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Visions of Rousseau: Political Portraits of Man in Nature and Society

By

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DISSERTATION

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Abstract

Rousseau's political thought is commonly understood as his prescriptive attempt to restore, recreate, or replicate the natural goodness of man in society. In contrast to this prevailing view, I argue for a reorientation that sees Rousseau's political thought as a diagnostic project, primarily concerned with discovering what Man is and to what extent this image of Man is still present in men. The political problem facing Rousseau and us, his readers, is the gap between the naturally good Image, Man, and His corrupted image-bearers, men. To investigate this problem, Rousseau utilizes portraiture. Portraiture is Rousseau's explicit and intentional methodology that approaches the problem of Man and men through figures—of natural man, Emile, Sophie, Julie, and Jean Jacques—from the relational perspective that arises between the interplay of the author of the portrait, the nature of the subject, and the impact on the audience of both the author and his work of art. On my reading, the framework of portraiture allows us to approach the metaphysical and moral concept, Man, apart from his phenomenal likenesses and historical development in men through the imaginative portraits of Rousseau. Rousseau thus can be seen as providing a much richer philosophical groundwork for his moral and political system than has previously been appreciated. The dissertation explains Rousseau's diagnostic attempt to see Man as he truly is and save men as they are through his portraits and by way of portraiture.

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Introduction

"*Picture an ideal world similar to ours, yet altogether different. Nature is the same there as on our earth, but its economy is more easily felt, its order more marked, its aspect more admirable. Forms are more elegant, colors more vivid, odors sweeter, all objects more interesting. All nature is so beautiful there that its contemplation, inflaming souls with love for such a touching tableau, inspires in them both the desire to contribute to this beautiful system and the fear of troubling its harmony"* (*CW* 1:9).[1]

Even among scholars sympathetic to Rousseau's systematic claims,[2] the obvious artistry of his work is set against its philosophic substance. Arthur Melzer concedes that "it is difficult to deny that Rousseau's style of writing is unsystematic. Believing that if one speaks to men 's hearts, their minds will follow, he tends to paint rather than to argue."[3] Judith Shklar contends that "Jean-Jacques Rousseau was not a professional philosopher... His great claim was that he alone had been 'the painter of nature and the historian of the human heart'. It was an art that did not demand great logical rigor or systematic exposition of abstract ideas."[4] Jean Starobinski argues that we do Rousseau a "disservice when we expect him to provide rigorous coherence and systematic thought."[5] One is forced to choose between Rousseau, "the philosopher or artist," the man of "philosophic or artistic genius" in political theory.[6] To recognize his artistry is to decide against the philosophic and political character of his writings.

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[1] Rousseau citations refer to the following translations: *CW* for *The Collected Writings of Rousseau*, ed. by Roger D. Masters and Christopher Kelly (Hanover, NH: University Press of New England, 1990–2010); *Discourse on the Origin and Foundations of Inequality among Men*, In *The Major Political Writings of Jean-Jacques Rousseau*, ed. and trans. John T. Scott. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2012); *Emile, or On Education*, trans. Allan Bloom. (New York: Basic Books, 1979); and *OC* for *Oeuvres complètes*. 5 vols. (Paris: Gallimard, Bibliothèque de la Pléiade, 1959–95).

[2] Rousseau first claims he has a system in the Preface to *Narcisse* (*OC*, II, 964). He most notably discusses his system in the *Dialogues* (*CW* 1:209), *Confessions* (*CW* 5:294), the "Letter to Malesherbes," (*CW* 5:575), though there are other references in his various correspondences.

[3] Arthur Melzer, *The Natural Goodness of Man: On the System of Rousseau's Thought.* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990), 2.

[4] Judith Shklar, *Men and Citizens: A Study of Rousseau's Social Theory*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1969), 1.

Without reading Rousseau against Rousseau, pitting the political and the artistic elements of his writings against each other, I argue that Rousseau's philosophic and political insights require his literary and artistic style; his writing, which seems to detract from his thought, is the very thing necessary for the full expression of that thought. Throughout the dissertation, I seek to demonstrate Rousseau's self-understanding of portraiture, how it is used to convey his principles, and why this concept is determinative for his thought. Portraiture is here understood as Rousseau's intentional and explicit choice to portray (*portraire*) his thought in such a way as to allow for the consideration of the relationship between the author of the portrait, the nature of the subject, and the impact on the audience of both the author and his work of art. Without sacrificing the coherence of his thought and without privileging artistry over philosophy, portraiture resists systemization: through a combination of personal accounts and distinctive vignettes, Rousseau constructs a political theory that cannot be reduced to a unified picture of the nature of man nor to a series of irreconcilable literary projects. This understanding of Rousseau's method considers the substance of his writings in their relational context and offers a new understanding of his moral and political principles that is not opposed to but supported by the artistry of his writing.

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[5] Jean Starobinski, *Jean-Jacques Rousseau: Transparency and Obstruction.* Trans. Arthur Goldhammer. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988), 184.

[6] Arthur Melzer, *The Natural Goodness of Man: On the System of Rousseau's Thought.* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990), 16, 22.

Rousseau’s portraiture ought to be understood to be a problem for the reader on the order of interpreting the dialogues of Plato, the *essais* of Montaigne, or the parallel lives of Plutarch. In lieu of searching for doctrines and contradictions, the reader must account for a shared methodology. Rousseau does not limit himself, as do these other authors, to a particular genre of writing; he does, however, repeatedly return to portraiture within his writings. Portraiture is a more adaptable sub-framework that can be used across genres—including novels, discourses, autobiographies, and dialogues. Rousseau’s method benefits from both the diversity of effects produced by his use of different genres and from a recognizable context by which to judge his substantive statements.

Approaching Rousseau’s philosophic system through his portraits allows us to maintain both the metaphorical reading of Rousseau’s works popular among literary scholars of Rousseau and his more practical, and indeed, political doctrines recognized chiefly among political theorists. Portraiture captures the excluded middle characteristic of Rousseau’s thought; without asking whether Rousseau prefers the natural man or citizen, artistry or philosophy, solitude or society, the portraiture approach used by Rousseau and argued for in this dissertation preserves both. Rousseau replicates his portraits of Man and men in the republican political body of the *Social Contract.* The logic of portraiture not only helps advance Rousseau’s ‘personally’ political attempts to know Man but his straightforwardly political project, the *Social Contract.* For the individual figure of the portrait, Rousseau instead shows the composite and corporate figure of politics. The person is replaced by the people as the subject of the image. The investigation of self-knowledge, and the parallel project of constructing political institutions compatible with and conducive to what Man is, is a continuous and self-referential activity, depicted in the self-referential and relational context of portraiture.

