral dont il faut tenir compte on n'expliquera jamais par l'intérest propre que les actions des méchans. Il est même à croire qu'on ne tentera point d'aller plus loin.[20]

We should note, however, this important qualification. Rousseau never believed that freedom, at least in the moral sense, meant doing whatever one pleased. Rousseau defined

only natural liberty as a function of appetite and instinct. But natural liberty and moral freedom are mutually exclusive. To persist in claiming a right to one's natural liberty, after having entered civil society, Rousseau argues, is to persist in being a slave to one's passion. Natural liberty must be superceded by a different right, and this right is moral freedom.

Moral freedom, Rousseau cliams, "makes man truly master of himself",[21] at least in the sense that man alone may desire what is for his own good, or that which he esteems as such, without any external compulsion. Restated, freedom is nothing more than not doing what one does not wish. It follows from what has been said that freedom is not freedom not to desire one's own welfare, nor is it freedom to desire one's own harm. Now, moral freedom, which makes men master of themselves must also make men just. Justice, Rousseau argues, is a consequence of "intelligence"—it is the product of faculties exercised through mutual engagements. That is to say, moral freedom can not entitle one man to do what is good for himself without also entitling all men to do what is good for themselves. Rousseau defines justice as "doing unto others as you would have them do unto you".[22] Thus, the principle of freedom (which is simply concerned with the individual), fused with the principle of justice (which applies to society as a whole), permits Rousseau to build a theory wherein moral freedom (unlike natural liberty) is adhering to one's private will while still ultimately sub-

ordinating oneself to the public will. It is, in a word, the recognition of necessity--an obedience to enlightened self-interest. It is this understanding of moral freedom, we suggest--to be the master of one's self while still not doing what one does not wish--which leads to the universal recognition of the supremacy of law in a free society. This is what later permits Rousseau to say, "that whoever refuses to obey the General Will shall be constrained to do so by the whole body, which means nothing more than that he shall be forced to be free".[23]

To return to our argument, it is because philosophy, or the activity of philosophizing, may persuade men to submit to their selfish interests rather than their rational self-interest (or, what is the same, the will of the whole) that leads Rousseau to condemn philosophy as a socially pernicious industry. And, although Rousseau grants that it is possible that on some occasions, even selfishness may force men to obey a collective will, this is, however, a prudential measure exercised by an individual who refuses to accept all the responsibilities of citizenship. In other words, it is a temporary submission to necessity, rather than an assent to freedom. Without addressing himself openly to connection between philosophy and natural liberty, Rousseau writes the following:

> En effet chaque individu peut comme homme avoir une volonté particuliere contraire ou disdemblable à la volonté générale qu'il a comme Citoyen. Son intérêt particulier peut lui parler tout autrement que l'intérêt commun; son existence absolue et

> naturellement indépendante peut lui faire envisager ce qu'il doit à la cause commune comme un contribution gratuite, dont la perte sera moins nuisible aux autres que le payement, n'en est onéreux pour lui, et regardant le personne morale qui constitue l'Etate comme un être de raison parce que ce n'est pas un homme, il jouiroit des droits du citoyen sans vouloir remplir des devoirs du sujet; injustice dont le progrès causeroit la ruine du corps politique.[24]

Thus, the "culture of science" or "modern rationalism" is bad because it creates disloyal citizens who submit to the authority of law only when it is in their favour.

CHAPTER II

ROUSSEAU'S THEORY OF THE HIGHER MAN

According to Rousseau, we have so far argued, morals grounded in science, or, more precisely, the "culture of science", are incompatible with any principle of justice or loyalty. Science and philosophy engender doubt; the quest for all truth is dangerous, as it undermines the "dogmas" which bind men to a specific community. Furthermore, Rousseau pursues this attack on science and philosophy to its logical conclusion by arguing that science in the hands of the common people ("les hommes vulgaires"), becomes a sham or pseudo-science whereby dangerous errors are flaunted in the name of liberty. But science, we know also, demands that at least some men pursue truth at the expense of neglecting their civic responsibilities. Consequently, the quest for truth takes on a higher status, a privileged position, above that of civic responsibility and political loyalty. Just as science honours truth more than duty, and erudition more than loyalty, so those who pursue the learned professions are honoured more than the common citizens. And although Rousseau recognizes that "science in the abstract merits all our admiration", he also argues that the dissemination of science can not but incite jealousies and injustices, as it creates dangerous social distinctions. Thus, science and philosophy are responsible for accenting a dangerous

form of inequality which, as Rousseau states, "creates, cheats and hypocrites".[1]

Of course, Rousseau does recognize that an attack on the proliferation of science, while still attempting to maintain the "superior dignity of science", would appear as something of a caricature—if not as outright parody.[2] This problem, some have suggested, led Rousseau partially to disguise his work. The plausible nature of this thesis is, at least in part, supported by the fact that Rousseau was no stranger to disguised political documents, which, by his own admission, suggest an author's true love for liberty. Rousseau, Professor Leo Strauss insists, ". . . is fully alive to the repponsibilities that his principles impose upon him."[3] Thus, while appealing to the masses to refrain from making contact with the sciences, Professor Strauss continues, Rousseau must appear to reject philosophy and science "tout-court". Professor Strauss' theory is based on the hypothesis that Rousseau, at least in his Premiere Discours, was speaking as "two different authors", addressing himself to "two different audiences". To each, Professor Strauss claims, Rousseau taught a different truth. To the masses, Rousseau taught the superfluousness or harmfulness of the arts and sciences. To the philosophers, Rousseau taught the indispensibility of science "for the purpose of inspiring the great minds". This theory is based on one of Rousseau's letters in which he states:

> J'aurois cru faire injure aux Lecteurs, et les traiter common des enfans, de leur interpréter une allégoire si claire; de leur dire que le flambeau de Prométhée est celui des Sciences fait pour animer les grands génies; que le Satyre, qui voyant le feu pour la première fois, court à lui, et veut l'embrasser, représente les hommes vulgaires, qui séduits par l'éclat des Lettres, se livrent indiscrétement à l'étude; que le Prométhée qui crie et les avertit du danger, est le Citoyen de Geneve. Cette allégoire est juste, belle, j'ose la croire sublime.[4]

Although Professor Strauss has provided a very persuasive argument, perhaps the definitive answer to Rousseau's intention, there is, we feel, one singularly important element in the Premiere Discours which has long remained under-emphasized.[5] Though Rousseau's attack is principally aimed against philosophy and science, one can not but notice that Rousseau is also preoccupied with the men of a "stronger nature" and their effect on the morals of a free people. Without a thorough discussion of Rousseau's insights into these men, it is, we feel, impossible to understand fully Rousseau's central paradox—that being the indispensible yet dangerous status of philosophy and science in civil society. Provisionally, we would make the following suggestions. First, men of superior talent are dangerous to a free society both because of the things they profess to teach and for the type of desires that they incite. Second, these men are absolutely essential if a free society is to be well administered. As the latter half of this essay is concerned predominantly with the second suggestion, we will only briefly adumbrate this theme in the section here, while con-

centrating the bulk of our attention on the first suggestion.

We begin this part of our discussion by suggesting the following important considerations. The Premiere Discours is not merely, as some imply, a piece of social philosophy, that is, Rousseau's discourse is not merely a treatise on manners and morals. The Premiere Discours does, although indirectly, deal with the political institutions or ideals upon which morals are stamped. One example which tends to support this thesis is Rousseau's association of virtue with republican government.

> Quand Cyneas prit notre Sénat pour une Assemblée de Rois, il ne fut ébloüi ni par une pompe vaine, ni par une élégance recherchée. Il n'y entendit point cette éloquence frivole, l'étude et le charme des hommes futiles. Que vit donc Cyneas de si majestueux? O Citoyens! Il vit un spectacle que ne donneront jamais vos richesses ni tous vos arts; le plus beau spectacle qui ait jamais paru sous le ciel, l'Assemblée de deux cens hommes vertueux, dignes de commander à Rome et de gouverner la terre.[6]

Moreover, in the Émile, Rousseau states:

> Il faut étudier la société par les hommes, et les hommes par la société: ceux qui voudront traiter séparément la politique et la morale, n'entendront jamais rien à aucune des deux.[7]

Thus, Rousseau's Premiere Discours, indeed, all his work, is of a political nature. And, as a political treatise, the Premiere Discours warns citizens of the radical individualism, and moral nihilism which the arts and sciences cultivate. As it is, Rousseau's statements with regard to a free society (and they are certainly far from clear in the Premiere Discours)

suggest a high degree of social cohesiveness. People must, according to Rousseau, be agreed on the fundamental principles which bind them together, that is, they must all share the "sacred dogmas" of a closed society. Prudence, Rousseau argues, dictates a distrust of cosmopolitanism, and therefore of all learning. The sentiments of humanity become weaker when they are infinitely extended.[8] Furthermore, no citizen should have any disproportionate amount of wealth or be granted special privileges. Thus, a free society is necessarily poor, as all social distinctions between men enervate unity and are pernicious to morals.

In so far as Rousseau does not develop the principles of a free society in his earlier work, he immediately presents the reader with what is perhaps the most severe threat to civil freedom. The threat, according to Rousseau, is from "that crowd of obscure writers and idle men of letters", from "artists" and "obscene authors" who, with a clear conscience, would stop at nothing for the sake of distinction. Thus, Rousseau's threat presents itself in the light of the eternal antagonism within the human soul, the antagonism between reason and passion. The beneficence of passion, Rousseau suggests, can not be taken for granted, as the desire for distinction is morally neutral. The passion for distinction merits no scrupples, for if it means defending atheism before Christians, or Christianity before atheists, it is the object of passion rather than the content

of the rhetoric that is most revealing. Speaking of such men and passion, Rousseau writes:

> Que dis-je; oisifs? et plût-à-Dieu qu'ils le fussent en effet! Les moeurs en servient plus saines et la société plus paisible. Mais ces vains et futiles déclamateurs vont de tous côtés, armés de leurs funestes paradoxes; sapant les fondemens de la foi, et anéantissant la vertu. Ils sourient dédoigneusement à ces vieux mots de Patrie et de Religion, et consacrent leurs talens et leur Philosophie à détruire et avilir tout ce qu'il y a de sacré parmi les hommes. Non qu'au fond ils Raissent ni la vertu ni nos dogmes; c'est de l'opinion publique qu'ils sont ennemis; et pour les ramener aux pieds des autels, il suffiroit de les releguer parmi les Athée. O fureur, de se distinguer, que ne pouvez-vous point?[9]

The principles which underlie this theory are presented in the Seconde Discours. These principles, in so far as they have a bearing on our discussion, are the following. It is in the nature of man to have pity and to desire his well being. It follows that it is not in the nature of man to want to hurt any sensitive creature unless his own preservation is threatened. Thus, man is good, and goodness is doing good for oneself with the least possible harm to others.[10] More importantly, man is defined by a free will. Man is a free agent, with an unlimited faculty of perfectibility. But Rousseau recognizes that passions, or violent emotions (e.g., love, hate, fear, etc.) are also natural to man. These passions are derived from our needs. Furthermore, human understanding owes much to the passions and it is by their activity that our reason is perfected. Man, Rousseau argues, seeks to know because he desires

to have pleasure. Thus, the arts and sciences, as products of "luxury and the desire to distinguish oneself", are born from man as a creature who seeks pleasure and avoids pain. But the desire to know, Rousseau claims, also makes men vain.

> C'est la raison qui engendre l'amour propre, et c'est la réflexion qui le fortifie; C'est elle qui replie l'homme sur lui-même; c'est elle qui le sépare de tout ce qui le gêne et l'afflige: C'est la Philosophie qui l'isole; c'est par elle qu'il dit en secret, a l'aspect d'un homme souffrant, peris si tu veux, je suis en sureté.[11]

Therefore vanity, which is in turn derived from want of pleasure, nurtures a desire for distinction—a desire which, as Rousseau later states, leads men to search for happiness outside themselves.[12] But happiness, as opposed to pleasure, is knowing one's limitations. Happiness is finding one's self without having to be dependent on the opinions of others. But a man motivated exclusively by passion knows no such limitations, and, as Rousseau suggests, the desire for distinction is an all-consuming passion, as it is "all capable". Thus, it is philosophy and science as instruments, or perhaps symptoms, of an extreme and radical pursuit of pleasure which Rousseau unmasks in his Premiere Discours.

We should stop here, however, and draw attention to one crucial distinction. Rousseau is careful at all times to distinguish clearly between two types of superior men. Both, no doubt, share some common properties. Both, for example, are men of greater than common abilities, talents, and intel-

ligence. The first of these types Rousseau refers to as "obscene authors" and "vile disclaimers". The second is associated with a "few wise men" and "preceptors of the human race". But, as Rousseau's rhetoric suggests, though both these types have some common characteristics, they are far from being identical. The first class of men, Rousseau tells us, is motivated purely by the base passion vanity. One would, Rousseau notes, "take them for a troop of charlatans, each crying from his own spot on a public square". But if these men are bad because they have no motive save self-aggrandizement, they are dangerous because they are completely unprincipled. They would, Rousseau insists, "break down the doors of science" or remove "the difficulties which block access to the temple of the muses"—not that men should be better governed nor that society be more formidable, but that rewards should be showered on the witty and that one should be preferred to all the rest. On the other hand, the second type of superior man, the true "philosopher", is one capable of immense self-discipline, temperance and courage. The truly "wise men" Rousseau explains, "do not chase after riches" and the favour of their contemporaries. Socrates, one of the best examples of these "few men", was able "to resist the general torrent". Cato the Elder, Rousseau tells us, abstained from vice and opposed "the cunning and subtle Greeks who seduced and enervated the courage of his fellow citizens". Both Socrates and Cato, Rousseau suggests, ran against the

social grain when clearly all available evidence would have suggested that to follow public opinion would have been in their best interest.

The best we can do for the moment is merely to sketch one possible explanation why these truly great men acted as they did—that is, defended virtue. The answer, we believe, is suggested in the Preface to the Premiere Discours, where Rousseau claims to be writing for those "beyond one's century". That is, men of the stamp of a Socrates or a Cato will act according to principles which, more often than not, run counter to their immediate welfare. But to write for posterity, as the legislator seeks "a distant glory", is not to belie the statement that men of great virtue still desire glory. However, the glory of posterity is a higher good than that sought by the "intemperate" and the "cunning". Future glory is a higher good because it is motivated by the most sincere and disinterested desire for the happiness and welfare of others. When one's interests are not involved, one always does good. Thus, it is quite a different matter to achieve posthumous glory than to appease one's immediate desires for command, attention, or commendation. To gratify one's immediate desires means to renounce all principles, it means submitting to the expedient. Therefore, the immediate glory sought by one class of higher men is basically ignoble, as the motives, although they may at times appear to be the noblest, originate from the basest of

all passions.