Scholars have often recognized occasions of portraiture in Rousseau without treating the concept systematically or methodologically—without treating such portraits together as a group or without assigning deeper significance to them as a particular means of conveying Rousseau's political thought. Lawrence Cooper sees Rousseau's "compelling portrait of Emile" in *Emile.*[7] Arthur Melzer most often uses "portrait" to describe Rousseau's disunified images, whether bourgeois or civilized man.[8] Jonathan Marks recognizes the "idyllic portrait" of natural man in the Second Discourse even while undermining it.[9] John Scott characterizes the first part of the Second Discourse as a description of "our original or natural condition through a portrait of savage man."[10] Paul de Man recognizes the persistence of "portraits" across Rousseau's works: "'Portrait' will become, of course, a particularly rich and ambiguous term throughout Rousseau's work, from the early riddle (*CW* 2:1133), to the portrait in *Narcisse*, the scene of Julie's portrait in the *Nouvelle Heloise* (2:278-80), the distinction between "portrait" and "tableau" in the Second Preface to the *Nouvelle Heloise,* and the rantings about his own portrait in the Dialogues."[11] Judith Shklar considers the Legislator of the *Social Contract* a portrait, even if "the least genuine, the most wooden, one –dimensional figure."[12] The *Confessions* and the *Reveries,* as Rousseau's explicit self-portraits, are read as such. Even without engaging in the artistic and literary aspects of Rousseau, Fredrick Neuhouser and Joshua Cohen use “picture” to conceptualize Rousseau’s philosophic contribution.[13]

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[7] Laurence Cooper, "Human Nature and the Love of Wisdom: Rousseau's Hidden (and Modified) Platonism," *Journal of Politics* 64 (2002): 109.

[8] Arthur Melzer, *The Natural Goodness of Man: On the System of Rousseau's Thought.* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990), 64, 77.

[9] Jonathan Marks, *Perfection and Disharmony in the Thought of Jean-Jacques Rousseau.* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 5, 115.

[10] John T. Scott, "The Theodicy of the Second Discourse: The 'Pure State of Nature' and Rousseau's Political Thought." *American Political Science Review* 86 (1992):696.

[11] Paul de Man, *Allegories of Reading: Figural Language in Rousseau, Nietzsche, Rilke, and Proust*. (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1979), 164.

[12] Judith Shklar, *Men and Citizens: A Study of Rousseau's Social Theory.* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1969).

Once one recognizes, however, the pervasiveness of artistic language across Rousseau’s writings, one is struck by the diversity of vocabulary used. Portrait exists alongside other such terms as *tableau*, *image*, *peinture*, *trace*, and *figure*. This dissertation, which privileges portraiture, treats these related terms as part of portraiture, even while recognizing Rousseau’s conscious word choice in any given instance. Since this is a political and not a literary project, I am less interested in simply categorizing and tracing Rousseau’s typography of terms than in observing the effect that the visual and artistic language has on his political thought. To demonstrate the authenticity of the understanding of portraiture I have begun to articulate, it is necessary to show its immediate textual basis in Rousseau and defend, from Rousseau, the propriety of its application to specific texts. I am not seeking to reconstruct a “Rousseauan” theory of writing as portraiture; I contend that Rousseau himself is the source and exponent of this methodology.

Studies of Man and the Man

In a series of coherent but distinct attempts to know both humanity and himself, Rousseau presents portraits of natural man, Emile, Sophie, Jean-Jacques, Rousseau, and Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *inter alia*. It is not simply the designation of these portraits as portraits that separate them from the “exemplary figures” or “types” presented in other arguments about Rousseau’s corpus.

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[13] Joshua Cohen, *Rousseau: A Free Community of Equals* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 10 and Frederick Neuhouser, *Rousseau’s Theodicy of Self-Love* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 269.

Tzvetan Todorov, for example, argues that there “are two types of man, types that Rousseau variously calls ‘natural man’ and the ‘man of man,’ or ‘the man of nature’ and the ‘man of opinion,’ or ‘savage man’ and ‘civil man,’ or, yet again, ‘the man of nature’ and ‘the factitious and chimerical man whom our institutions and our prejudices have substituted for him.’”[14] Emile is the attempted synthesis of these opposing types—an individual that combines elements of these contradictory species. In Todorov’s reading, Emile is a chimera. Rousseau argues, however, that projects that seek to “follow a good [practice] halfway” are “much more chimerical” than what he is proposing and introduce “contraction in man”: Man “cannot pursue two opposite goals at the same time.”[15] Todorov’s view, and many others in this vein, might succeed as a “reconstruction” of Rousseau but any such reconstruction must “contain little,” as he himself admits.[16]

Judith Shklar acknowledges that the “citizen of a Spartan Republic” and the “man of the Golden Age” are “incompatible,” and sees them instead as “two models” from which “one ought to choose.”[17] Melzer likewise recognizes the incompatibility between the natural man and citizen, but adds to these types Emile and the solitary walker, so long as they meet “the formal standard of psychic unity or noncontradiction.”[18] If Rousseau’s problem cannot be fixed through chimerical synthesis, the alternative seems to be the multiplication of types and the proliferation of human souls. Laurence Cooper argues that Rousseau offers “two exemplary types, one of which represents the peak of human possibility and the other, the best life available to the man of ordinary gifts": himself and Emile respectively.[19] Besides these two exemplars there exist a myriad of other types, including the citizen and natural man in Rousseau's system and the Bible's pious man and the Greek's gentleman. Bejamin Storey identifies "five major human types" in Rousseau's thought.[20]

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[14] Tzvetan Todorov, *Imperfect Garden: The Legacy of Humanism*. Trans. Carol Cosman. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002), 5.
[15] Ibid. 34
[16] Ibid. 3
[17] Judith Shklar, *Men and Citizens: A Study of Rousseau’s Social Theory*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1969), 6.
[18] Arthur Melzer, *The Natural Goodness of Man: On the System of Rousseau’s Thought.* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990), 90.

My rejection of the centrality of unity also signals the rejection of arguments which assert the productivity of disunity for human perfection. The elevation of figures such as Emile, the solitary walker, or the savage man found in the second part of the Second Discourse over and against the citizen or natural man still prioritize the psychological status of the subjects and ignore their larger relational context. Benjamin Storey, who argues that disunified figures such as Emile and the solitary walker are Rousseau's solution for the problem of self-knowledge, follows Melzer's reading of the citizen and natural man as self-ignorant but psychologically unified beings; on this basis, he rejects these lives as inadequately human, arguing that a fully human life requires self-reflection and the possibility of self-knowledge. The preference for self-reflective but disunified beings, like Emile and the solitary walker, is not itself philosophical. Storey presents a cognitive standard for philosophy but suggests that Rousseau's writing is not itself principally philosophical. The culmination of Storey's argument is that the human psyche, with the appropriate training and end, may be able to approach philosophy.

Just as every reader of Plato's *Republic* is familiar with the official tripartite psychology of souls, so too is every reader of Rousseau aware of the natural man and citizen paradox. As the dialogue progresses, however, the ‘doctrine’ of the tripartite soul proves untenable. What was once three parts is shown to be as many parts as there are desires. The soul is not tripartite but infinitely divided. At the same time, Socrates reveals psychic unity and returns from the brink of infinity to propose a myth that saves the phenomena: every soul is preserved and purified as a unit rather than dissolving into all its competing constituent parts. Likewise, Rousseauan typology propagates until there are as many types of man as there are men. Where Socrates turns to myth to hold together his images of the whole and partitioned soul, Rousseau turns to portraiture to simultaneously present unified Man and disunified man: every man is preserved and purified in the image of Man, as an individual in his species, rather than dissolving into an isolated individual among undifferentiated material. Just as Socratic psychology develops an appreciation for the tension and unity between parts and the whole, Rousseau’s thought sees the variety and similarity among individuals through his species and original, Man.

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[19] Laurence Cooper, *Rousseau, Nature, and the Problem of the Good Life*. (University Park, PA: Penn State University Press, 1999), 173.

[20] Benjamin Storey, "Rousseau and the Problem of Self-Knowledge." *The Review of Politics* 71 (2009): 252.

This insight is not only applicable for Rousseau’s philosophy but for his politics. The Lycurgan model of law, famously associated with the *Social Contract*, takes for granted that there are discrete and limited types of men. The Socratic model found in the *Republic* and discussed mentioned in the Second Discourse and *Emile* would fail on the same grounds if this difficulty did not come to light in the dialogue or the dialogical logic of the text. Like Plato, Rousseau avoids chimeras as well as the Lycurgan vivisection, which seeks to rip apart what has grown up together. Lycurgus not only molds and shapes but abuses and deforms mankind; Plato— and on this reading, Rousseau— “carves up nature at the joints” and allows even chimeras to be studied as they are and not through a sclerotic and overly fastidious political or politicized science.[21] As Rousseau states in the *Emile, "When* one wishes to refer to the land of chimeras, mention is made of Plato's institutions. If Lycurgus had set his down only in writing, I would find them far more chimerical. Plato only purified the heart of man; Lycurgus denatured it."[22]

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[21] Plato. *Phaedrus,* trans. James H. Nichols. (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1998), 265e.

David Lay Williams recognizes and expands Rousseau's appreciation for and reappropriation of Platonic philosophy, identified by Shklar and Bloom, arguing that Rousseau was committed "to the central doctrines of modern Platonic metaphysics—the existence of God, free will, an immaterial soul, and transcendent ideas."[23] Williams' Rousseau is, if not devout, at least a true believer: he is an apologist for "the existence of God."[24] I agree with Williams' motivating observation that Rousseau's commitment to "modern Platonic metaphysics" is driven by his rejection of and dissatisfaction with contemporary materialist accounts of man. But, I argue, Rousseau does not seek his metaphysics and morals "from the other world" (*CW* 6:7). He does not, as Williams argues, root his philosophic system in "transcendental norms," but in Socratic self-knowledge, which is neither materialist nor transcendent but fully and thoroughly human. Salvation does not come from God but man. We do not await the new Heavens and Earth, but the republic of men made in the image of Man by men.

As theodicean arguments recognize, Rousseau is a reformer in his own right, even if he does not believe in or worship the Christian God. John Scott understands Rousseau's theodicy as justification of Nature before the introduction of either corruption or sin: "Rousseau claims that he has demonstrated that man is naturally good and that he has thereby justified nature."[25]

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[22] Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Emile, or On Education*, trans. Allan Bloom. (New York: Basic Books, 1979), 40.
[23] David Lay Williams, *Rousseau's Platonic Enlightenment*. (State College, PA: Penn State University Press, 2007), 62.
[24] Ibid, 66
[25] John T. Scott, "The Theodicy of the *Second Discourse*: The 'Pure State of Nature' and Rousseau's Political Thought." *American Political Science Review* 86 (1992):704.

Fredrick Neuhouser understands Rousseau's inquiry not as whether Nature is just or unjust because men are evil but as whether Nature is good or evil simply. If, however, Rousseau were justifying the ways of nature to man, as others have tried to justify the ways of God, then there would seem to be an important difference in the analogy. The original goodness of nature does not pose the same problem as the (continuing) goodness of God; the most serious problem for theologians is not that man has fallen from his perfect state at all but that he has done so in apparent violation of God's just providence. Rousseau, who does not seek a naturalistic account of man's physical departure from some original perfection, cares less about defending nature's justice than giving a moral account of man.

Jonathan Marks rejects theodicean arguments altogether through Rousseau's understanding of natural history, arguing that Rousseau's earliest depiction of natural man is not "original" or "natural" but already altered by his environment. What Rousseau praises then about this "natural" man is not nature but history: the perfection of his physical form by external pressures and interactions with his environment.[26] Marks's solution is not a question of political theory but of anthropology. In employing a natural and historical argument to confront the "physical" theodicean arguments (like Scott's), Marks forfeits the possibility of teleology. Teleology is not proven in natural selection; the phenomenological evidence Marks cites is irrelevant for the metaphysical argument he wants to make. Marks diminishes Rousseau's metaphysical and moral argument for freedom because of physical findings, collapsing the difference that Rousseau himself outlines in the beginning of the Discourse (*CW* 3:131).

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[26] Jonathan Marks, *Perfection and Disharmony in the Thought of Jean-Jacques Rousseau*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 24.

Rousseau certainly advocates for the moral improvement of man, but not through materialist methods.

Rousseau's method is portraiture, which investigates Man politically through a complex interaction between author, audience, and subject. The framework prevents unmediated engagement with the subject, which the author can neither portray straightforwardly without obscuring nor show the audience without misunderstanding. By contextualizing and accounting for Rousseau's role as author, I seek to reject accounts which use Rousseau's presence across his writings as fodder for a psychological (or psychiatric) diagnosis of the historical man.[27] Much like Rousseau's audience, Rousseau-as-artist is neither Rousseau-as-he-lived-and-breathed, nor merely a reconstruction or revision of that man. The question of authorship, then, is not a literal question of who wrote the works Rousseau is credited with writing, as the Man of Letters of the second Preface to *Julie* asks, characteristically off the mark. It is rather a question of how Rousseau's status as author of his works affects the substance of those works.

Rousseau's authorship of the Second Discourse, which no one today denies, nonetheless proves a contentious and consequential question for the subject of that work. Rousseau and his "enemies" both provide accounts of its origin, which either elevate or diminish the cogency of his argument. For both, the goodness and meaning of the work is inextricably connected to the goodness and sincerity of its author.[28] The enemies claim the 'true history' of the composition:

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[27] Jean Starobinski, *Jean-Jacques Rousseau: Transparency and Obstruction*, trans. Arthur Goldhammer. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988).

[28] I here use "sincerity" in a pedestrian way. For arguments on Rousseau's sincerity, see Irving Babbit, *Rousseau and Romanticism* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1919); Marshall Berman *The Politics of Authenticity: Radical Individualism and the Emergence of Modern Society* (New York: Atheneum, 1970); Alessandro Ferrara, *Modernity and Authenticity: A Study of the Social and Ethical Thought of Jean-Jacques Rousseau* (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 1993); Arthur Melzer, "The Origin of Counter-Enlightenment: Rousseau and the New Religion of Sincerity." *American Political Science Review* 90 (1996): 244-60; Charles Taylor, *Sources of the*

Diderot's slanderous story depends on the reality of the conversation between himself and Rousseau. Rousseau, who readily admits consulting Diderot, does not simply dispute the details of the conversation but instead offers a portrait of himself conceiving the Discourse. The question of authorship for Rousseau is itself the subject of the picture he is painting. Rousseau the author is not simply outside the picture but the subject of it. Rousseau acts as both painter and subject, not as one Rousseau but as two. Rousseau is, at once, both the author and not the author—he is the Rousseau he is depicting and only the Rousseau who is depicting.

Christopher Kelly's serious treatment of Rousseau's authorship is an invaluable resource for scholars but is much more historical in its focus than my own study.[29] Whereas Kelly takes seriously, and rightly so, the real effects of persecution on authorial and civic responsibility,[30] I focus on the in-text author Rousseau, as painter and subject of his own portrait. (If there are implications for Rousseau as an "esoteric" writer, it would therefore be pedagogical and philosophical rather than political or historical, or essential rather than accidental.) I do not treat Rousseau's autobiographical works in this dissertation, in part, to separate my project from others like Susan K. Jackson's, who reads Rousseau's autobiographies into his other works.[31] There is undoubtedly a link between Rousseau's autobiographies and other writings, but it is not primarily personal. If anything, Rousseau's moral, metaphysical, and political teachings across

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Self: The Making of Modern Identity (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1989); Charles Taylor, *The Ethics of Authenticity* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1991)*;* and Lionel Trilling, *Sincerity and Authenticity: the Charles Eliot Norton Lectures*. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1970).