But why should Rousseau assume that the interplay between men's reason and passion is at the heart of a free society? A free society, we have already seen, is animated by men's ability to will according to a principle of justice. Men are free, we have argued, when men can will what is good for themselves as well as what is good for others. But we also know that a free society is founded on men's opinions, and that these opinions are reflected in the institutions which serve them. Thus, it is the opinion that government through justice constitues freedoms, which must be constantly defended, if society is to be truly free. Rousseau's paradox is not as obscure as it may first appear. A free society is predicated on reason, but its basis is opinion. Returning for a moment to Rousseau's discussion of justice in the Seconde Discours, we find Rousseau to remark:

> Quoi qu'il puisse appartenir à Socrate, et aux Esprit de sa trempe, d'acquerir de la vertu par raison, il y a longtems que le Genre-humain ne seroit plus, si sa conservation n'eût dépendu que des raisonnemens de ceux qui le composent.[13]

But, if virtue can be gained through reason, why can't reason be gained through virtue? The principle of justice is, as Rousseau states, a "sublime maxim of reason". Thus, opinions which conform with reason are, if only in their consequence, as good as reason itself.

Now, no one need remind us that opinions are founded on very shaky intellectual grounds. Furthermore, we know that passions, by their very nature, can not be circumscribed by any restrictions—regardless how well these restrictions are founded on reason. What is more, men's vanity, or desire for distinction, has no object in view other than the fame or glory of the individual. Thus, the men who choose to pursue the arts and sciences choose to pursue their own pleasure, their own good, regardless of the consequences to society. This choice is not an unconscious one. Rousseau repeatedly asserts that these higher men, in so far as they are totally consumed by their passions, must distinguish themselves by whatever means might be available. Of course, this means adopting a style which is both as unique as it is engaging. It means, so to speak, sacrificing themselves before the crowd which is the keeper of their destiny. Thus, Rousseau's analysis of the atheist before Christians or Christian before atheists, is but a caricature of a slave. Rousseau repeats this analysis several pages on in the following manner:

> Tout Artiste veut être applaudi. Les éloges de ses contemporains sont la partie la plus précieuse de sa récompense. Que fera-t-il donc pour les obtenir, s'il a le malheur d'être né chez un Peuple et dans des tems où les Savans devenus a la mode ont mis une jeunesse frivole en etat de donner le ton; où les hommes ont sacrifié leur goût aux Tyrans de leur liberté; où l'un des séxes n'osant approuver que ce qui est proportionné à la pusillanimité de l'autre, on laisse tomber des chefs d'oeuvres de Poësie dramatique, et des prodiges d'harmonie sont rebutés? Ce qu'il fera, Messieurs? Il rabaissera son genie au niveau de son siécle, et aimera mieux composer des ouvrage communs qu'on admire pendant

> sa vie, que des merveilles qu'on d'admireront que longtems après sa mort. Dites-nous, célébre Arouet, combien vous avez sacrifié de beautés males et fortes à nôtre fausse délicatesse, et combien l'esprit de la galanterie si fertile en petites choses vous en a coûté de grandes.[14]

But if these higher men are indeed the people's slaves, does it then not follow that their passion for distinction can bend them to encourage vice as well as support virtue? Is it not possible that the passion for distinction would impel these uncommon men to teach virtue in a good society and viciousness in a corrupt one? Rousseau, towards the end of the Premiere Discours, tacitly admits this to be a serious possibility. But we know also that, except for a few most virtuous of men, all others will invariably submit to the authority of public opinion. "Opinion", Rousseau states, in one of his most famous letters, "is Queen of the world". But perhaps an example from the Premiere Discours itself would reveal more of the problem involved. Fabricius, Rousseau tells us, had a noble soul and Rome was saved by his valour. But Fabricius, Rousseau suggests, lived in an age of "thatched roofs and rustic hearths, where moderation and virtue used to dwell". On the other hand, Rousseau blames Voltaire for prostituting his talents to a corrupt society. Voltaire, Rousseau implies, ignores virtue for the sake of petty, but popular, works. If, for a moment, we leave the class of a Socrates and a Cato aside, we may begin to question the individual motives of such brilliant men as Fabricius, Voltaire, Charles-Andre Vanloo, and Jean-Baptiste-Marie Pierre

(Rousseau poses this question explicitly to the last two.) One must question, if one accepts our theory so far, if Fabricius' nobility was a function of a moral principle or historical circumstances and expediency. One must question whether Rousseau's judgment of Voltaire would have been different if Voltaire lived in another age. Of course, we can only raise this as a question which is obviously impossible to answer. It may very well be simply that certain men do what they do precisely because they are who they are.

But if we accept our preliminary conclusion—that is, that as slaves to public opinion these higher men teach virtue in a good society and evil in a bad one—how, then, are we to understand Rousseau's atheist-Christian paradox?

We have already noted that the passion for distinction is a desire for honour and glory. But we do not mean to suggest that only a few men have such a passion. The desire for reputation is rooted in men's vanity. But distinction, like all precious commodities, is scarce, and therefore only a few ever gratify their passion for it. These few, obviously enough, are those higher men from which no society, or era, is immune. But their extreme self-indulgence is merely a magnification of what others would do if assured of impunity. Therefore, desires of which the many are deprived but which are afforded to the few, incite jealousy, deceit and subtle slander on the one hand, and great admiration and hero worship on the other. Thus, the

extraordinary men who are rewarded handsomely for their slavishness to men's opinions precipitate dangerous social morals.

> D'où naissent tous ces abus, si ce n'est de l'inégalité funeste introduite entre les hommes par la distinction des talens et par l'avilissement des virtus? Voilà l'effet le plus évident de toutes nos études, et la plus dangereuse de toutes leurs conséquences. On ne demande plus d'un homme s'il a de la probité, mais s'il a des talens; ni d'un homme s'il a de la probite, mais s'il a des talens; ri d'un Livre s'il est utile, mais s'il est bien écrit. Les récompense sont prodiguées au bel esprit, et la vertu reste sans honneurs. Il y a mille prix pour les beaux discours, aucun pour les belles actions.[15]

The dangerous morals Rousseau believed to be at the base of a corrupt society, we suggest, are inspired by vanity or the pursuit of pleasure. Consequently, a situation is created wherein pleasure is comparing oneself with others and finding no one more talented or pleasing than oneself. It therefore follows that corruption is essentially the situation wherein one man finds his advantage only at the expense of others. The popularization of science and philosophy, we need only add, fosters such corruption. They are the means or the avenues by which men may pursue their passion for distinction. But, and this is certainly more important, the advantage gained from pleasing public opinion is also the power to change it. Therefore, it is in some sense true to say that the talented are not only men's slaves, but also their masters. Indeed, Rousseau implies this when, in the Préface à Narcisse, he writes:

> Le goût des lettres qui naît du désir de se distinguer, produit nécessairement des maux infiniment plus dangereux que tout le bien qu'elles font n'est utile;

> c'est de rendre à la fin ceux qui s'y livrent très-peu scrupuleux sur les moyens de réussir. Les premiers Philosophes se firent une grand réputation en enseignant aux hommes la pratique de leurs devoirs et les principes de la vertu. Mais bientôt ces précepts étant devenus communs, il fallut se distinguer en frayant des routes contraires. Telle est l'origine des systèmes absurdes des Leucippe, des Diogènes, des Pyrrhon, des Protagore, des Lucrèce. Les Hobbes, les Mandeville et mille autre ont affecté de se distinguer de même parmi nous, et leur dangereuse doctrine a tellement fructifié, que, quoiqu'il nous reste de vrais Philosophes ardens à rappeller dans nos coeurs les loix de l'humanité et de la vertu, on est épouvanté de voir jusqu'à quel point notre siecle raissonneur a poussé dans ses maximes le mépris des dévoirs de l'homme et du citoyen.[16]

Obviously, Rousseau is not so foolish as to underestimate the power of genius to change men's opinions. Hence, be it as the peoples' slaves or masters, these higher men always serve a very dangerous function. The fact that their teachings are mutually contradictory does not detract--but in fact enhances--their one precept. These men are irreverent, not because they are atheists but because they can be neither atheists nor Christians. They are not citizens, not because they can not obey law but because they can be neither loyal nor disloyal. Their position is governed strictly by expediency; they are cynics because they can not imagine there being any good other than self-gratification.

But it would be a mistake to conclude that Rousseau attributes the extremism of the higher man solely to scepticism. The dangerous "Pyrrhonism", Rousseau refers to, is not in itself a sufficient motivation for distinction. As can be seen

from the above, Rousseau attributes scepticism to ambition and not ambition to scepticism. Yet, if our theory is at all plausible, then it would appear that Rousseau's paradox of the master-slave is based on the popularly accepted maxim that distinction, "satisfied by the conventional honours bestowed by the weaker, on the basis of their morality of weakness",[17] is the highest good. But this conclusion presents us with the following difficulty. Is Rousseau suggesting that there is no real or qualitative distinction between all higher and common men, except that the former are much more likely to satisfy their passions? We believe not. Not only does Rousseau refuse to make such an admission, but he also rejects the supposition on which it is founded. The master-slave paradox, Rousseau argues, is valid because the ambition of most higher men is chained to the public belief that political or scientific glory is the highest human good. Thus, all measures which can secure such glory are justifiable, or at any rate, understandable and excusable. Of course, such glory is assured to no one, and one might say, that it is because most men are committed to this doctrine that the glory of each successive wave undermines that of its predecessors. But Rousseau, we have noted, distinguished between the higher men motivated by ambition and those great men of truly immortal stature. Socrates and Cato, we have argued, were not motivated by blind ambition but by a higher or disinterested principle which enabled them to keep

a strong watch over their passions. Hence, this disinterested principle contradicts the maxim favouring conventional honours. Socrates and Cato, therefore, were independent, indeed, truly virtuous men, because they refused to submit to the tyranny of public opinion, that is, they refused to accept the honours that could have been theirs from pandering to "that herd called society". But if these truly higher types can reject the praise of their contemporaries, without also rejecting glory, the following qeustion must then be asked. What is the nature of this glory to which the noble few aspire? The answer, it would appear, is found in the immortal discourses with which these men span the ages. The legislator's code is designed for a particular people, but it conveys the external questions of politics. Similarly, Socrates, Cato, Machiavelli, Calvin, and Rousseau speak to each other through time, though ostensibly, they are all concerned with the problems of their age and community. Thus, the glory sought by these "sublime geniuses" is qualitatively different from that of the "thousand others who have affected to distinguish themselves among us". This immortal glory is not begotten from weaker or common men but from the great men of history to whom disinterestedness is the highest principle.

The glory sought by these highest types, we may here note, makes these men self-controlled in face of the lawlessness which surrounds them. But if self-control is the mark of a

virtuous man, it is no less the mark of a citizen with republican temperament. Wisdom and self-control are the defining characteristics of Rousseau's ancient state-founders and republican-saviours. For Rousseau, Cato, Machiavelli, Bacon, Calvin and Socrates do not pose a threat to republican morals although it is in their power to destroy them. Unfortunately, Rousseau does not leave us with any further explanation for these men's actions beyond that which has been noted above. Therefore, we are left to infer that Rousseau had a conception of these highest men in which their conscience "for the duties of man and citizen" impelled them to defend virtue and to draw that veil of illusion which alone makes politics a practical solution to the human predicament.

We have only to compare briefly the above with Rousseau's position that a free society is governed by a strict code of morals wherein good and evil, noble and ignoble, are clearly defined. This code is viable as long as it is revered, that is, as long as men's opinions are governed by the principles of law. But principles and expediency, we have suggested, are irreconcilable. Those who are motivated by ambition will not attempt to change opinions for want of good or evil. Rousseau explicitly tells us that these men "hate virtue nor our dogmas". But change and innovation are essential to distinguish themselves from the rest. And as this incessant change and reward incite others to pursue similar activities, law and obedience

to law must be steadily undermined. Thus, through these men the crowd is permitted to express every form of absurdity, perfidity, calumny, roguery, and half-truth--and all in the name of science and liberty. But if the corruption of men's opinions, their tastes and morals, is only one consequence of the inequality of merit introduced by the higher men.[18] The other, and by far the more important, is the "debasement of virtue".

Again, assuming Rousseau to be speaking through his tutor, Jean-Jacques, he states:

> Mon enfant, il n'y a point de bonheur sans courage ni de vertu sans combat. Le mot vertu vient de force; la force est la base de toute vertu. La vertu n'apportient qu'à un être foible par sa nature et fort par sa volonté; c'est en cela que consiste la mérite de l'homme juste, et quoique nous appellions Dieu bon nous ne l'appellons pas vertueux, parce qu'il n'a pas besoin d'effort preur bien faire. Pour t'expliquier ce mot si profane, j'ai attendu que tu fusses en état de m'entendre. Tant que la vertu ne coûte rien à pratiquer on a peu besoin de la conoitre. Ce besoin vient quand les passions s'eveillent; il est deja venu pour toi . . .
>
> Qu'est-ce donc l'homme vertueux? C'est celui qui sait vaincre ses affections. Car alors il suit sa raison, sa conscience, il fait son devoir, il se tient dans l'ordre et rien ne l'en peut écarter.[19]

Virtue, Rousseau tells us, is derived from the word "strength". Virtue is essentially the willingness of an individual to do good in the face of adversity, it also presupposes a voluntary decision to obey one's reason--to do good rather than evil, to be just rather than unjust, to be free rather

than a slave. Freedom, we have pointed out, is doing what is truly in one's best interest—it is being free from doing what one does not truly want to do. Man is by nature good; when he obeys reason, he is just. Thus, men are free and virtuous when they are just. But the "culture of science", we have argued also, is a product of a lawless temperament. If slaves and lackeys can not be virtuous then a society of slaves and lackeys can not be virtuous. These higher types of men are slaves to their passions, and thus they are also slaves to the crowds. As masters of these very crowds, however, these same higher men teach society as a whole to submit to their opinions. Therefore, both the talented and the untalented, the ordinary and the exceptional, mutually corrupt each other, turning society—in spite of all the libertarian rhetoric—into a hideous form of tyranny, wherein all are slaves to an insatiable appetite.