[29] Christopher Kelly, *Rousseau as Author: Consecrating One's Life to the Truth*. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003).

[30] Christopher Kelly, "Rousseau and the Case For (and Against) Censorship." *Journal of Politics* 59 (1997): 1232–51.

[31] Susan Jackson, *Rousseau's Occasional Autobiographies* (Columbus, OH: Ohio State University Press, 1992).

his works should be read on to his self-portraits, rather than subjectivizing his philosophy and reading his textual intervention as psychological or egotistical.

My emphasis on the textual author is in some ways reminiscent of deconstructionist readings of Rousseau, like Derrida or De Man, but does not subordinate "the political destiny of man" to "a linguistic model that exists independently of nature and independently of the subject."[32] Rousseau is admittedly interested in language, as his *Essay of the Origin of Language* and discursive account of the origin of language in the Second Discourse indicate, but he does not situate his system in linguistical insights. His figural beginning, realized in Fabricius and mythologized in the *Confessions* and his *Letter to Malesherbes,* does not dissolve into linguistical study but maintains its imaginative style and its moral, metaphysical, and political aim through the framework of portraiture. I follow John Scott in insisting on the integrity of the form and substance of Rousseau's work without mixing or substituting the two.[33] Form and substance are interconnected and mutually reinforcing without subsumption or sublimination.

Like Scott, I take seriously Rousseau's use of visual metaphor, calling his reader to see and perceive correctly the picture at hand.[34] Where Scott focuses more on the literal images that accompany Rousseau's writings, engravings and frontispieces, I focus more on the literary images within the writings themselves. There is overlap between our approaches, but our different points of emphasis lead to and inform our similar but distinct arguments. I am sympathetic to Scott's attention to the relationship between the actual Rousseau and the actual reader of Rousseau. Without disagreement, I nonetheless prioritize the relationship between the depicted or in-text author, the textual audience, and the apparent subject as my subject. The portraits of men across Rousseau's writings include the whole apparatus of portrait, of portraiture, and not simply the figure in frame. The intertextual context informs my whole reading of Rousseau and has implications for all his major doctrines. Even where my conclusions coincide with the existing literature, I nevertheless insist—with Rousseau—on the importance of the way in which that conclusion was drawn.

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[32] Paul de Man, *Allegories of Reading: Figural Language in Rousseau, Nietzsche, Rilke, and Proust* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1979), 156. See also Jacques Derrida, "The Linguistic Circle of Geneva" in *Margins of Philosophy,* trans. Alan Bass. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982), 137-153.
[33] John T. Scott, *Rousseau's Reader* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2020), 2.
[34] John T. Scott, "Do You See What I See? The Education of the Reader in Rousseau's *Emile*." *The Review of Politics,* 74 (2012): 443-464.

Plan of the Dissertation

The study consists of five chapters, with each analyzing a different picture of Rousseau's portraits: beginning with a meta-analysis of portraiture, before turning to authorial positioning and receptive observation, followed by an analysis of the portraits of natural man, and Emile and Sophie, before concluding with the political implications of portraiture on Rousseau's social contract theory.

In the first chapter, I investigate the status of Rousseau's authorship in the second Preface of *Julie,* a dialogue between Rousseau-as-Editor and a Man of Letters. The dialogue prepares for a dialogical reading of portraiture and introduces the conceit of portraiture in this context. This chapter introduces Rousseau's standards for judging portraits through a metanalysis of Rousseau's method. The explicit subject of the Preface is the text itself, abstracted from particular portraits—of natural man, Emile, or Sophie—that appear later in this project. The second Preface allegorizes Rousseau's dual appearance as a Roman and *Romantic*, separated from autobiography and situated in a conversation about writing and depicting. The tension between these two aspects, recognized as one of the chief aspects of Rousseau's thought, is resolved through the logic of portraiture, which recognizes the importance of figural positioning and authorial self-presentation within the image. The dissertation, which examines the *Second Discourse, Emile, Social Contract,* and *Confessions,* considers Rousseau's portraits of man through the framework established in the Preface. This framework shifts the investigation of natural, Emile, and the citizen from the 'reality' of these figures—whether they existed or could exist or could be recovered in some important or representative way—to the productivity of the investigation for our own understanding of ourselves as Men. The congruity between the figure and its larger portrait point ahead to a more concrete conceptualization of Mankind's fitness for his social context.

In the second chapter, I read Rousseau's portraiture against artistic representation in literature and literary writing more generally in the front matter of *The Discourse on the Origin and the Foundations of Inequality Among Men.* The front matter of the Discourse introduces Rousseau's portrait of natural man without yet portraying the subject—natural man. The methodological framework presented in the prefatory material is inextricable from his portrait of natural man and prepares his audience to view this portrait with new sight. Rousseau's concern for politics and morals drives his rejection of the modes of observation that one would ordinarily employ to investigate man's origin. On their own terms, comparative, historical, legal, and scientific approaches are both uninterested and unable to pursue self-knowledge. Rousseauan portraiture prepares us to study the moral origins and political foundations of men, and to know, or begin our search for man as a moral and political being. Viewing natural man as a portrait of man and not as a historical, scientific or foreign specimen allows for a reexamination of natural man that is at once both more familiar and more novel than has previously been imagined.

Natural man is less an impossible and idiosyncratic portrait at the borders of humanity than the foundational tableau that undergirds our own image and understanding of ourselves as Men.

In the third chapter, I present Rousseau's portrait of Man portrayed in the first part of the Second Discourse. Man is doubly depicted in the Discourse—physically and metaphysically, solitary and social, savage and civil. Rousseau as citizen-author paints a metaphysical and moral portrait of Man as a metaphysical and moral being. In doing so, he does not find the source of our problems, of inequality, injustice, and ultimately, evil, in Man but among men, combatting both materialist and Christian alternatives. Rousseau is first and foremost a political thinker, elevating the pursuit of self-knowledge to reveal a more-than-material but non-transcendental vision of Man that defends Man by accusing men. Man is free and perfectible but has used this freedom and perfectibility badly. His freedom to unfreedom, however, cannot alter man's nature or being; even though men are guilty, they are not damned. Rousseau justifies the ways of Man (and not God) to men in an anthro-theodicy, offering a way out of the evils of bourgeois society through a return to man's natural, moral and metaphysical state of freedom and perfectibility. The radical denaturing of Man is excluded either as a description of his condition (as in a certain Calvinistic soteriology) or as a solution to that condition (as in a certain materialist anthropology or a certain critical theory); at the same time, men are restored not to an imago dei but to their own self-image, Man. Rousseau's justification of Man makes possible the sanctification of men and glorification of Men through citizenship and participation in politics.