CHAPTER III

THE CORRUPTION OF MORALS

Until now our considerations have been focused on the theoretical problem of passion and reason. We have yet to demonstrate how men's morals are threatened by a practical consideration of Rousseau's theory of the higher men. For this reason, we now turn to Rousseau's Lettre à M. d'Alembert, which, as a rebuttle against a suggestion for the establishment of a theatre in Geneva, clearly adumbrates the general arguments against the popularization of sciences.

We need not discuss the events or circumstances which led to this letter, other than to say that Genevan law prohibited the threatre within the walls of the city. Thus, the stage was set for a confrontation between one of the best and most talented minds of eighteenth century France, d'Alembert, who stood for the refinement of the arts and sciences, and Rousseau, who, as a loyal citizen, expressed the necessity of maintaining republican simplicity and austerity.

D'Alembert's suggestion, obviously enough, was to introduce to Geneva some of the gaiety of Paris and, ostensibly, none of its vices. A theatre governed by strict laws, d'Alembert argued, would refine the provincial tastes of Genevans without endangering the fine civic morals on which their city was founded. This all presupposes, of course, that the theatre,

has a civilizing effect on men's morals, It presupposes that social sophistication is part and parcel of a free society.

It is on this level, the level of supposition, that Rousseau chooses to launch his attack.

> How many questions I find to discuss in what you appear to have settled! Whether the theatre is good or bad in itself? Whether it can be united with morals (manners)? Whether it is in conformity with republican austerity? Whether it ought to be tolerated in a little city? Whether the actor's profession can be a decent one? Whether actresses can be as well behaved as other women? Whether good laws suffice for repressing the abuses? Whether these laws can be well observed? etc.[1]

Now, Rousseau does not say that d'Alembert purposefully chose to disregard these matters. On the other hand, Rousseau implies that this omission may be more indicative than it may at first appear, and that, indeed, it is not a simple matter of an innocent oversight. But why should d'Alembert's motives be of any interest to Rousseau? Moreover, why is Rousseau so careful to emphasize the manner in which this work ought to be read?

Perhaps these problems can best be resolved if we proceed to examine the style in which Rousseau's letter is written. In it, as opposed to his other work, Rousseau claims to be "saying fewer things with more words".[2] The change, Rousseau insists, is necessary if one is to achieve clarity, that is, in order that one might be better understood by everyone. Clearly, Rousseau is writing for the masses; therefore, he must choose the most appropriate manner of discourse. While speaking

to the many, Rousseau employs rhetoric. Rhetoric, by definition, is the art of persuasive oratory. It is that art which aims at the broadest possible range of listeners, and therefore, it must appeal to men's passions. Rhetoric is not reason, reason can neither persuade nor inflame men towards action. Therefore, at least in public matters, reason is inferior to rhetoric. More importantly, reason is dangerous to the political community. Professor R.D. Masters describes this danger as follows:

> Reason is an insufficient basis of virtue not merely because it errs, but because it discovers--and often merely reflects--a man's self-interest; reason alone can therefore never overcome the contradiction between what is good for the individual and the common good.[3]

Rousseau's letter, therefore, is an open letter designed to have a persuasive effect on the general public of Geneva. But as Rousseau does not wish to appeal to reason, for reason merely incites men's selfishness, Rousseau attempts to inflame men's passions—specifically, the passion of beneficence. Consequently, Rousseau must discriminate between what he may and what he may not say to his audience. To persuade, one must also deceive. Rousseau must attempt to focus the citizens' attention only on those things which favour his cause while ignoring all that may speak against him. Professor Bloom expressed this will when he wrote:

> Rhetoric, by its very nature, implies that simple reason does not suffice for persuasion, that there is an element of unreason and passion which is an essential part of the understanding of man; the very form indicates a problem which supplements our understanding of the subject matter contained within it.[4]

As it is, Rousseau's letter was never intended to be of a philosophical nature, nor did it pretend to be; and unlike d'Alembert, whom Rousseau accused of having written an article which feigned to be philosophical, Rousseau's letter is the sincere apology of a Genevan who neither sought profit nor fame by disguising his intent with his words. The inference, quite obviously, is that d'Alembert's suggestion harboured an ulterior motive. In his reply, Rousseau intimates that d'Alembert is exploiting his own personal prestige and that of his associates in order to appease Voltaire and certain popular sentiments within Geneva itself. D'Alembert, Rousseau recognizes, is a philosopher and a scientist of a most distinguished order. But his works are in great demand, and, as a consequence, d'Alembert is also a slave to public opinion; an opinion which is predicated on the dignity of talent, genius and learning on the one hand, and popular appeal on the other. Thus, d'Alembert's article had to pretend to appeal to the most laudable characteristics of science (i.e., disinterestedness) while still pandering to men's passions.

Rousseau's attack on d'Alembert, indeed, on most higher men, is fought on two fronts. Rousseau attacks d'Alembert on the principle of disinterestedness—indeed, the very principle of philosophy and science—and utility. The principle of disinterestedness applies to all genuine men of science. It is, in a word, the principle which separates a man from all loyalties save one—to truth. But how can d'Alembert, whose

prestige is founded on his popularity, be completely faithful to truth? Indeed, how can any man be faithful to two masters? Rousseau, the philosopher,—to the chagrin of his contemporaries—always considered himself a man of complete independence. In explaining his intentions, Rousseau writes:

> If my writings inspire me with some pride, it is for the purity of intentions which dictate them, it is for the disinterestedness for which few authors have given one the example and which very few will wish to imitate. Never did personal views foil the desire to be useful to others which put the pen in my hand and I have almost always written against my own interest. Vitam impendere vero: this is the motto I have chosen and of which I feel I am worthy.[5]

But if Rousseau the philosopher cares only for truth, how is his rhetorical letter to be explained? Rousseau rises, so he states, to this occasion not for fame or to support one faction against another, but because he senses that his country is in danger. Rousseau repeatedly insists that to have remained silent and obscure would certainly have been preferable, but neither is now possible.

> To have the right to remain silent on this occasion, I should need never to have raised for subjects less necessary. Sweet obscurity, which was for thirty years my happiness, I should need always to have known how to love thee. It would have to be unknown that I have had some relations with the editors of l'Encyclopédie, that I have furnished some articles for the work, that my name is to be found with those of the authors. My zeal for my country would have to be less known, and it would be necessary that others supposed that the article "Geneva" had escaped my attention or that they could not infer from my silence that I adhere to its contents. Since none of this is possible, I must then speak; I must disavow what I cannot

> at all approve, so that sentiments other than my own cannot be imputed to me. My countrymen have no need of my advice; I know it well. But I have need to do myself honor in showing that I think as they do about our maxims.[6]

Because of this apparent crisis, Rousseau refuses to identify himself solely as a philosopher. Rousseau insists that he is a loyal citizen and that he is speaking to his fellow countrymen. Rousseau is able to defend his philosophical integrity by carefully synthesizing the duties of a philosopher with those of a citizen. A philosopher is obliged to seek the truth, but his obligation to speak the truth does not extend to the general public if it may actually threaten their freedom.[7] Rousseau insists that he is writing in defence of truth, but he is also motivated by a "love of country". From this it follows that a philosopher has to take into consideration two important factors before obliging himself to speak what he believes to be the truth. These are truth and utility. Thus, if we reflect back to the Premiere Discours, in light of this new principle, we find that Rousseau's attack on the "culture of science" is a consequence of society's inability to distinguish between dangerous and salutory truths. It is a consequence of a culture that cannot censor itself—indeed, of a culture that naively rejects censorship totally. Thus, as we have argued earlier, since one cannot realistically hope to censor science in a culture that cannot tolerate censorship, Rousseau is forced to reject the dissemination of dangerous truths under the banner that all science and philosophy are bad.

We should add one final note on this subject. Although we have suggested one such dangerous truth, Rousseau is careful never to reveal which truths he believes to be useful and which to be dangerous. These dangerous truths, we suggest, are found upon analysis of the whole of Rousseau's work, and are not apparent to the casual reader. Rousseau's reticence, we may say, is founded on prudence. In the Préface à Narcisse and in the Dedicace à la Republique de Genève, Rousseau contents himself with the suggestion that those truths which promote mutual esteem and goodwill should be taught--leaving his more serious students to infer that those which do not meet these criteria (e.g., that all apparently noble actions are basely motivated) are the sole preserve of the wise and the reticent. If so, then, according to Rousseau, philosophers are not only obliged not to reveal pernicious truths, but are bound to lie if necessary.

This conclusion, however, raises more problems than it solves. How can philosophers be trusted to teach only that which is useful and be silent on all that is dangerous? Rousseau's earlier response, we have suggested, presupposes the uncorruptable nature of the true philosopher-citizen. But a democratic polity, Rousseau is also aware, can not depend on the awesome virtue of a few men. It is at all times hazardous, Rousseau argues, to leave such decision to the "reason" of any one man, or, indeed, to even a group of men. It is this pro-

blem, we suggest, which leads Rousseau to the fundamental principle which will underlie almost all of his later moral or political philosophy. This principle can be stated as follows. Men have always desired that which is just, and as long as their own interests were not involved, they have always acted justly. However, when men see that their interests do coincide with one side rather than another, that is, there is something to be gained by supporting one particular faction against another, their sentiments are soon corrupted.[8] This, we will later show, is the underlying justification for the impersonal and general nature of the General Will. It is this principle, we suggest, which also deprives the legislator from "command over men". Finally, it is this principle which is, at least in part, responsible for Rousseau's position against the "culture of science" and the men who profit by it. Men like d'Alembert, Rousseau implies, are only pretending to speak of useful truths when in fact honour and distinction are their only goal. These men are dangerous not only in the sense that they provide us with useless and sometimes harmful lessons, but they are dangerous examples for us to emulate. Reiterating his warning to mankind from the Premiere Discours Rousseau states:

> Blind men that we are, amidst so much enlightenment! Victims of our own mad applause, will we never learn how much contempt and hate are deserved by any man who abuses the genius and the talent that nature gave him, to the hurt of mankind?[9]

To return to our primary consideration, we must now proceed to follow Rousseau's arguments against the establishment of a theatre. Genevans, Rousseau tells us, are a free people.[10] There is a general equality among all their relations, there are a few factions (and none of these can override the rest), and, consequently, social harmony is assured for the present. The morals and habits of Genevans, and this is what is most important, foster a patriotic zeal in which all citizens find happiness and pleasure in the execution of their duties. To establish a theatre in a country in which the time of a husband, a son, and a citizen is completely taken up by a devotion to their cherished duties can only detract from the pleasures these men find in the performance of their civic responsibilities.[11] The theatre, Rousseau insists, can not change public sentiments or morals, which it can only follow and embellish.[12] But if the theatre can not change men's morals, it can do much in changing their habits. The theatre demands that citizens withdraw from their duties in order to experience the performing arts. Thus, citizens who avail themselves to leisure find their pleasure in the frivolous waste of time in which all their thoughts are concentrated on their individual well-being. Therefore, by changing men's habits, the theatre also changes men's morals; as the singular goal of the theatre is to draw men back for more of the same, civic duties or virtues are neglected as men become slaves to their passions.[13]

The modern Parisian theatre, Rousseau points out, is preoccupied primarily with three principle themes, those of tragedy, love, and comedy, all of which have disastrous consequences in a city which is animated by republican morals. Tragedy is bad because it exposes a citizen to the most cruel and vicious crimes of men. But, more importantly, tragedy does not, as some have suggested, envigorate the soul for virtue, nor does it teach men to hate villains and cowards. Citizens, Rousseau believes, are softened by the display of pitiful creatures, whose crimes would normally incite horror. But tragedy unites laudable sentiments with moral weakness, and men are ready to forgive the greatest injustices, or perhaps to sympathize with the most cowardly souls, while they happily forget their own misdeeds. In the case of love, the theatre exposes all the citizens, and especially the young, to the emotions over which they have least control. Young men are taught to submit to the will of women, for the realm of women is love, and it is they who command in it. That is, young citizens are drawn from a virtuous life in order that they may pay court to women. Furthermore, love is almost exclusively reserved for the young; and as the old, who should rightly be the most respected figures of any society, are invariably brought into conflict with the young lovers, they are often depicted as ridiculous and spiteful for daring to impose the austere morals of a republican education. Love is perhaps the

single most important theme in the education of citizens, as it is the sentiment which binds all the citizens to their families, and therefore to the state. But love in the theatre is identified solely with women and not with the state. This places the young citizens in a position where they must invariably decide between their duties to the state and their love for particular women. Thus, the theatre exposes the young citizens to a conflict, a conflict in which the resolution will almost certainly favour love of women rather than love of virtue.[14]

The effects of comedy are equally pernicious to a healthy society. The virtue of comedy is that it can make people laugh, and as there is no object too holy for its lampoons, comedy takes what is otherwise sacred only to project it under a ludicrous light. The charm of comedy is that it can render piety, sincerity, and kindness insipid. Comedy can coerce men to act according to the standards of the prevailing public opinion. Any individual deviating from what is socially permitted can fear the ridicule of comic imitation. But virtue, we have said, requires the courage to be independent, to contradict accepted social practices, which, although corrupt, have become socially permissible. Hence, comedy tends to ridicule the virtuous, and to sanction corrupt practices for which the public embraces and tolerates no abuse.[15] Such was the case with Molière's Misanthrope, the principal example that Rousseau was to use to demonstrate the corrupt nature of

the theatre. Alceste, Rousseau argues, represents the virtuous citizen in a corrupt age. The character of Alceste is laughable, not because he is represented as mean, but because the author of the play "would have his audience laugh". Molière purposefully misrepresents the figure of Alceste; and as he is able to confuse the viciousness of a wretched individual with a man of honour who has a sincere hatred for vice, the audience is taught to associate men of principle with pedantic sermonizers of false morals. Alceste is truly a good man, but because he can not bear to see the viciousness with which his fellow human beings treat each other, his character is eclipsed by an irrascible and spiteful nature. Contrasted to this is Alceste's friend, who, by virtue of his cold maxims and jests, constantly provokes Alceste to utter countless absurdities. Alceste's friend, because he can share in men's vices, without being ruffled by his own contradictions, is tolerated by the audience, while Alceste, who is sincere and genuine in his word and deed, is despised and ridiculed.[16] But if Alceste is ridiculous, Alceste's friend is absolutely dangerous. From the latter we are taught the absolute superiority of cynicism.