In the fourth chapter, I turn to *Emile* for Rousseau's portraits of Emile and Sophie. I consider the problem of Sophie and of women for man's being made or remade in the image of man. The whole picture of Sophie, and likewise the whole literary chimera, must be taken together with and in the whole picture of man. Without losing sight of our subjects, I turn to

Rousseau’s authorial presentation of himself as man, citizen, and midwife in the title page and preface, which constitutes the first important shift in his readers’ vision of self-knowledge. This shift in perspective moves from the “ill-drawn” education of the age to the “true study” of man in Emile. Something like—and yet unlike—this procedure is repeated as the portrait entangles with further images and images of images are prepared and introduced. This is especially prominent in the introduction of Homer and Fenelon’s Telmachuses and Athenas, where the tutoress is exchanged for the tutor amid other exchanges and complications. This complex of images comes to its climax in the meeting of Emile and Sophie that assumes and is interpenetrated by all these other relationships. Rousseau forms man in the image of Man, which is at once an arduous and delicate process, modeled in the *Emile* through masculine and feminine metaphor. Of all the works treated in this dissertation, the *Emile* most clearly shows the compatibility of competing images within an image and completeness of the Image in itself and its parts. The relationship of Emile and Sophie models the relationship between Man and society and prepares for the consummation and union of the two concepts in the social contract.

In the fifth and final chapter, Rousseau depicts the social contract in “On Travel” in the fifth and final book of his *Emile.* This chapter compares the portrayal of the social contract within the novel to Rousseau’s *Social Contract.* To complete his education and solidify his formation, Rousseau sends Emile away from Sophie to travel and observe governments. The combined context of “On Travel” and the short introduction to the *Social Contract* suggest an intertextuality between the two works which allows us to view the *Social Contract,* otherwise devoid of observational language and figurative imagery, in the portraiture framework. The opening of “On Travel” operates as a kind of proxy-preface for the social contracts. Emile’s travel allegorizes reading well and visits foreigners, from ancient civilizations and faraway lands, through books. Before Emile leaves for his journey, Rousseau imagines a short dialogue between tutor and pupil that emphasizes the importance of Rousseau's methodology in his duplicated presentation of the social contract. The social contract of the *Emile* and the *Social Contract* portray the same principles of political right to different audiences: the former, to Men in search of self-knowledge, and the latter, to men as they are. I then apply the logic of portraiture to the legislator and general will to show how Rousseau reconciles men and citizens, and philosophy and politics in his system.

As in portraiture, the entire people, as author, legislates on behalf on the entire people, as subject, witnessed and experienced by the entire people as audience. The pattern of multiplication in portraiture, seen most especially with Rousseau across his works, is repeated here as the outworking of the general will in the city of the *Social Contract*. The duplication or multiplication of whole objects is intentional and is not a division. Rousseau does not divide himself among various Rousseaus, any more than the people is divided into parts. The question of unity that arises in Rousseau's writings is not solved by minimizing, stripping Man of his facilities in nature or denaturing him in society, but by multiplying. It is not a question of this or that part of Man or this or that part of politics, but the relationship between wholes, seen in different aspects. Law is to the body politic what portraiture is to Man.

I conclude by suggesting areas for further research, especially in *Julie* and Rousseau's autobiographical writings. Rousseau's complex series of portraits are not simply stylistic but essential for portraying his thought. The figure of Fabricius envisioned by the figure Rousseau bookends his system and reveals the frame and framework of his political works.

Chapter 1: Roman/tic Rousseau

Abstract: The second Preface of *Julie* investigates the status of Rousseau's authorship through a dialogue between Rousseau-as-Editor and a Man of Letters. Introducing the conceit of portraiture and the standards for judging portraits here and elsewhere, the dialogue allows for metanalysis of Rousseau's method as the explicit subject of the text, abstracted from particular portraits—of natural man, of the citizen, of characters like Emile—that appear elsewhere in his writings. In the second Preface, Rousseau's depiction of himself as torn between the Romans and *Romans,* as though between the republicans and the romantics, is separated from considerations of personal history and situated in conversation about novels. The tension, recognized as one of the chief aspects of Rousseau's thought, is resolved through the logic of portraiture, which recognizes the importance of figural positioning and authorial self-presentation within the image. The dissertation, which examines the *Second Discourse, Emile, Social Contract,* and *Confessions,* considers Rousseau's portraits of man through the framework established in the Preface.

Portraiture as Method

Rousseau resists being transformed into a mere purveyor of political observations or doctrines by displacing his own position—and his own positions—in the pursuit of self-knowledge. In the following chapter, I focus on Rousseau's presentation of no small part of the methodology of his thought, in the structure of portraiture, to prepare to approach the substance of his thought. This substance is contained within his portraits of man but includes and requires an understanding of portraiture itself and its place in Rousseau's writings. Without lying or self-deception, without psychologizing or deconstructing, the author and readers respectively situate themselves within the text such that they are not merely context but text itself.

The first section of this chapter follows Rousseau's painstaking and perplexing effort, in establishing the context for *Julie,* to distance himself from his own writing, calling himself Editor only and refusing the name Author. Rousseau's parallel between the second Preface and Persius's first Satire is developed here, with particular attention to the implicit comparisons between Rousseau and N. and Persius and his interlocutor. The next section outlines and critiques N.'s definitions of portraits and tableaus, using the form of the dialogue and the Persius parallel. The following section compares passages from the Preface to excerpts from the *Second Discourse* to establish Rousseau's method for his investigation of Man. The penultimate section follows Rousseau in using Tasso to understand Rousseau's comments on pastoral life, not as a necessary concession to civil or city life or as a statement on superiority of the state but as an alternative means to approach the same subject Rousseau treats elsewhere in different dress. Finally, I conclude by following Rousseau's return to the dialogue structure at the end of the Preface and suggest that the particular attention on the form of the Preface at both the beginning and end indicates the importance of authorial and figural positioning and audience perspective in reading all of Rousseau's writings.

The second Preface is the most immediate discussion of portraiture and its purpose in Rousseau's writings. This chapter establishes Rousseau's method, which will be used to read and interpret his more overtly political writings and figures, including the natural man of the *Second Discourse* and Emile and Sophie in *Emile*. Though its first audience consists of authors, philosophers, and men of letters, the dialogue applies to and prepares for scientific and political audiences as well. The connection between Rousseau's "literary" writings and his "political" writings ought to become obvious in reading this and the following chapter together, and comparing the similarities, even while acknowledging the stylistic differences, between the second Preface to *Julie* and the prefatory material of the *Second Discourse*.[35] Thus a "duplication" of the present analysis in the chapter that follows is intentional and is intended to establish Rousseau's method of portraiture across types of works before turning to more substantive investigations of portraits in the remainder of this study, in chapters 3 and 4. Perennial debate about the facticity or hypothesis of the state of nature notwithstanding, Rousseau's portraits are neither actual or historical treatments nor chimerical fantasies but can be understood as novel histories of Man.[36] In this way, investigation of Rousseau's method, a focus on portraiture itself and not particular portraits, is not ancillary to Rousseau's moral and political thought but itself the substance of that thought.

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[35] Cf. Christie Vance, "La Nouvelle Héloïse: The Language of Paris." *Yale French Studies*, 45 (1970): 127–36. Vance ascribes the similarities between *Julie* and the Second Discourse to Rousseau's interest in and study of historical linguistics, imagined cyclically in the latter and morally in the former.