Although Rousseau admits his strong admiration for Molière's work, and the great pleasure he had often received from attending Moliere's plays, he, nevertheless, insists that the theatre must remain barred from Geneva. The theatre, Rousseau concludes, has only one object in view, and that, as

was stated, is that people should come back to attend more performances. In order to be successful, the playwright must please, or pander, to the sentiments of his audience. As public opinion is his only guide, it would seem that the theatre is good for a good society and bad for a bad society. This is Rousseau's preliminary conclusion. But the theatre excites men's passions, and "all the passions are sisters".[17] Furthermore, the virtuous man in the theatre is a hero, and the common citizens can not identify themselves with heroes. Virtue, consequently, is reserved for fantasy and is not viewed as useful for the practical affairs of everyday existence. Thus, men are taught to excuse their vices and weaknesses, since, not being heroes themselves, they can more casually commit crimes, which, though comparatively small, are excusably by a corrupt social order. Hence, the theatre is not good in a good society, but bad in a good society.

By portraying the simple, honest, and happy life of a small village (which, in fact, represents the model of a free Republic), Rousseau is able to follow the progress of corruption and the debasement of morals from the moment a theatre is introduced. The first effect of the theatre is to make men unhappy with their occupations, and to seek pleasures in things other than duties, which, by virtue of their necessity are the most neglected.[18] Second, there is an increase of personal expenses and citizens are forced to become more and more dependant on

wealth of which, paradoxically enough, they have less, as their desire to work is less earnest. Third, the theatre and its associate institutions necessitate an increase in public expenditures and taxes. Fourth, and by far the most important, the theatre incites vanity and competition among citizens, especially among women, and as "the effect increases by its effect" jealousies, factions, inequality, and luxury can all be traced to the establishment of the theatre.[19]

We may conclude this part of our discussion by briefly noting that Rousseau's censure of the theatre, and the extraordinary men of genius who are responsible for it, incorporates the following paradox. If the theatre is bad in a good society, it may also be good in a bad society. Idleness, Rousseau argues, being endemic to a corrupt social order, is prone to excite the imagination of certain men and lead them to commit evil deeds. The theatre, therefore, may be good in a bad society, in so far as it will occupy violent men with petty amusements, depriving them of the time to plan and execute their more dangerous designs. Furthermore, the theatre, as well as all the arts and sciences, may provide society with a certain measure of relief. It is possible, Rousseau argues, that in spite of the infinite discussions with which men will frivolously amuse themselves, they may, by chance, discover some remedies to the prevailing abuses of their age. Aside from the mere "safety-valve" effect of preventing some crime, the arts and sciences

may help raise questions or thoughts in men's minds which, being revolutionary, may possibly benefit society as a whole.[20] Rousseau, we should also add, does not favour the suppression of all art forms in a healthy republic. Towards the end of this letter Rousseau describes entertainment which is suited for a republic. Entertainment, Rousseau argues, must develop courageous, reverent, and temperate citizens. Festivals should be moulded, Rousseau tells us, on "the image of Lacedaemon", and inspire, from old and young alike, civic pride and duty. Above all, entertainment must not cause men to forget their fatherland, or dispose them to feel content anywhere so long as they are being amused.

CHAPTER IV

THE LEGISLATOR AND PRINCIPLES OF POLITICAL RIGHT

Social inequality and its effect, the corruption of morals, are the inevitable consequences of time. Even the best constituted states, according to Rousseau, can not escape from this iron rule of history, for even their initial success contributes to their ultimate demise. While using the analogy of the human body, Rousseau describes the state as "beginning to die the moment it is formed."[1] This "natural tendency" culminates in the successful ascension of a particular will, the abrogation of the social contract, and the dissolution of the state. But if this process is, indeed, inevitable, at least it need not be immediate.[2] The natural degeneration of morals and the natural tendency towards an increase in social inequality may be checked through the continual and formal exercise of the legislative authority.[3] For if "the force of circumstance tends always to destroy equality, the force of legislation ought always tend to preserve it."[4] But Rousseau's solution suggests difficulties which, although not in themselves insoluble, can be resolved only through a preliminary examination of the Du Contract Social ou Principes Du Droit Politique. Rousseau's primary consideration in writing the Du Contract Social was stated as follows:

> Trouver une forme d'association qui défende et protege de toute la force commune la personne et les biens de chaque associé, et par laquelle chacun s'unissant à tous n'obeisse pourtant qu'a lui-meme et reste aussi libre qu'auparavant.[5]

Rousseau attempted to resolve this problem through a theory in which every individual voluntarily alienates his freedom, or rights, to the supreme direction of the General Will. The General Will, Rousseau insists, is indestructible, it always acts according to right, and, therefore, it always aims at the common good.[6] But how is the legislative authority, that is, the sovereign, to decide what is in the best interest of the community as a whole? The General Will is always right, but the judgments which guide it are not always equally enlightened. Individuals, Rousseau is aware, see the good and reject it, while the public desires the good but does not see it. Both equally need guidance, and, hence, the community stands in need of a legislator.

Rousseau's suggestion in favour of a legislator seems to present, at least initially, an insourmountable difficulty. On the one hand, Rousseau repeatedly insists that the sovereign, or the supreme authority, is to reside in the will of people, who, collectively, constitute the legislative power.[7] On the other hand, Rousseau implies that the legislator is above the authority of the sovereign and consequently above the authority of the people. Professor Leo Strauss has argued that although this classical notion of the legislator does, indeed, obscure the sovereignty of the people, that is, it leads to the sub-

stitution of the supremacy of the law for the full sovereignty of the people, it does clarify the fundamental problem of civil society.[8] This fundamental problem of civil society concerns the status, or role, of philosophy within the political community; and even though Rousseau's doctrine of the legislator was never seriously intended as a practicle solution, it did adumbrate Rousseau's own function. Indeed, this theory is corroborated by Professor R.D. Masters, who, in The Political Philosophy of J.J. Rousseau,[9] argues that the addressee of the Du Contract Social is the "ambitious politician", who would not automatically assent to a legitimate social order. Rousseau's Du Contract Social is in the form of an admonition in which Rousseau attempts to show that it is in the best, or enlightened, self interest of the politician to know and to practice the principles of political right. If the addressee of the Du Contract Social is the ambitious politician, Rousseau's role is then that of a philosopher and a teacher of a prospective prince or magistrate, synonymous with the legislators of the past—the ones Rousseau recognized to have had "the hand of that great and powerful genius which lies behind all things". Before we may address ourselves to this problem, however, we must first proceed to outline the principles on which political right is founded, that is, we must set out to demonstrate how the social contract can be legitimated, and how the legislative power tends to preserve equality and freedom, understood in the moral and civil sense.

A study of Rousseau's Principes Du Droit Politique must begin and end with the sovereignty of the General Will. Rousseau defined sovereignty as "nothing more than the exercise of the General Will".[10] Sovereignty is the collective power directed by the collective will. It is the right of the people, as a people or body, to will what is in their own best interest, or, what is the same, to will the common good. But why do people have a right to sovereignty, and what might we infer from the General Will?

From the outset, Rousseau insists that civil, or political, society is not natural to man,[11] and that the social order is founded on convention which, "as a sacred right, serves as the basis for all other rights".[12] Rousseau then proceeds to say that any conventional surrender of freedom, be it through force or compact, can not be the basis of political society because such an agreement, not being fully voluntary or according to reason,[13] is identical to slavery. Having introduced the articles of association, Rousseau sums up his earlier argument--force is incompatible with right and the social contract is a sacred agreement which no other contract may controvert--by stating:

> Mais le corps politique ou le Souverain ne tirant son être que de la sainteté du contract ne peut jamais s'obliger, même envers autrui, à rien qui déroge à cet acte primitif, comme d'aliéner quelque portion de lui-même ou de se soumettre à un autre Souverain. Violer l'aite par lequel il existe seroit s'anéantir, et ce qui ne'ent rien ne produit rien.[14]

It follows that the alleged right of a parent can not account for a political community; for similar reasons, the right of the strongest in conquest, and the right to enslave those over whom one has the power of life and death, are null and void.

But what exactly are these articles of association? A political community, according to Rousseau, is founded on a merely voluntary act in which each individual pledges himself to obey the General Will. By so doing, men exchange their right to natural freedom for a moral or political freedom, which is founded on reason or on what one might construe as the force of necessity. This was discussed earlier, at which time we also pointed out how reason dictates that it is impossible for a private will to coincide with the General Will on all points. We suggested that, though it may happen that on certain issues both the General Will and the private will may agree, such events are purely accidental for such cases can be neither regular nor enduring. As it is, the private will always inclines by its very nature towards partiality and the General Will towards equality.[15] Therefore, reason alone must dictate that men can submit only their individual wills to the impartial and impersonal direction of the General Will, and thus "remain as free as before". In other words, Rousseau's solution to the problem of freedom demands that each associate "alienate himself and all his rights to the whole community".[16] In so doing, no man surrenders himself to the rule of any of his peers, for no associate has powers which all do not equally share.

But, in surrendering himself to the whole, we have argued, men follow their reason rather than their passions. Thus, political right, which is incompatible with any form of slavery, is completely congruous with the universal assent of each to obey the supreme authority of the General Will.

The General Will is the true basis of civil society, and as it alone can direct the forces of the state in accordance with that end for which the state has been established--namely, the good of the whole—it must come from all and apply to all.[17] This means that the General Will must be general both in its object and in its essence. We have already determined from Rousseau's teachings that political right is never compatible with the obedience to any particular will. Therefore, sovereignty, or the exercise of the General Will, must be the power exercised by a people as a collective body. The will of the people as the sovereign, Rousseau argues, can not be expressed by any body other than itself; hence, sovereignty is inalienable.[18] But for the same reason that sovereignty is inalienable, it is also indivisible. The General Will alone, as was stated, can direct the state; and while government requires both a legislative and executive power, together they fall under the supreme authority of the General Will. Rousseau's theory assumes that the General Will can be expressed through a single common voice, which is the "sum of the differences" of all the individual wills. The apparent ambiguity of this thought can be explained if we attempt to clarify Rousseau's differentiation between the General Will (Volanté

Générale) and the will of all (volonté de tous). The will of all is nothing more than a sum of all particular wills. The will of all can not serve as the basis of civil society as it inclines towards an individual or particular interest. The General Will, which by its definition disregards private interests, can serve as the foundation of civil society, as it expresses a desire for a "common" or "general" object. Professor Masters sums up the distinction as follows:

> Rousseau asserts that the enlightended, common interest is a really existent component of the will of each man: 'remove from these same (private) wills the more and the less which destroy each other, and the General Will remains as the sum of the differences.' If citizen A wants objects a,b,c,d, whereas citizen B wants d,e,f,g, one can say that a,b,c form the private self-interest of A, and e,f,g the private self-interest of B. Although these private interests may be (and usually are) opposed to one another and cannot serve as the foundation of any common interest, Rousseau asserts that there is a part of the private interest of both A and B which is truly common (i.e., object d). Whereas the 'will of all' is a simple addition of private interests, the general will is the 'sum of the differences' of these interests."[19]

But for the General Will to remain truly general, Rousseau insists, it must meet the following two criteria. The first, as has already been stated above, is that the General Will must express a common good, which is equally desired by everyone for everyone. We note that Rousseau never claimed that the vote on the General Will must be unanimous. The object of the General Will must be equally desired in so far as all men equally desire the good and desire it not only for themselves but for

everyone else. The second criterion, and this is truly what is most important, is that the General Will must be the product of the deliberation of all individual wills upon a question that concerns the nation as a whole. This means that the General Will is competent to express itself on general or common concerns and that it loses its natural rectitude as soon as a particular object is brought into question.[20] By differentiating between an act of sovereignty, which constitutes law, and an act of administration, which is but an application of law, Rousseau is able to construct a theory in which each man can not will something for himself without, at the same time, willing it for all others. Thus, since the will is by definition oriented to that which is good for the one who wills it, an act of the General Will is that decision in which everyone "takes the word each to pertain to himself, and in voting for all thinks of himself, and automatically wills what is for the good of the whole."[21]

Rousseau's theory of political right is founded on the principle, or "fundamental law", stated above, that the supreme authority is the sole right of the sovereign. It is this principle alone which breathes life into the state and legitimates a universal submission to the direction of the General Will. It follows from this that Rousseau is a democrat, at least in the sense that the decisions of the sovereign are premised on the principle of majority rule.[22] But Rousseau also claims to despire democracy. Democracy, Rousseau argues, in its purest form is

bad because it is synonymous with anarchy; it requires more virtue than most men are capable of and conditions which are too ideal.[23] Instead, Rousseau favours that the state be administered by an "elected aristocracy". This notion, when we examine it closely, amounts to little more than the modern ideal for popular democracy. Rousseau is a democrat, and although he scoffs at democracy in his Du Contract Social, he is quick to point out in his other works that he favours a democratic constitution wherein the authority of the executive and the power of the legislative are kept in separate hands. This will be discussed shortly; for now we should note that democracy is not merely government by majority, for the majority will may be simply the command of a dominant element or elite and not a decision rendered by the "sum of the differences". The General Will is a formal principle in that it implies a decision which each citizen can conceivably will for everyone, including himself. But a decision of this order can be rendered only by a virtuous citizen, that is, a man who has the strength to supress his private will and consider primarily the general good rather than his private welfare. Thus, Rousseau is not a democrat in the modern sense--a libertarian and a majoritarian--but an advocate of a common self-imposed morality, which is characteristic of a democrat in the classical sense. Classical democracy presupposes the virtue of its citizen, and that virtue is the means to freedom. It is for this reason that Professors A. Bloom, Leo Strauss and R.D. Masters, have insisted that Rousseau addressed himself to the ancients, that is, the politics of the poletia.[24]

For Rousseau, the legislative power is the heart of the state, while the executive authority is the brain which gives movement to all the parts. The brain may fall into paralysis and the individual still lives. A man can be an imbecile and survive: but as soon as the heart has ceased its function, the animal is dead.[25] Rousseau knows very well that there are forces within the state that constantly move towards the usurpation of law and the abrogation of the social contract. Rousseau believes that there are two ways that this can happen. First, the prince may cease to administer the state according to law and usurp the power which they ought to exercise only as a body.[26] Second, legitimate government may dissolve itself either through the seizure of power by a despot or the collapse of authority, which is anarchy. As a rule, governments contract, that is, they change from democratic to oristomatic to despotic. Rousseau argues that this is the "inevitable" sequence in history, in which the General Will is undermined by the particular will or wills of either the prince or the magistrates. Nevertheless, government is essential to the state. The executive authority, which Rousseau often calls, the prince, and whose members are the magistrates, is necessary, as the General Will can not express itself on particular issues or cases. In other words, as the sovereign can legitimately make laws only about general concerns, the application of those laws is a particular act (or act of administration), which is out of the sovereign's domain and which, therefore, belongs solely to the

government. The prince is the brain of the body politic. But the prince always tends to form a special association within the state, that is, a corporate will, in which the will of the magistrates is general in relation to the prince but particular in relation to the sovereign.[27] This is the undesirable consequence which follows from Rousseau's theory of the General Will and which, in effect, makes government a "necessary evil". It follows that a truly well constituted society is one in which men need "few laws" and "limited government". In a healthy state, Rousseau believes, government which governs least governs best. That is to say, if all the "mechanisms" within the state work for the common good, the state functions through a spirit of perpetual harmony, and the government, in effect, accomplishes everything by doing nothing. The analogy Rousseau refers to is that of a watch, and as in a watch, all individual mechanisms function harmoniously within the whole to effect perfect order. But just as the mechanism of a watch must run down eventually, so, too, must legitimate government eventually collapse.[28]

Putting aside all further considerations of Rousseau's theory of the General Will, we may now come to the second and much more difficult problem posed by Rousseau's doctrine of the Legislator.