The second Preface or the "Préface dialogue" to *Julie* was published separately under the name "*Preface of the New Heloise: or Conversation about Novels."* The Preface is a dialogue between two interlocutors, R and N, on the manuscript of *Julie* and, more generally, on *romans.* R is explicitly identified as Rousseau, or some version thereof, in the Preface (*CW* 6.19), and N is referred to as a Man of Letters on the Preface's title page. The Preface is ordinarily characterized as Rousseau's dramatic apology to his reader for his departure from the classical aesthetic of the novel. At the same time, the apology resembles but "fails to conform" to the "habitual eighteenth-century discussions of the relative merits of fiction as compared to history."[37] To the extent that the second Preface has been studied at all, it has largely been treated by literary scholars as literary criticism.[38]

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[36] Cf. Grimm, *Correspondance litteraire,* cited by J. G. Prodhomme in *Vingt chefs- d'oeuvre juges par leurs contemporains* Paris: Stock, 1930, p. 126 and "Mme de Cramer-Delon to Rousseau," 31 Jan. 1761, Letter 783, *Correspondance generale de Jean-Jacques Rousseau,* ed. Theophile Dufour and P.P. Plan. Paris: Armand Colin, 1924. Mme de Cramer-Delon's called the Preface "une maniere d'enigme," and Grimm complained that "en quatre-vingt-dix pages un recueil fort serre de sophismes oiu la bonne foi est offensee a chaque ligne."

[37] Paul de Man, *Allegories of Reading: Figural Language in Rousseau, Nietzsche, Rilke, and Proust*. (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1979), 195.

[38] Two notable literary treatments, besides de Man's, appear in Darton's *The Great Cat Massacre* and Jackson's "Text and Context." Darton focuses on how Rousseau was read and received by his contemporaries. Jackson synthesizes de Man's and Darton's accounts in her own reading of the Preface as prelude to Rousseau's autobiography. Robert Darton, *The Great Cat Massacre and Other Episodes in French Cultural History* (New York: Basic Books, 1984) and

Though undoubtedly writing on writing, the second Preface is more than linguistic or literary exercise. In the preface, Rousseau explores the politics of the novel in two senses: the political subjects or political context of novels, and what a novel *is*. Without claiming literary criticism as such as political, I argue that Rousseau's investigation of what a novel (*Roman*) is cannot be separated from his investigations of a certain kind of "Roman-ness."[39] This idea captures at once that civic virtue characteristic of the Roman people and the character of a certain kind of novel which includes or lays claim to the former, that is, the *Roman*. The political subject and context of novels is, for Rousseau, inextricable from the work as a whole and its "Roman" character.

Without including biographical or historical information on the composition of the novel, Rousseau urges his reader to consider the text as it presents itself, which not only includes the subject and context but author and audience and the relationship between all of these figures within the broader political portrait.[40] Rousseau's political *roman* is political not because it is about political things or composed under certain political conditions but because Rousseau's

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Susan Jackson, "Text and Context of Rousseau's Relation with Diderot." *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 20 (1986):195-219.

[39] Cf. Ronald Rosbottom, "A Matter of Competence: The Relationship between Reading and Novel-making in Eighteenth-Century France." *Studies in Eighteenth-Century Culture.* 6(1977): 245-263. Rosbottom argues that "the whole essay is a simultaneous effort to hypostatize a reader and to formulate a reading of his novel. This text pays homage to the expected discussion of the conflicting concepts of verité/raisemblance, fiction/mensonge, illusion/reality, society/solitude, and so forth, and in so doing it arrives at some significant conclusions about the nature of fiction and its role in the propagandization of truth" (252).

[40] Nicholas Paige, "Rousseau's Readers Revisited: The Aesthetics of La Nouvelle Héloïse." *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 42, no. 1 (2008): 131–54. Paige reads the second Preface's interest in and discussion of its audience and readers as a transition from proto-aesthetic understandings of readers' psychological identification with the characters to a more supple aesthetic response that includes not only identification but renunciation and distance.

literature and literary theory are directed toward self-knowledge.[41] Rousseau's understanding of what makes a novel "political" is perhaps broader than readers of the *Social Contract* might expect but essential for understanding his notoriously difficult style. The entire picture of writing Rousseau presents here extends beyond the novel and ought to be used to read his more overtly political or apparently straightforward works, including the *Second Discourse* and the *Social Contract*.

The doubled aspect that characterizes the second Preface—that it is the second of two prefaces; that is it is a separate work within a work; that it is writing on writing; that it concerns the new, and recalls the original, Heloise; that it was written by Rousseau without, if Rousseau of the preface is to be believed, being authored by Rousseau, among other duplications—challenges not only aesthetic expectations but the readers' political and metaphysical assumptions. Rousseau renews not only the romantic escapades of Heloise and Peter Abelard but the teleological, philosophical, moral, metaphysical, and (in sum) political import of their letters. The fictional or historical status of Julie, understood by N. as the contest between tableaus and portraits, is subverted by Rousseau. The *New Heloise,* like her namesake, deals with the problem of universals but does so from an embodied, human perspective. Man is the location of the investigation.

From this perspective, the problem of universals is situated as an aspect of a larger, philosophic and political problem—the problem of self-knowledge. Like Heloise herself, Rousseau plays with the concept of man through his literary portraits. Heloise, for example, addresses one of her letters to Peter with a playful (or perhaps forlorn) illustration of the problem: “To him who is hers in species / From her who is his as particular” (105).[42] Heloise mocks Peter’s distant posture toward her by appealing to his denial of all but the personal and particular, applying his abstract reasoning to their real relationship. As both heroine and author, political figure and philosopher, Heloise inspires Rousseau’s portraiture approach. Rousseau is not a scholar of Heloise and Abelard and is not particularly reverent of either 18th century literary historiography or medieval scholasticism in such accounts of the letters. Rousseau’s *New Heloise* is not so much a departure from her namesake as a departure from contemporary treatments of her namesake. He does not pursue universal or abstract man apart from man as species and individual.

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[41] For a historical consideration on what led Rousseau to combine his political philosophy with the novel, see Christopher Kelly, "Taking Readers as They Are: Rousseau's Turn from Discourses to Novels." *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 33 (1999): 85–101.

Alongside this picture of the Latin medievals, who may stand for Rome as much as for France, Rousseau places two other models. The political importance of the second Preface is apparent not only in its connection to Abelard and Heloise or its investigation of writing, but its invocation of Persius, Roman citizen-author of the *Satires*, and Tasso, romantic poet of the fictional history, *Jerusalem Delivered.* Using excerpts from prefaces of both a Roman author and an author of romance, Rousseau simultaneously identifies himself with the Roman and the romantic tradition, politicizing the romantic and romanticizing the political. Throughout the course of the dialogue, Rousseau rebukes and corrects N.’s naïve commitment to French standards for reading and writing to prepare N. to read the letters as they ought to be read, not as reflection of the current fashions in morality but as unfamiliar, yet true, images of man. Rousseau hopes that the novelty of these figures will delight those who love what is good and instruct those who are unaccustomed with it. The model of reading and writing established by the second Preface establishes a textual hermeneutic for the whole of the study that follows, which traces Rousseau's own methodology in correcting French men of letters of various dispositions and particular arts or sciences and, as we will see more clearly in the prefatory material to the *Second Discourse*, the French materialists especially and paradigmatically.

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[42] The first letter from Heloise to Peter similarly plays with their respective titles or roles but ultimately decides that any categorization of their relationship inadequately captures what they are to each other, finally using only their names: “To her lord, no, her father, to her husband, her brother from his handmaid, no, his daughter, his wife, no his sister—to Abelard from Heloise” (49). Here too Heloise plays with Abelard’s philosophy in the context of their personal relationship. Peter Abelard and Heloise. *Abelard and Heloise: The Letters and Other Writings,* trans. William Levitan. (Indianapolis, IN: Hackett Publishing, 2007).