The doctrine of the legislator plays a decisive role in the political philosophy of Jean-Jacques Rousseau and it is in Chapter VII, Book II, of the Du Contract Social that Rousseau most clearly articulates the fundamental problem of civil society. Civil society, we have pointed out is not natural

to man—it is a product of convention and innovation. But as convention and innovation are always necessary to civil society,[29] in the sense that new laws are needed to meet various circumstances and problems which invariable arise, "the problem of the founding is thus merely the problem of all governments in its most radical form".[30] Therefore, the fundamental problem of all government, or of civil society in general, is legislation, more specifically the art of statecraft, which presupposes that some men have a special type of knowledge.[31] In this regard, Rousseau's doctrine of the legislator is very similar to Plato's theory of the "civil" or "royal man" found in The Statesman. But why and how should Rousseau have returned to a theory which his age chose to abandon? It is, after all, conspicuously absent in the works of Hobbes and Locke, which may lead us to believe that Rousseau's return to the classics is, in some sense, a rejection of modern political theory. Rousseau's preoccupation with the pre-modern problem of the statesman, we suggest, should be examined in light of his earlier theory of the natural inequality of talents between men.

Rousseau's position may be more clearly understood if we at least briefly compare it with the classical theory of the legislator. For Plato, and also for Aristotle, the political art is "directive productive art" and not an "instrumental" or "contributory art". An instrumental art is one which produce the necessary skills and talents of civil life without "directing" the use to which they should be put.[32] Seamanship, medicine, and

masonry are three examples of instrumental arts. Because the "directive art" presides over the instrumental arts, and, in a sense, "gives to each its due", it is the "master" art or science, which "will be found in the possession of one or two, or at most a select few". But society can not always be assured that men of this genius or mark will be easily found, or for that matter, that they can be distinquished from those who falsely claim to possess such knowledge. Thus, legislation, or the rule of law, is a practical, "second best" solution to the perpetual crisis in which all political communities find themselves. This means that for all practical purposes law should replace the rule of the philosopher and be construed as the "written copy" of the "scientific knowledge" which only the true statesman possesses. But law can not be expected to cover all the exigencies which befall the political community; therefore, the spirit of the law should be applied to those cases which are beyond the exact wording of law. The classical theory of the legislator places great emphasis on the community's need of a legislator who is, after all, superior to law; and unless this man can be found and granted his right to rule, it is important that laws be maintained without any change whatsoever. But if the state stands in need of a legislator, a legislator does not need a state. The legislator, in a sense, is above the law, and "a god among men". This important passage from Aristotle's Politics should clearly indicate our meaning:

> " If . . . there be some one person, or more than one, although not enough to make up the full complement of a state, whose virtue is so pre-eminent that the virtues or political capacity of all the rest admit of no comparison with his or theirs, he or they can be no longer regarded as part of a state; for justice will not be done to the superior, if he is reckoned only as the equal of those who are so far inferior to him in virtue and in political capacity. Such a one may truly be deemed a god among men. Hence we see that legislation is necessarily concerned only with those who are equal in birth and capacity; and that for men of pre-eminent virtue there is no law--they are themselves a law. Anyone would be ridiculous who attempted to make laws for them; they would probably retort what, in the fable of Antisthenes, the lion said to the hares, when in council of the beasts the latter began haranguing and claiming equality for all (Where are your claws and teeth?!). And for this reason democratic states have instituted ostracism; equality is above all things their aim, and therefore they ostracised and banished from the city for a time those who seemed to predominate too much . . . [33]

Unlike the ancients, however, Rousseau rejects any theory which omits to explain human freedom in terms of will or consent. For Rousseau, laws that do not have popular assent are not legitimate, and therefore not binding on citizens. Because Rousseau can never admit that knowledge, in political life, is the sole criterion of a legitimate constitution, he abandons any attempt to define the best regime. Rousseau considers the science of the legislator as a prudential science which guides the philosopher-legislator in his understanding of the "invincible nature of things"; if the sovereign will elects to ignore the truth, it does so in accordance and its right (although it thereby acts imprudently).[34] The role of

the legislator, Rousseau argues, should not be construed as a special case and therefore exempt from political right. The legislator, Rousseau insists, has no status in political right, for the General Will can never be compatible with a particular will, even if the particular will is that of the legislator.[35] The duty of the legislator must be strictly limited to suggesting a legal code which can be adopted only if and when it is ratified by the General Will. Of course, Rousseau imagines that the true legislator is able to do more than simply suggest a code while leaving it to a rude people to decide one way or another. It is this trait or implied element of Rousseau's thought that has caused most commentators difficulty and has even allowed them to suggest that the doctrine of the legislator does, in fact, contradict the principles of political right.

The legislator is an independent man of science who, having formulated a legal code, is neither obliged to obey it nor account for his actions. On this point Rousseau is in complete agreement with the ancients: the "philosopher", who is also the "legislator", is, in a sense, a "god" whose needs are very different from those of the rest of the political community. The needs of the community (or of the common men) are satisfied through law, that is, through a legal or moral code which obliges all men to submit to the General Will. The needs of the legislator, however, are satisfied through the independent, or disinterested, contemplation of science. But this need, or philosophical passion, is frustrated by the community which can

see science only as the selfish pursuit of idel men. Thus, it is in the very nature of the political community and philosophy to repel each other. But Rousseau is aware that the problem is much more complex than it may at first appear. The political community demands obedience and, therefore, needs laws. The philosopher demands independence and therefore, needs leisure. If the two naturally repel each other, there is good reason for a mutual attraction. It is through the extraordinary genius of the legislator that Rousseau can reconcile the paradox between philosophy and civil society.

The legislator is directly responsible for the founding of the state; it is his "virtue" or "great soul" which transforms a people into a nation. The legislator is the "engineer" who, by virtue of his "extraordinary office", is able to shape and mould the character of men's thoughts, although pretending to be concerned solely with their laws.[36] The goal of the legislator is, according to Rousseau

> . . . de substituer une existence partielle et morale à l'existence physique et indépendante que nous avons tous pecue de la nature. Il faut, en un mot, qu'il ote de a l'homme ses forces propres pour lui en donner qui lui soient étrangeres et dont il ne puisse faire usage sans se secours d'autrui. Plus ces forces naturelles sont mortes et anéanties, plus les acquises sont grandes et durables, plus aussi l'institution est solide et parfaite: En sorte que chaque Citoyen n'est rien, ne peut rien, que par tous les autres, et que la force acquise par le tout soit égale ou soupérieure à la somme des forces naturelles de tous les individus, on peut dire que la legislation est au plus haut point de perfection qu'elle puisse atteindre.[37]

In order to accomplish this incredible task, the legislator must teach men virtue. Men in the state of nature are good, they refrain from doing harm to others unless it is absolutely necessary—they need no one, nor do they have any commitments to anyone. But virtue and goodness are not identical, and a good man is both burdensome and useless to the state. The legislator must teach men virtue in the sense that men must willingly adopt mutual and equitable obligations. In short, the legislator must transform men from "independent units" into "fractions of a denominator". This Rousseau knows very well, is no simple task, and it is only a genius of the loftiest nature who can succeed in producing a secure and lasting political edifice. But if the purpose of the legislator is to create something that does not yet exist—namely, the nation—and to leave it behind in perpetuity, he must have a means that does not contradict any of the principles of political right. The legislator's secret, Rousseau suggests, is his love of humanity, a love which allows him to seek "distant glory and to labour in one age, only to enjoy the fruits in another".[38] But the legislator's "divine-like" mission must never be completely revealed to the vulgar, and the means he must adopt can not be explained to the very people he would mould. Thus, the legislator must speak in the only language which the vulgar understand; he must appeal to the gods, thereby legitimating, or canonizing, the very code he would have men obey.

There are two prudential reasons which may help explain Rousseau's desire to obfuscate the difference between philosophy and religion. The first is that a newly formed nation can not be expected to understand the political and philosophical wisdom on which law is founded. Thus, a rejection of the legislator's code may not be caused simply by imprudence but by political immaturity. Second, and by far the more important, to attempt to teach philosophy to the vulgar is in itself dangerous, for it leads men to the conclusion that society is founded strictly on physical needs and not on moral and civil responsibilities.[39] Quite bluntly, philosophy reveals to all men the very foundations of modern natural science. But this amounts to nothing more than the teaching to all mankind about that which it must completely forget, that is, the natural independence of each man. Society, Rousseau is sure, is founded on the physical needs of men, but society can not be premissed only on needs, for as soon as each man's requirements are met, there is little incentive for him to contribute further to those of the whole. Thus, a more solid ground has to be discivered on which to base civil responsibilities, so as to assure that all men continually serve the common interest. The solution that Rousseau adopts is a political, or civil, religion.

As it is, Rousseau's doctrine of the legislator—a doctrine of a political elite—does, indeed, obscure the full sovereignty of the people. Rousseau resolved, through his theory of democracy which is "wisely tempered". Although it is certainly

true that Rousseau emphasizes the legitimate authority of the sovereign to change the law at any time, the art of politics is directed to the development of men's habits and opinions which render the exercise of this right unnecessary, or in any case rare, and even then with great solemnity and reluctance.[40] Democracy, Rousseau argues, does admit the possibility of public assemblies, but it must also be recognized that such affairs are dangerous. As the people become steadily more corrupt, they are easily seduced by such men of power as demagogues and orators.[41] For this reason it is best if the everyday affairs of government are concluded by a few wise and vituous magistrates acting as trustees of the people's will. Furthermore, Rousseau assumes that a healthy republic will have little need for the frequent expression of the General Will. The multiplication of laws, which is the duty of the lgislative authority, is designed to impede vice, but if circumstances require its constant appeal, it is in itself the clearest evidence of incipient corruption. In a well-constituted state the laws of the state and the customs of the people mutually complement each other. And as men have great confidence in their magistrates and as magistrates do honour to the citizens, the spirit of the laws can be safely assumed to deal with any particular unforseen events. A democracy which is "wisely tempered" is governed by a few general laws; and as esteem permeates the relations between citizens and magistrates, there is little need for the continual assent of the General Will.

CHAPTER V

THE POLITICS OF CENSORSHIP

Throughout the Du Contract Social, Rousseau never ceases to maintain that the "particular will acts unceasingly against the General Will", leaving us to conclude that the action of the legislator is, at best, of a temporary or transitory nature. Furthermore, the principles of political right, inasmuch as they are according to nature, or reason, are as far as man can go in solving the problem of a truly legitimate and secure order. But even so, Rousseau tells us, nothing is permanent:

> Telle est la pente naturelle et inévitable des Gouvernemens les mieux institués. Si Sparte et Rome ont péri, quel Etat peut espérer de durer toujours? Si nous voulons former un établissement durable, ne songeons donc point à le rendre éternel. Pour réussir il ne faut pas tester l'impossible, ni se flater de donner à l'ouvrage des hommes une solidité que le choses humaines ne comportent pas.[1]

Thus, Rousseau's own pessimistic attitude to the perpetual maintenance of republican institutions is prefigured, partly in the internal conflict between the passion and reason of individual and unequal citizens and partly in the vigorous demands of the General Will. No doubt, some commentators have seized on this final admission to point out that Rousseau is, in fact, a "utopian philosopher" that is, a man who would construct a "city in words".[2] But such criticisms have for the most part failed to note that Rousseau anticipated this charge against

himself. Rousseau explicitly denied that he ignored, or attempted to transcent, the "invincible nature of things". Being a man of few words, Rousseau claims to be "taking men as they are and laws as they may be". There was never any intention, at least not on Rousseau's part, to reason from anything but "from the actual to the possible".[3]

We have already discussed, to some degree, Rousseau's theory of corruption in the second and third chapters of this essay. It was, we found, premissed on the thesis that the passion for distinction, as a function of the natural inequality among men, is responsible for social or political inequality, which, in turn, is the cause of faction. We may now proceed to discuss the second part of Rousseau's theory, by examining Rousseau's treatment of the abuse of government, and of politics as the necessary means by which the inevitable degeneration of the state is delayed.

Government, Rousseau argues, is a "geometrical mean" between "two extremeties". These extremeties are the individual and the sovereign. But Rousseau recognizes that this is a "moral calculation", which lacks "geometrical precision". The form of government should vary depending on the more or less social cohesiveness of a people. But other factors, Rousseau goes on to say, which have a direct bearing on the proper form a particular government is to take, are geography, topography, demography and the like.[4] The study of these factors and their relations within the state (as well as a consideration of factors relating to affairs between states) constitutes the study of

political science.