Rousseau employs romantic writing for Roman ends and moralizes Rome through romance. The literary portrait or tableau is at once both particular and general, much as a fictional figure is both real and imaginary. The question is not whether Rousseau studies man but not "Man," or "Man" but not men. Portraiture is a romantic device for republican writing, writing that is at least literary but not simply or even primarily literary. This chapter is, in some sense, the most "meta" but is nonetheless essential for understanding how Rousseau writes and why he writes as he does, having serious implications even for Rousseau as metaphysician. The apparently technical conversation on writing is, in this sense, not unlike the *Social Contract,* which seems *politically* technical and is thus prone to being misread. The complicated and idiosyncratic style of Rousseau's is necessary for his moral and political thought and is itself reflective of that thought.

Two or None: Situating Author and Reader

Through a complex invocation of the Roman poet Persius, Rousseau invites a reconsideration of the relationship between author, reader, and text. Rousseau quotes only the first Satire in the second Preface but draws from the third Satire in the Preface of the *Second Discourse* and again at the beginning of Book I in the *Confessions*. Across works, Rousseau prefaces his own writing with lines from the *Satires*. Persius's *Satires* consists of a prologue and six Satires. Together, the prologue and the first Satire introduce the work and serve as prefaces for the work. The parallel between the prologue and the first Satire and the first and second Preface is both structurally and substantively apparent.

Like Rousseau's first Preface, Persius's Prologue is short, consisting of only 14 lines. Persius briefly introduces himself and his work, eliding the distinction between the two. In the prologue, Persius distances himself from other poets by employing non-traditional meter, known for its aggressive stance, and deriding "traditional poetic imagery of poetic inspiration."[43] He presents himself as a "half-caste" poet, driven not by the "belly" as others but by some higher, and yet unnamed, purpose.[44] Like Rousseau and the Encyclopedists, Persius stands both among yet apart from his intellectual community, not only in style but in purpose. Rousseau and Persius are not quite full members of their class in various senses but confidently mock this "mongrel" reputation. Though the prologue introduces Persius, Persius re-introduces himself in his first Satire in the form of a dialogue between himself and an unnamed interlocutor. The first Satire introduces Persius as author, contrasting his literary style, audience, and subject with contemporary Roman poets. It serves as a kind of preface for the rest of the work. It is an imagined dialogue between the author and an imaginary interlocutor— "You, whoever you are, whom I've just created to put the opposite case."[45] Rousseau's second Preface follows this model. Both dialogues introduce the larger work through a conversation between the author and an unknown interlocutor. Both discuss the number and kind of reader expected for the work, the appropriate or ideal audience, the place of the author, and his relationship to his audience and work.

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[43] Susan Braund, edited and translated *Juvenal and Persius* (Loeb Classical Library 91) (Cambridge, MA and London: Harvard University Press, 2004), 43.

[44] Ibid. 6.11

[45] Ibid. 1.44

In the first Satire, Persius advances many of the same opinions Rousseau himself espouses throughout his writings: the superiority of ancient literature and morals, the depravity of contemporary writing and morality, the triviality of contemporary reception, the integrity of the author in the face of societal hypocrisy, and the author's unique ability to see past convention. At first glance, the comparison between the preface and the satire is reducible to the shared judgment of two citizen-authors. Persius is undoubtedly a citizen of Rome, writing for Rome's honor and against those that would bring shame to it—including popular poets and Roman politicians. He is critical of opponents of philosophy and the judgment of his fellow citizens, explicitly condemning their literary preferences and moral taste. The similarities between Rousseau, citizen of Geneva, and Persius, citizen of Rome, are obvious.

Rousseau, however, explicitly rejects the titles "citizen" and "author" in the preface, complicating any easy comparison between the two writers and the two texts (*CW* 6:20). In the satire, Persius mocks "provincial importance"[46] and the romantic novels so to speak of his own day,[47] ridiculing the apparent subject and form of *Julie.* If Rousseau is modeling his preface on the first Satire, we would expect a parallel between the character Persius and the character Rousseau. Instead, N. is situated as Persius's analog. The preface is neither the image nor opposite of the satire; the twin visages of Rousseau and Persius occupy opposing roles in their dialogues. By treating the satire and preface together, we can simultaneously look at Rousseau, without titles, and a citizen-author. The comparative examination helps illuminate what is at stake when Rousseau is writing as a citizen-author and provides a basis for rethinking the relationship among his writings.

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[46] Ibid 1.131
[47] Ibid 1.134

The man of letters, called “N.”, is the first to invoke and invite the comparison between the two works and the two authors. Quoting Persius, poet-narrator of the *Satires*, N. predicts either “two or no one” (*vel duo, vel nemo*) will read *Julie* in its entirety (*CW* 6:7). Persius and N. find themselves similarly situated as men who are ordinarily authors but here are established as readers.[48] Though Persius is the author of the *Satires,* the first satire begins with Persius’s recitation of a line from Lucilius,[49] positioning him as a reader of Lucilius. The man of letters (N.) identifies himself as a reader in the first line of the dialogue—"I have read [your manuscript] all the way through”— but is named, literally, an author. “Authors, Men of Letters, and Philosophers,” are categorically the same in the dialogue (*CW* 6:14). Both dialogues begin with the author-reader presenting the work of another.

On the other side of the analogy, neither the anonymous interlocutor nor Rousseau can be called either author or reader of the texts under review. The interlocutor hears the line by Lucilius from Persius, but we have no indication that he has read the work from which it was drawn nor that he has written anything himself. Rousseau copies and edits the manuscript N. presents, but he does not suggest that he has read it as a reader. He has read the manuscript as an Editor and copyist (*CW* 6:19). Though Rousseau and the Roman interlocutor are similarly situated in their respective dialogues, Rousseau's "editor" title signals his privileged position. Rousseau is an informed interlocutor, with the authority to judge the author(s), their authorial attention, the subjects, and the suitability for audiences. Rousseau recognizes himself as reader of other works throughout the dialogue, including Persius's *Satires*, but not of *Julie.* Though in fact the author of *Julie,* Rousseau goes to great lengths to separate himself from this role without lying (*CW* 6.21). The interlocutor and Rousseau, as neither reader nor author, ask the first question in their dialogues.

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[48] For an alternative reading of the N. and Rousseau’s figural positioning, see Juliet Flower Maccannell, “The Post-Fictional Self: Authorial Consciousness in Three Texts by Rousseau.” *MLN* 89, no. 4 (1974): 580–99.

[49] Susan Braund, edited and translated *Juvenal and Persius* (Loeb Classical Library 91) (Cambridge, MA and London: Harvard University Press, 2004), 1.1. There is some dispute in the Persius scholarship whether this line is from Lucilius or another source: J.E.G. Zetzel, “Lucilius, Lucretius, and Persius 1. 1.” *Classical Philology* 72 (1977): 40–42. In any case, Persius scholars agree that it is not Persius.