As it is, not only do the relations between these factors differ from one state to another, but they also differ between various historical stages within one state. Thus, the object of all good government (indeed, the very purpose of the legislator's constitution) is continually to bring into harmony the close relationship of "government" and "law", with men's "natural relations". That is to say, the proper form of government is the one that can make the state durable by ensuring that all relations serve to bind each man's will with that of the whole. Thus, the study of government is in fact the study of morals, law, customs and above all, virtue. But this suggests that only certain conditions, conditions which may well-nigh be impossible, can sustain civic virtue among a body politic.[5] Be that as it may, Rousseau can easily insist that there is only one good form of government for any state: "but as a thousand events may change the relations within a nation, different governments may not only be good for different people, but good for the same people at different times".[6] The "geometric mean", Rousseau argues, between all social and natural relations determines the "amount of activity which results from the concurrence of innumerable causes".[7] This means that the strength of the government must be proportionally increased when a people are more numerous or, to put the matter in Rousseau's terms, when the "ratio" between all the particular wills and the General Will has increased. We should note that Rousseau does not employ the terms "made

more active" and "to strengthen" synonymously. To each he gives a different meaning. In the case of the former, Rousseau means that government must be more ready and willing to step into all civil matters which affect men's morals and customs. As for the latter, Rousseau implies that government should be instituted in progressively fewer hands as the state expands, that is, "the number of magistrates diminishes in proportion to the number of people". In both cases Rousseau can excuse such a tendency on the grounds that it is dictated by prudence, and because "the force of circumstances tends always to destroy equality, the force of legislation ought always to tend to preserve it".[8]

Until now, we have been speaking about the "relative strength" of government and not about "the quality of its behaviour". The indisputable relations of things force Rousseau to formulate the general rule that government must contract as the state expands, that government must be more active as the "ratio" between all the particular wills and the General Will increases. But Rousseau is careful to point out also that the enlargement of the state means offering the holders of public authority more opportunities to abuse their power. Thus, the quality of government behaviour tends to vary in inverse ratio to its relative strength. That is, as political power becomes increasingly concentrated in the hands of the prince, the power of the sovereign is so rarely exercised as to render it virtually impotent. Therefore, the "moi-commun" is more apt to be sacrificed to the "moi-particular". Rousseau was aware that this was not a consequence of accident

or political mischieviousness, but rather a part of the unalterable nature of circumstances, whereby, as was said, the "particular will acts unceasingly against the General Will".

But why should Rousseau insist on the validity of such determinism? This question must be answered in two parts. First, Roussseau's insistence that government must contract (its members pass from a greater to a small number, that is, from democracy to aristocracy, and from aristocracy to royal government) is based on his criteria of good government. The criteria of good government are the protection and prosperity it can assure for all its constituents. Second, it follows from this that a well constituted state must expand as all possible conditions for contraction have been eliminated by the very criteria that make it good. A state that is badly constituted from the start will perish still-born, thereby immediately dissolving its despotic government. To say the least, Rousseau's determinism is tautological, as expansion is implied in the very definition of good government. What is more, Rousseau's analysis of the natural tendency of government implicitly suggests that corruption, or vice, not only on the level of government but throughout the community is a foregone conclusion.

We should note, consequently, that no state can expand in a social or moral vacuum. Until this point we have associated vice, that is, the necessary assent of the particular will of the prince or of a magistrate, with physical expansion. But Rousseau holds that this can not happen without also precipitating a

corresponding change in the morals and customs of the people as a whole.[9] This is an important admission, for it serves as a link between Rousseau's Premiere Discours and Du Contract Social. If we reflect back for a moment to the principal tenent of Rousseau's Premiere Discours (vice is the inescapable product of "luxury and the desire to distinquish oneself"), and his principle in the Du Contract Social (vice is associated with the physical expansion of the state), we find by the use of sylogism that the enlightenment, or a prejudice for science, must necessarily be a product of historical determinism since good government sows the seeds of its own destruction.[10]

To the above we should add one further note. The myth of the legislator and the sacrosanct code for which he alone is responsible are irredeemedly lost with the mark of time. The reason, obviously enough, is implicit in the theory of historical determinism adumbrated above. But Rousseau believes society to stand in need of an on-going "mysterious and awe-inspiring"[11] mechanism which, although inescapably susceptible to the same attacks which the enlightenment levels against the legislator, is, nevertheless, less vulnerable. The solution Rousseau adopts is a civil religion. But, of course, even civil religion, like the myth of the legislator, is ultimately premissed on a form of reverence which science and the enlightenment necessarily annihilate. Therefore, there is little reason to believe that Rousseau himself accepted a civil religion as an ultimate solution to the problem of corruption. Like the other instituions to be

discussed shortly, it is only a stop-gap measure which holds back the flood tides of history. It is for this reason, we believe, that Rousseau chooses only "secluded" or "closed" republics (e.g., Sparta and Geneva) to be capable of maintaining for at least some time, their republican morals and institutions. As for the present, Romanticism is not always a practical, nor always a plausible, answer to this insoluble dilema.

Rousseau suggests three institutions which may hinder, but never completely stop, the progress of corruption. These are the tribunate, the dictatorship, and the centuriate. The tribunate, Rousseau insists, is not a constituent part of the state, and its members ought not to have any share of the legislative or executive power. Their power, negative by design, can serve neither to initiate nor to execute law. Rather, the purpose of the tribunate is to prevent execution or certain laws or orders. In this respect, the tribunate is a buffer between the prince and the sovereign, and between the prince and individual citizens. The function of the tribunate is to check the spread of corrupt influences. But, having recognized the possibility that this body may actually accelerate corruption once corruption had begun, Rousseau provides for two general guidelines concerning its structure and tenure. The first rule is that the tribunate should not be expanded beyond a small number of members. Using the example of the Roman tribunate, Rousseau notes that the argument that more members provide for a greater check amongst themselves is fallacious. On the contrary, having weakned the

tribunate through a multiplication of its members, the Romans lessened its effectiveness against public corruption. The more important of the two rules is that the body should not remain permanently seated. Rousseau suggests that regular intervals during which the tribunate remains out of office should be part of its constitution. These intervals, which should not be so great as to allow a possible abuse to take root, must be specified by law, with a provision for extraordinary circumstances.

The other devices Rousseau proposes, which complement the tribunate and which also serve to check corruption, are the institution of a dictator in times of crisis, and of censors to maintain morals. Both, it should be remembered, are instituted to preserve a good constitution rather than reform one that is beginning to become corrupted. Due to the inflexible nature of law, as well as the long and elaborate procedure that is required for its express, the state must institute a dictatorship in a time of crisis. Clearly, such circumstances necessitate that the state defend itself through swift measures which exceed the normal authority of the executive. Therefore, the dictatorship is an institution of expediency. As long as the dictatorship is limited to a very short period, Rousseau cautions, there is little danger that the institution will be abused. Similarly, the centuriate assembly can be useful to preserve morals, but never to restore them. The authority of the censors lies in the opinion of the people. As long as the people are not corrupted, the censors are obeyed, for their judgements are based on what the people have already deemed good. Public opinion, Rousseau

often emphasizes, is sovereign. Law can have no authority over opinion but can only follow it. It is the duty of the censor, Rousseau argues, to prevent opinions, or morals, from becoming corrupted by preserving the integrity of custom by wise rulings. From this we may assume that the reconciliation between philosophy and science, on the one hand, and morals and customs, on the other, is met in the person, or persons, or the censor, of whom Cato, is certainly the best example.

The art, or rather the science, of the censors is to safeguard the morals or a free people. But this function is not predicated on enlightening the people, that is, on exposing humanity to the arts and sciences as the philosophes had suggested. The censors do educate the citizens, but it is not through the dissemination of the arts and sciences that they command honour and obedience. Rousssau, we have said, recognized that science could not appeal to the many without first being debased or corrupted, that is to say, science must be transformed into pseudo-sciences when released to the public. But if the function of the censor does depend on science and science necessarily is corrupted by the people (to say nothing of the people who in turn are corrupted by pseudo-science), the censors must have another recourse to persuasion. This recourse is "opinion" or "belief"; the censors must be able to command the morals or customs of the people by attributing that which is generally honoured to a specific act of legislation or social principle.

To be successful, a censor requires artistic skill and scientific knowledge, and Rousseau is aware that only a handful of men are suited for this role. "It was never enough", Rousseau argues "to say to citizens, be good; they must be taught so".[12] This is the indescriable art of the censor or, for the matter, of all true magistrates. Thus, the mark of the censor is knowledge of men's morals and customs—"this feature, unknown to our political theorists". But the censor is not only a philosopher and a statesman he is above all else a citizen. The censor is one who must guard the community against the very science he enjoys. Philosophy and science, we have said, rebel against the very sentiments on which the authority of law relies. They undermine the morals of people and therefore the political art of the censor. It is for this reason that, as we have all along pointed out, philosophy should remain inaccessible to the citizens. But as all legislation requires philosophy, philosophy is essential to the healthy community. The duty of the censor is to decide on those issues on which the public is uncertain. When public opinion has decided one way, and the censors another, this body ceases to be respected and is no longer obeyed. Similarly, as the people become corrupted—as public opinion becomes accustomed to accept vice instead of virtue—the rulings of the censors can occassion only public ridicule and contempt. Thus it is, Rousseau concludes that the tribunate, the dictatorship and the centuriate are all institutions subject to the same 'logic of history' and can not by themselves prevent the ultimate usurpation of the sovereign authority.

A civil religion is Rousseau's final statement on the problem of corruption, and as it does not suffer from the same politically "insuperable objections" which are raised about the legislator, a civil religion is compatible with political right. The moral freedom of each individual in civil society (which, as was said, consists in obeying himself while recognizing the law of political necessity, and therefore submitting to the impersonnal decrees of the General Will) is not threatened by civil religion. A civil religion, Rousseau recognizes, must not infringe on those matters which are of a private nature. Thus, Rousseau can claim that "each individual may hold whatever opinions he pleases, without the sovereign having any business to take cognizance of them".[13] But the state can, and should, formualte those "dogmas" without which it is "impossible to be a good citizen or a loyal subject". The dogmas of the civil religion must be simple and few in number, pressed precisely and without explanation or commentaries. A person must voluntarily submit to the "truthfulness" of these dogmas or be banished from the state—"not for impiety but as an antisocial being".

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION: SOME CRITICAL REFLECTIONS

Having come so far, we need only add a few summary remarks to conclude our discussion. It follows from what has been said that popular sovereignty, according to Rousseau, is the only natural solution to the problem of human freedom. Since each man gives himself to all, he gives himself to no one; the freedom each man enjoys in the state of nature is not violated, and in the bargain he acquires a greater degree of security as well as certain moral attributes. "Civil society is founded on the needs of the body" and not on those of the mind. The needs of the mind are met through philosophy and science—through a radical separation from all opinions and customs of men and society. The mind is that which makes man truly distinctive from all other forms of life; thought is the sui generis of an infinitely perfectible creature. But man is, if not by nature, then by necessity, a political animal, that is, man can actively resolve the difficulties of his environment only through political action. One can not speak of political action in the state of nature. Political action presupposes the existence of the state, it presupposes that men have defined laws and regulations which will govern human intercourse. Thus, when men choose to assert the true nature of their humanity, they expose themselves to a politically

subversive activity. Philosophy, we have argued, leads men to speculate about the nature of the whole. Philosophy is a socially dangerous activity, as it directs men to doubt the opinions of their ancestors, and, consequently, to dissolve the basis on which society as a whole is founded. But if philosophy is an inherently dangerous activity, as it leads men to modern science, and therefore to find their natural independence, it is also essential, since it illuminates the truly great minds of humanity for the benefit of mankind. Philosophy and science, Rousseau believes, in the hands of men of the "loftiest natures" can prevent all humanity from returning "to the barbarism of the first age".[1]

But Rousseau's theory of the higher man, we have argued, posed a problem which he could not completely resolve. If philosophy can "be called down from the heavens" to teach men virtue and to form those institutions which, as Montesquieu claims, "later shape the leaders of the republic",[2] men of incomparable virtue must first be found. The legislator, of course, is such an incomparable man. But the extraordinary nature of this philosopher is not his genius or his political craft. "The legislator's great soul", Rousseau tells us, "is the true miracle which must vindicate his mission".[3] Genius and statecraft, no doubt, are absolutely essential to the founding of a lasting order. But these attributes are also essential to the maintenance of all republics, old and new

alike, and Rousseau gives us several examples of men with such skill and knowledge without assuming them to be state-founders or republic saviours. The truly distinctive element of the legislator and the men of his stamp is their super human moral self-control. Lycurgus, perhaps the best example of a classical legislator, began by abdicating his monarchical fundtions. When introducing the doctrine of the legislator, Rousseau writes:

> Pour découvrir les meilleures regles de société qui conviennent aux Nation, il faudroit un intelligence, supérieure, qui vit toutes les passions des hommes et qui n'en éprouvât aucune, qui n'eut aucun rapport avec notre nature et qui la connût à fond, dont le bonheur fût indépendant de nous et qui pourtant voulut bien s'occuper du notre; enfin qui, dans le progrès des tems se ménageant une gloire éloignée, put travailler dans un siecle et jouir dans un autre. Il faudroit des Dieux pour donner des loix aux hommes.[4]

But most men are incapable of submitting their passions to the authority of reason. Reason, Rousseau repeatedly wards, should be suspect to every man; the only reason men should follow is the public reason, which is law.[5] Now, law and civil religion may be adequate restraints for common men, but one must seriously doubt the thesis that they are also adequate to subject the passions of those with stronger natures. The code of the legislator is addressed to the vulgar men, and therefore it is steeped in the language of religion. Furthermore, since the legislator's code is meant to direct men's opinions in keeping with the decrees of political right and the institutions which assure their freedom, it must also stimulate men's passions.

This means that the legislator's code must cultivate the passions of beneficence and altruism from men's innermost sense of vanity. This, more than anything else, testifies to the greatness of the legislator. For the individual who can control his passions and seek a "distintant glory", while cultivating what is innermost base, can be no less than a god.

> Je conviendrai d'autant mieux de tout cela qu'un homme qui n'auroit point de passions seroit certainement un fort mauvais citoyen: mais il faut convenir aussi que si l'on n'apprend point aux hommes à n'aimer rien, il n'est pas impossible de leur apprendre à aimer un object plûtôt qu'une autre, et ce qui est véritablement beau, plûtôt que ce qui est difforme. Si, par example, on les exerce assez-tôt a ne jamais regarder leur individu que par ses relations avec le corps de l'Etat, et à n'appercevoir, pour ainsi dire, leur propre existence que comme une partie de la sienne, ils pourrent parvenir enfin à s'indetifier en quelque sorte avec a plus grand tout, à se sentir membres de la partie, à l'aimer de ce sentiment exquis que tout homme isolé n'a que pour soi-même, à élever perpétuellement leur ame à ce grand objet, et à transformer ainsi en une vertu sublime, cette disposition dangereuse d'où naissent tous nos vices. Non-seulement la Philosophie démontre la possibilité de ces nouvelles directions, mais l'Histoire en fournit mille examples éclatons . . .[6]

Rousseau, we have noted, does not suppose that all men are born of equal talent and ambition. The appeal to passion, even under the best of circumstances, is as dangerous as it is necessary. The common man may, as Rousseau notes above, "come to identify himself with the whole", but the glory of a citizen is hardly sufficient to one of a superior nature. For, as Hobbes says, "glory is like honor, if all men have it, no man hath it",

the men of superior talent and genius will seek glory which is unparalleled by others. The first philosophers, Rousseau tells us, made great reputations by teaching men virtue. But Rousseau remains somewhat silent about their motive. Rousseau does not say that virtue was taught from a lack of virtue on the part of citizens or from an over-abundance of virtue on the part of early philosophers. May we not infer from this silence that the teaching of virtue was motivated by similar base passions as those attributed to the moderns? Indeed, Rousseau's censure and praise of Cicero, "the father of the Republic", is indicative of this line of thought. Of Cicero, Rousseau writes the following.

> Mais l'éloquence du Consul entraine tout; et lui-meme, quoique Romain, aimant mieux sa gloire que sa patri, ne cherchoit pas tant le moyen le plus légitime et le plus sûr de souver l'Etat, que celui d'avoir tout l'honneur de cette affaire.[7]

The example of Cicero serves to underline the thesis discussed above. Base motives can be made to serve noble ends. Indeed, the problem posed by Rousseau's theory of popular sovereignty—that the General Will can not express itself on particular issues and therefore there is a need for the separation of executive and legislative powers—presupposes the correctness of this proposition. It presupposes also, as Professor Leo Strauss has pointed out, ". . . that science and society may be brought into some kind of agreement by violence, that is, the possibility that the philosopher can be

forced by society, or by himself as a citizen, to put his talents to the service of society by teaching the people their duties while refraining from teaching them philosophy or science."[8] In the Premiere Discours, we noted, Rousseau spoke of Socrates "resisting the great torrent" and Cato the Elder "inveighing against those cunning and subtle Greeks"; these men taught virtue when following the opposite route would have clearly been in their favour. But these men, like the legislators of old (e.g., Moses, Lycurgus, Numa) were possessed with extraordinary virtue. They sought a glory which was beyond the reckoning of common men, indeed, beyond the grasp of modern philosophy. But Rousseau does not propose to build a democratic theory on the fortunate, though unlikely, existence of a few extraordinarily virtuous men. Rousseau supposes to found popular sovereignty on less virtue, that is, on the election of wise and honest magistrates who, as deputies of the people's will, always exercise great restraint when deciding upon issues which may affect them personally. Rousseau, however, never says very much about the character or motives of these magistrates. From the Dedicace à la République de Genève, where Rousseau showers both the citizens and the magistrates with praise, we can only assume that magistrates elected by the people are likely to be the most intelligent, talented, and honest men of the city. Rousseau merely contents himself with exhorting both ordinary citizens and the magistrates alike to

honour each other so that a common respect for the law guarantees a sincere and perpetual harmony. Rousseau's reluctance to speak about the motives of the magistrates is accented by his vehement desire to warn the citizens against the motives of equally ingenious and talented men.

> Gardez-vous, sur tout, et ce sera mon dernier Conseil, d'écouter jamais des interpretations sinistres et des discours envenimés dont les motifs secrets sont souvent plus dangereux que les actions qui en sont l'objet.[9]

But is virtue, as Rousseau seems to claim, that which distinguishes the magistrates of a free republic from the perpetrators of "venomous discourses"? Without knowing the precise motives of the magistrates, it is difficult to say if they were virtuous because they desired honour or if they desired honour because they were virtuous. Quite obviously, the problem of the wise and virtuous magistrate is exacerbated for two reasons. First, Rousseau remains reticent on the very important question of the motives of the people's deputies. Second, "the universal desire for reputation, honours, and preferences, which devours us all", is, as was noted, morally neutral.

We can hardly dismiss this problem as a mere oversight, and its resolution, we suggest, is crucial to our understanding of science and democracy. By not questioning the motives of the higher men, Rousseau is attempting to redirect their passions towards the service of democracy. That democracy serves the interest of all mankind is not a self-evident truth. Men, and

certainly the "few best individuals",[10] must be shown that their interests truly lie with a democratic form of government. But to do this, Rousseau has to show that honour can be gained through law and distinction through service to the state. Rousseau does not pretend to preach sermons and it is, he recognizes, foolish to rely on men's sense of justice when it is possible to motivate them by self-interest. By praising Geneva and its constitution, Rousseau can show the magistrates of this city the way by which one gains true fame. This is also repeated in the case of the Marquis d'Argenson, of whom in the Du Contract Social Rousseau writes:

> Je n'ai pu me refuser au plausir de citer quelquefois ce manuscrit quoique non connu du public, pour rendre honneur à la mémoire d'un homme illustre et respectable, qui avoit conservé jusques dans le Ministere le coeur d'un vrai citizen, et des vues droites et saines sur le gouvernement de son pays.[11]

By not questioning the motives of the Marquis d'Argenson and the Magistrates of Geneva, Rousseau avoids an obvious blunder. It does not require much common sense to realize that one can not persuade someone whom one has just finished insulting. By suggesting neither the nobleness nor the baseness of the political leader's intentions, Rousseau allows his reader to pursue a noble end (e.g., altruism), though perhaps inspired by baser passions. But if Rousseau is prepared to offer a carrot, he is careful not to forget that some men require the stick. Institutions, Rousseau suggests, whether they be academic or political, must inflame the talented men's passions for virtue

by—and this is only implicitly suggested—appealing to their vanity.

> Ces sages institutions affermies par son auguste successeur, et imitées par tous les Rois de l'Europe, serviront du moins de frein aux gens de lettres, qui tous aspirant à l'honneur d'être admis dans les Académies, veilleront sur eux-mêmes, et tâcheront de s'en rendre dignes par des ouvrages utiles et des moeurs irreprochables. Celles de ces Compagnies, qui pour les prix dont elles honorent le mérite littéraire feront un choix de sujets propres à ranimer l'amour de la vertu dans les coeurs des Citoyens, montreront que cet amour regne parmi elles, et donneront aux Peuples ce plaisir si rare et si doux de voir des societés savantes se dévoüer à verser sur le Genre-humain, non-seulement des lumiéres agreables, mais aussi des instructions salutaires. [12]

Ultimately, of course, Rousseau can not provide any guaranteed means to persuade the naturally superior men to serve democracy rather than oppose it. Moreover, as the popularization of philosophy and science has made it "necessary to renounce virtue to become a respectable man",[13] men are drawn to discover selfishness as the sole motive for good and evil, and thereby remove the veil of illusory opinion, which alone may sustain republican morals. The status of science in a democracy, therefore, like that of the greatest men, must necessarily be subordinate to the proposition that man is virtuous, that there is "morality in man's heart", and that each man has a moral existence which he owes to the whole. Without this subordination, virtue may be destroyed by cynicism, which, while parading as wisdom, draws its strength from vile passions.

NOTES TO CHAPTER I

[1]C.E. Butterworth, Paradox and Political Philosophy, unpublished manuscript, University of Maryland, p. 1.

[2]Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Rousseau Juge de Jean Jacques, in Oeuvres Complèts de Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Bibliothèque de la Pléiade (Paris: Galimard, 1959-1969), Vol. I, p. 932. Except for Rousseau's Lettre à M. d'Alembert, which will be cited from A. Bloom (ed.), Politics and the Arts, and in English, all other references will be cited from the Pléiade collection, in French, with the appropriate volumes identified in Roman numerals in parentheses.

[3]For the purposes of this essay the terms "philosophy" and "science" will be used synonymously. However, the distinction between philosophy and science can be explained as follows:

> The distinction between philosophy and science or the separation of science from philosophy was a consequence of the revolution which occurred in the seventeenth century. This revolution was primarily not the victory of science over Metaphysics but what one may call the victory of the new philosophy or science over Aristotelian philosophy or science. Yet the new philosophy or science was not equally successful in all its parts. Its most successful part was physics (and mathematics). Prior to the victory of the new physics, there was not the science of physics simply: there was Aristotelian physics, Platonic physics, Epicurean physics, Stoic physics; to speak colloquially, there was no metaphysically neutral physics. The victory of the new physics led to the emergence of a physics which seemed to be as metaphysically netural as, say, mathematics, medicine, or the art of shoe-making. The emergence of a metaphysically neutral physics made it possible for "science" to become independent of "philosophy", and in fact an authority for the latter. (Leo Strauss, "An Epilogue", H.J. Storing (ed.), in Essays on the Scientific Study of Politics, p. 309.)

[4]Rousseau, Préface d'une Seconde Lettre à Bordes (III), 106.

[5]See Rousseau's Préface à Narcisse (II), 972ff and the Lettre à M. d'Alembert, pp. 58-59.

NOTES TO CHAPTER I (cont'd)

[6]Butterworth, pp. 2-3.

[7]Thomas Hobbes, Leviathan or The Matter, Forme and Power of a Commonwealth, M. Oakeshott (ed.), p. 467.

[8]Leo Strauss, "On the Intention of Rousseau", in M. Cranston and S. Peters (eds.), Hobbes and Rousseau, pp. 288-290.

[9]Rousseau, Préface à Narcisse (II), 959-967.

[10]Rousseau, Premier Discours (III), 8,9,10,12,20,22,24-25.

[11]Bloom, Politics and the Arts, page XX.

[12]Rousseau, Émile (IV), 569.

[13]Rousseau, Émile (IV), 570.

[14]Rousseau, Premier Discours (III), 18.

[15]Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Discours sur les Sciences et Les Arts, G. Haven (ed.), Modern Language Association, note 116, p. 193, note 278 and 279, p. 243.

[16]Alexis de Tocqueville, Democracy in America (Vol. II), Ch. V, p. 24.

[17]The Federalist, No. 49, Madison, p. 340.

[18]Rousseau, Premier Discours (III), 8-9.

[19]Rousseau, Préface à Narcisse (II), 967-968. In regard to immorality, or what Rousseau termed "the greatest crime", see Du Contract Social (Vol. IV), Bk. IV, Ch. VIII, p. 468. This point is reiterated again in Rousseau's Lettre à M. d'Alembert; in A. Bloom (ed.) Politics and the Arts, pp. 24, 51.

[20]Rousseau, Émile (IV), 599.

[21]Rousseau, Du Contract Social (III), Bk. I, Ch. VIII, 365.

[22]Rousseau, Second Discours (III), 156.

[23]Rousseau, Du Contract Social (III), Bk. I, Ch. VII, 363.

[24]Rousseau, Du Contract Social (III), Bk. I, Ch. VII, 363.

NOTES TO CHAPTER II

[1]Rousseau, Préface à Narcisse (II), 965ff. See also Premiere Discours (III), 25.

[2]Rousseau, Premier Discours (III), 5.

[3]Leo Strauss, "On the Intention of Rousseau", in M. Cranston and S. Peters (eds.), Hobbes and Rousseau, pp. 263-270.

[4]Rousseau, Lettre à Lecat (III), 102.

[5]One should, we suggest, take seriously Dr. Strauss's suggestion that Rousseau's doctrine of the legislator is, at least in part, an adumbration of his function. See Leo Strauss, Natural Right and History, p. 288.

[6]Rousseau, Premier Discours (III), 15. See also Rousseau, The First and Second Discourses, R.D. Masters (ed.), note 19, pp. 68-69.

[7]Rousseau, Émile (IV), 524.

[8]"Toute societé partielle, quand elle est étroite et bien unie, s'aliéne de la grande. Tout patriote est dur aux etrangers; ils ne sont qu'hommes, ils ne sont rien à ses yeux. Ce inconvenient est inévitable, mais il est foible. L'essenciel est d'être bon aux gens avec qui l'on vit. Au dehors le Spartiate étoit ambitieux, avare, inique: Mais le desintéressement, l'équité, la concorde régnoiet dans ses murs. Défiez-vous de ces cosmopolites qui vont chercher au loin dans leurs livre des devoir qu'ils dédaignent de remplir autour d'eux. Tel philosophe aime les Tartares pour être dispensé d'aimer ses voisins." Rousseau, Emile (IV), Bk. I, 248-249.

Compare the above with Rousseau's remarks on the effects of "our much vaunted urbanity" in Du Contract Social (III), Bk. II, Ch. IX, XI, pp. 388-389, 391-393; Discours sur l'Économie Politique (III) p. 254.

Compare Rousseau's attitude toward the expansion of the state which "stretches" the social bond with the degree to which science and philosophy encourage men to "love the Tartars" so to "avoid loving their neighbours". Rousseau's theory of a "closed society" which is animated by a "national philosophy" or "civil religion" is predicated on the need for civil society to maintain exclusively national institutions or symbols. Progress in the arts and sciences, or the proliferation of philosophy and science in general, extends men's faculties beyond the confines of the state, and therefore of duty.

NOTES TO CHAPTER II (cont'd)

Professor Strauss described civil society, or the city, at least as the classics conceived of it as a "small society" wherein "the limits of the city coincide with the range of man's active concern for nonanonymous individuals" and where political freedom "is not a gift of heaven" but, "becomes actual only through the efforts of many generations, and its preservation always requires the highest degree of vigilence". (Leo Strauss, Natural Right and History, pp. 130-132.)

[9]Rousseau, Premier Discours (III), 19. (Italics in quoted passages are mine). While speaking through his Savoyard Vicar, Rousseau states the fundamental problem between passion and reason in the following way:

> En méditant sur la nature de l'homme j'y vous decouvrir deux principes distincts, dont l'un l'élevoit à l'étude des vérités éternelles, à l'amour de la justice et du beau morals, aux régions du monde intellectuel, dont la contemplation fait les délice du sage, et dont l'autre le ramenoit bassement en lui-même, l'asservissoit à l'empire de sens, aux passions qui sort leurs ministres et contrariot par elles tout ce que lui inspiroit les sentiment prémier. En me sentant entraîné, combattu par ces deux movemens contraires, je me disois: non, l'homme n'est point un; je veux et je ne veux pas, je me sens à la fois esclave et libre; je vois le bien, je l'aime, et je fois le mal: je suis actif guard j'écoute la raison, passif quand mes passions m'entrainent, et mon pire tourment, quand je succombe, est de sentir que j'ai pu resister. Rousseau, Émile (IV), Bk. IV, 583.

[10]Rousseau, Second Discours (III), 157.

[11]Rousseau, Second Discours (III), 156. Compare with Rousseau's statement in Préface à Narcisse (II), 967.

[12]Rousseau, Émile (II), 303.

[13]Rousseau, Second Discours (III), 156.

[14]Rousseau, Premier Discours (III), 21.

[15]Rousseau, Premier Discours (III), 25. Compare with Rousseau's Préface à Narcisse (II), 965.

[16]Rousseau, Préface à Narcisse (II), 965-6.

NOTES TO CHAPTER II (cont'd)

[17]H.V. Jaffa, The Crisis of The House Divided, p. 213.

[18]"Socrate avoit commencé dans Athénes, le vieux Caton continua dans Rome de se déchaîner contre ces Grecs artificieux et subtils qui séduisoient la vertu et amolissoient le courage de ses concitoyens. Mais les Sciences, les Arts et la dialectique prévalurent encore: Rome se remplit de Philosophes et d'Orateurs; on négligea la discipline militaire, on méprisa l'agriculture, on embrassa des Sectes et l'on oublia la Patrie. Aux noms sacrés de liberté, de desinteressement, d'obeissance aux Loix, succederent les noms d'Epicure, de Zenon, d'Arcesilas. Depuis que les Scavans ont commencé à paroître parmi nous, disoient leurs propres Philosophes, les Gens de bien se sont éclipsés. Jusqu'alors les Romains s'étoient contentés de pratiquer la vertu; tout fut perdu quand ils commencerent à l'étudier. (italics in original) Rousseau, Premiere Discours (III), 14.

[19]Rousseau, Émile (IV) Bk. V, pp. 817-818.

NOTES TO CHAPTER III

[1]Rousseau, Lettre à M. d'Alembert, p. 15.

[2]Rousseau, Lettre à M. d'Alembert, p. 6.

[3]R.D. Masters, The Political Philosophy of J.J. Rousseau, p. 75.

[4]Bloom, Politics and the Arts, p. xvi.

[5]Rousseau, Lettre à M. d'Alembert, p. 132N. See also Confessions, (I), Bk. II, p. 56.

[6]Rousseau, Lettre à M. d'Alembert, pp. 5-6.

[7]Rousseau, "Quatrième Promenade", Les Rêvereries du Promeneur Solitaires (I), pp. 1026-1029.

[8]Rousseau, Lettre à M. d'Alembert, p. 24. Compare with Rousseau's remarks in Du Contract Social (III), Bk. IV, Ch. 1, p. 438.

[9]Rousseau, Lettre à M. d'Alembert, p. 29.

[10]Rousseau, Lettre à M. d'Alembert, p. 15. Compare with Rousseau's remarks on a democracy, p. 115.

[11]Rousseau, Lettre à M. d'Alembert, p. 16.

[12]Rousseau, Lettre à M. d'Alembert, p. 19.

[13]The theatre, Rousseau believes, cannot make men love the good, the beautiful, and the virtuous, as these are sentiments which must have existed beforehand. But if the threatre can reflect only what citizens already feel, by exciting men's sentiments, it can also expose men to all the human passions and excesses. The cornerstone of a republic is duty, and as duty implies a certain degree of self-control and temperence the effects of the theatre contradict the very principle of a free society. See Lettre à M. d'Alembert, pp. 21,51,57,108. Compare the above with Émile (IV), Bk. IV, pp. 594-595,602.

[14]Rousseau, Lettre à M. d'Alembert, pp. 48-57. Note that Rousseau used two examples (the plays Bernice by Racine and Zaire by Voltaire), both of which depict the conflict between duty to the state and love of a woman. In both plays the heroes, Titus and Orosmane respectively, have to decide between obeying the laws of the state or abdicating their duty in favour of their lovers; and even though both submit to the authority of law, it is done only reluctantly, whereupon the lesson the

NOTES TO CHAPTER III (cont'd)

the audience receives is negated by the very emotions which are aroused.

[15] Rousseau, Lettre à M. d'Alembert, p. 34-36. Rousseau insists that a playwright can follow only the accepted sentiments of his audience, for no audience will accept an author who contradicts their opinions or saterizes their tastes. An author, Rousseau believes, who would deviate from this rule would soon find that he was writing for himself. Therefore, in a corrupt society, it is not corruption that is ridiculed, but its exact opposite—virtue. Virtue is out of keeping with the social lethargy that permeates all corrupt states, and it is an easy target for theatrical ridicule. Compare the above with Premiere Discours (III), p. 3 and Du Contract Social, (III), Bk. II, Ch. VIII, p. 385. See also Plato's Republic, 492B-D.

[16] Rousseau, Lettre à M. d'Alembert, pp. 34,35,37,40-41, 44-45.

[17] Rousseau, Lettre à M. d'Alembert, pp. 20-21.

[18] Rousseau, Seconde Discours (III), p. 206.

[19] Rousseau, Lettre à M. d'Alembert, pp. 62-64.

[20] Leo Strauss, Natural Right and History, p. 259. See also Rousseau, Préface à Narcisse (II), p. 972ff and Lettre à M. d'Alembert, pp. 58-60.

NOTES TO CHAPTER IV

[1]Rousseau, Du Contract Social (III), Bk. III Ch. XI, p. 421.

[2]Rousseau, Du Contract Social (III), Bk. II, Ch. XI, p. 392; Bk. III, Ch. XI, p. 424.

[3]Rousseau, Du Contract Social (III), Bk. III, Ch. XII-XIV, pp. 424-427.

[4]Rousseau, Du Contract Social (III), Bk. II, Ch. XI, p. 392.

[5]Rousseau, Du Contract Social (III), Bk. II, Ch. IV, p. 360.

[6]Rousseau, Du Contract Social (III), Bk. IV, Ch. I, pp. 438-439.

[7]Rousseau, Du Contract Social (III), Bk. I, Ch. VII, p. 362; Bk. II, Ch. I, p. 368; Bk. III, Ch. I, p. 395; Bk. III, Ch. XII, p. 425.

[8]Leo Strauss, Natural Right and History, p. 288.

[9]R.D. Masters, The Political Philosophy of J.J. Rousseau, pp. 306-312. Compare the above with Rousseau's remarks in Discours sur l'Économie Politique (III), p. 258.

[10]Rousseau, Du Contract Social (III), Bk. II, Ch. I, p. 352.

[11]In writing the Du Contract Social Rousseau presupposes that his reader is already acquainted with the Seconde Discours. Compare Rousseau's opening remarks in Du Contract Social (III), Bk. I, Ch. VI and VIII, pp. 360,364 and the Seconde Discours, part I.

[12]Rousseau, Du Contract Social (III), Bk. I, Ch. I, p. 352.

[13]See Émile Durkheim, Montesquieu and Rousseau, Forerunners of Sociology, trans. G. Davy, pp. 95-96. Compare with Rousseau's own usage of the terms "reason" and "nature" in Du Contract Social (III), Bk. I, Ch. IV, pp. 357-358; Bk. II, Ch. IV, p. 373.

[14]Rousseau, Du Contract Social (III), Bk. I, Ch. VII, p. 363. See also Bk. I, Ch. V, p. 359; Bk. II, Ch. I, pp. 368-369; Bk. III, Ch. XVI, p. 432.

[15]Rousseau, Du Contract Social (III), Bk. I, Ch. VI, p. 360.

NOTES TO CHAPTER IV (cont'd)

[16]Rousseau, Du Contract Social (III), Bk. I, Ch. VI, p. 360.

[17]Rousseau, Du Contract Social (III), Bk. II, Ch. IV, pp. 373-374; Bk. II, Ch. VI, pp. 378-379.

[18]Rousseau, Du Contract Social (III), Bk. II, Ch. I, p. 368; Bk. III, Ch. XV, pp. 428-431.

[19]R.D. Masters, The Political Philosophy of J.J. Rousseau, p. 326. See Rousseau, Du Contract Social (III), Bk. II, Ch. III, p. 371.

[20]Rousseau, Du Contract Social (III), Bk. II, Ch. IV, pp. 373-375.

[21]Rousseau, Du Contract Social (III), Bk. II, Ch. IV, p. 373.

[22]Rousseau, Du Contract Social (III), Bk. IV, Ch. II, p. 441

[23]Rousseau, Du Contract Social (III), Bk. II, Ch. IV, pp. 404-405. Compare with Rousseau's praise of Democracy which is "wisely tempered" in Dedicace à la République de Genève (III), pp. 112ff.

[24]A. Bloom, "J.J. Rousseau", Strauss and Cropsey (ed.), in History of Political Philosophy, pp. 543-549,534-535. See also Leo Strauss, Natural Right and History, pp. 252-254; Rousseau, The First and Second Discourses, trans. R.D. Masters, pp. 14-15.

[25]Rousseau, Du Contract Social (III), Bk. III, Ch. XI, p. 24.

[26]Rousseau, Du Contract Social (III), Bk. III, Ch. X, pp. 421-423, Ch. XVIII, pp. 434-436.

[27]Rousseau, Du Contract Social (III), Bk. III, Ch. II, pp. 439-441.

[28]Rousseau, Du Contract Social (III), Bk. III, Ch. X, pp. 421-423.

[29]Rousseau, Du Contract Social (III), Bk. IV, Ch. IV, pp. 452-453.

[30]R.D. Masters, The Political Philosophy of J.J. Rousseau, p. 357.

NOTES TO CHAPTER IV (cont'd)

[31]Rousseau, Du Contract Social (III), Bk. II, Ch. VII, pp. 381-383, Ch. XI, pp 391-393, Ch. XII, pp. 393-394.

[32]R.D. Masters, The Political Philosophy of J.J. Rousseau, pp. 360-362.

[33]Aristotle, Politics, 1284a, 3-20.

[34]R.D. Masters, The Political Philosophy of J.J. Rousseau, pp. 362-363.

[35]Rousseau, Du Contract Social (III), Bk. II, Ch. VII, p. 383.

[36]Rousseau, Du Contract Social (III), Bk. II, Ch. XII, p. 394. See also Lettre à M. d'Alembert, pp. 66,79.

[37]Rousseau, Du Contract Social (III), Bk. II, Ch. VII, pp. 381-382. See also Émile (IV), p. 249.

[38]Rousseau, Du Contract Social (III), Bk. II, Ch. VII, p. 381.

[39]I am indebted to Professor S.J. Ajzenstat for his suggestion that a civil responsibility is to others while a moral obligation is to oneself.

[40]Rousseau, Du Contract Social (III), Bk. II, Ch. IV, p. 374. See also Discours sur l'Économie Politique (III), pp. 246-247, 250-251. Note that Rousseau considered most change as bad and as proof of moral corruption.

[41]Rousseau, Du Contract Social (III), Bk. II, Ch. IV, p. 374.

NOTES TO CHAPTER V

[1]Rousseau, Du Contract Social (III), Bk. III, Ch. XI, p. 424.

[2]See E.H. Wright, The Meaning of Rousseau, pp. 32,70-71 and J. Manners "The Social Contract and Rousseau Revolt against Society", M. Cranston and R.S. Peters (ed.), in Hobbes and Rousseau, pp. 304,307,308. For Rousseau's reply to such a charge, see "Sixieme Lettre", in Lettres Écrites de la Montagne (III), p. 810.

[3]Rousseau, Du Contract Social (III), Bk. III, Ch. XII, p. 426.

[4]Rousseau, Du Contract Social (III), Bk. II, Ch. IX-XI, pp. 386-393.

[5]See Rousseau's treatment of Peter the Great and Milos in relation to Plato, who, "refused to provide laws for the Arcadians and the Cyreneans." Peter the Great failed because he tried to "govern them too early" when discipline was what was needed. Milos attempted the exact reverse and failed with a people who were "dominated by their vices". Rousseau, Du Contract Social (III), Bk. II, Ch. VIII, pp. 384-385. See also Rousseau's analysis of the Romans, after the expulsion of the Tarquins, in Dedicace à la République de Genève (III), p. 113

[6]Rousseau, Du Contract Social (III), Bk. III, Ch. I, p. 397.

[7]Rousseau, Du Contract Social (III), Bk. III, Ch. I, pp. 397-398.

[8]Rousseau, Du Contract Social (III), Bk. II, Ch. XI, pp. 392-393; Bk. III, Ch. I, p. 398; Bk. III, Ch. II, p. 402.

[9]Rousseau, Du Contract Social (III), Bk. IV, Ch. I, p. 438.

[10]Rousseau, Du Contract Social (III), Bk. II, Ch. VII, p. 381. Note that Rousseau associates success (fame) with decline (corruption).

[11]Leo Strauss, "On the Intention of Rousseau", M. Cranston and R.S. Peters (ed.), in Hobbes and Rousseau, pp. 283-384.

[12]Rousseau, Discours sur l'Économie Politique (III), pp. 251-252,254,255,259,261.

[13]Rousseau, Du Contract Social (III), Bk. IV, Ch. VIII, pp. 467-468.

NOTES TO CHAPTER VI

[1]Rousseau, Premier Discours (III), 6.

[2]Rousseau, Du Contract Social (III), Bk. II, Ch. VII, p. 381.

[3]Rousseau, Du Contract Social (III), Bk. II, Ch. VII, p. 383.

[4]Rousseau, Du Contract Social (III), Bk. II, Ch. VII, p. 381. (italics are mine)

[5]Rousseau, Discours Sur l'Économie Politique (III), 243ff.

[6]Rousseau, Discours Sur l'Économie Politique (III), p. 259-260.

[7]Rousseau, Du Contract Social (III) Bi. IV, Ch. VI, p. 457. (italics are mine)

[8]Leo Strauss, "On the Intention of Rousseau", M. Cranston and S. Peters (eds.), Hobbes and Rousseau, pp. 280-281.

[9]Rousseau, Dedicace à la République de Genève (III), p. 117.

[10]Bloom, Politics and the Arts, p. xvii.

[11]Rousseau, Du Contract Social (III), Bk. IV, Ch. VII, pp. 467-468N. See also R.D. Masters, The Political Philosophy of J.J. Rousseau, pp. 307-309.

[12]Rousseau, Premier Discours (III), 26-27. (Italics are mine.) See also Lettre à M. d'Alembert, pp. 65-75.

[13]Rousseau, Préface à Narcisse (II), 968ff.

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