Both questions concern the anticipated readership of the respective works. Rousseau's question shifts the focus of the interlocutor's question—"Who'll read that?"—from the type of person who would read the work at all to the type of reader who would read the work all the way through (*CW* 6:7). Whereas the Roman interlocutor is primarily concerned with public recognition, whether good or bad, Rousseau is interested in good readers, whether many or few. Persius expects "no one" will read it at all, even though we know of at least two: Persius and his reader. When the interlocutor presses him— "no one?"—Persius adds this possibility: "two or no one." N. forecloses Persius's initial response by asserting that he has "read it all the way through," establishing at least one reader, and a thorough reader at that, before Rousseau speaks. Not "no one" or *nemo* but N. has read *Julie* in its entirety. N.'s response to Rousseau's question is the same as Persius's second response and the first invocation of the *Satires,* paralleling the Roman dialogue without either perfectly imitating or inverting the image.

Rousseau as editor recognizes the reference and quotes the interlocutor in turn: "*turpe et miserabile*" (*CW* 6:7). For Persius' interlocutor, this line expresses a clear judgment, but Rousseau's use transforms its meaning. He is not himself issuing a judgment but placing the burden of judgment on N., while at the same time indicating that N. cannot sidestep such judgment by invoking classical literature. N. cannot substitute his status as a well-read intellectual for genuine judgment and thought. As author, he must come down definitively and personally. He cannot hide behind his class or received opinion. Where Persius questions his interlocutor—"why?" —N. is called *into* question by his interlocutor— "I want a straightforward judgment." The addition to the original quote removes Rousseau from direct investigation. Rousseau places himself in the Socratic (or rather Platonic) tradition of philosophy by judging the opinion of others rather than providing a clear judgment of his own: "This way, I will extract your answers from you before you have answered me. Besides, since I cannot adequately respond to your question, you must resolve mine unaided" (*CW* 6:7). Rousseau parallels Persius in questioning, but the roles do not realign. Persius's question is rhetorical, and he retains his position. The interlocutors move the conversation along but are not the focus of their respective conversations. N. and Persius are the figures in view.

For Rousseau, N. embodies the species of French author while Persius stands as a particular model of Roman authorship. Without yet introducing tableaux and portraits, Rousseau provides individual and general pictures of readers and writers, which will parallel and inform the universal and particular figures under review and in *Julie*. N. is more immediately a tableau of men as they are today; men of letters may easily see themselves in this figure. Persius, however, is a foreign as Julie—he himself is a kind of portrait. Rousseau lays the groundwork for portraiture before engaging with and introducing his apparent subject and the immediate portrait—Julie—through these figures of portraiture. Though specific to the second Preface, the technical positioning at the beginning of the dialogue suggests Rousseau's broader approach to his writings, both as the author of those works and for the readers of those works.

Reality or Fiction, Good or Bad, Portrait or Tableau

The complex comparison between Persius and N. and the respective works they inhabit is replicated in the conversation that immediately follows between Rousseau and N. The introduction of portraits and tableaux captures and, in a sense, metabolizes this parallel, uniting the structural and the substantive through the singular investigation of the philosophic, moral, and political problem of self-knowledge. The beginning of the dialogue moves from the structural comparison between the two characters and the two works to a conversation on the character, Julie, in the work, *Julie.* The purpose of this duplication (and of this duplicative study) is not to needlessly complicate an already complicated text but to recognize, conceptualize, and investigate what man is. The resolution to approaching the question, what is man, is found in conversation of portraits and tableaux *and* the broader work Rousseau is doing to establish his method of portraiture, that is, in the immediate subject and broader structural context of the work.

The particular instantiation of the investigation here appears in the problem of universals—first in the comparison between Persius and N., then between Julie and Parisian women, and finally between men and man. With the characters thus situated, the reader is prepared to compare the judgments of Persius and N. Persius judges Roman taste (which prefers Labeo the wretched and vulgar translator of Homer to his own sort of satire) and his interlocutor's hollow judgment ("turpe et miserabile"). Persius's distaste for "muddled Rome" is driven by his commitment to truth, not a lack of recognition for himself.[50] He urges his interlocutor *not* to "step in to correct the faulty balance in those scales," because he should not be concerned with external validation.[51] Persius tells him: “Don’t search outside yourself,” in a Roman articulation of the Socratic precept to *know thyself*.[52] This internally oriented search for self-knowledge cannot be explained to his interlocutor because his interlocutor, like other Romans, is corrupt: “The reason? Is there anyone at Rome who doesn’t —oh, if only I could say it.”[53] Not from a fear of notoriety, a concern for his own reputation, but from an actual sense of propriety, if a satiric one, Persius refrains from spelling things out in a naked way.

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[50] Susan Braund, edited and translated *Juvenal and Persius* (Loeb Classical Library 91) (Cambridge, MA and London: Harvard University Press, 2004), 1.5.

All of Rome, according to Persius, has lost its ability to judge correctly, substituting virtue and morality for public esteem: “What, you old reprobate, do you compose morsels for other people’s ears, morsels which would make even you, with your joints and skin decayed, say, ‘Enough!’?... Appalling! Is your knowledge so worthless unless someone *else* knows that you know it?”[54] This is the perfect opposite of the pursuit of self-knowledge: concern that *others* know that one knows. His interlocutor, like Rome itself, does not know “the point of studying” beyond the pleasure of being “pointed out and to hear people say: ‘That’s him!”[55] The (faulty) impulse of the Roman interlocutor is to judge the excellence of author by reception alone, and not on by the treatment or choice of subject. Persius is a Roman apart. He does not embody the Romans who, like his interlocutor, are not interested in the pursuit of self-knowledge or works which are concerned with this pursuit. It is not hard to see how and why Rousseau, with some transformation, takes on this model. The political character of the argument ought to be clear, if complex. The Romans judge “politically” or popularly, but without establishing a truly republican judgment. This judgment fails because it is not moral but merely popular.

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[51] Ibid 1.6-7

[52] Ibid. 1.7

[53] Ibid. 1.8

[54] Ibid. 1.22-23

[55] Ibid. 1.24,28

Persius's desire but inability to plainly state his judgment contrasts with N.'s refusal to issue his. N.'s reticence is also a consequence of his environment. He is unable to issue his judgment because he is a product of his decadent society and has thus been rendered incapable of such judgment alone. As Rousseau remarks, N.'s silence is itself a bold judgment but a judgment against himself and his society. With some pressure from Rousseau, N. reveals that he lacks the knowledge required to judge the work. He does not know the status of the author or the letters: "Is this correspondence real, or is it a fiction?"[56] He, like the citizens of Rome, lacks ears to hear, or in this case, eyes to see. In contrast to the Roman interlocutor, N. is primarily concerned with the subject. The work he is judging is only a manuscript and lacks a real audience. It thus has no known reputation to which to look for judgment. N. is forced to focus his judgment on the subject itself, but still errs in what it is about the subject that he focuses on. Whereas Persius is a man among Romans, an exemplary individual of his species, N. is nothing but a Frenchman—he is only, so to speak, nothing or no one (*nemo*) but species.

For N., goodness or badness is determined by the work's adherence to material facts: Was there a woman named Julie? Did she live in a small town at the foot of the Alps? Did she indeed write these letters? This concern for facticity may be an improvement over the corrupt judgment of the Romans, insofar as it pertains to knowledge and not merely to the reputation for knowledge among others. Rousseau, however, is interested in a moral judgment of the letters, which does not depend on the 'reality' of the particulars: "to say whether a Book is good or bad, how does it matter how it came to be written?" For Rousseau, it is not a matter of whether the facts of the Book are real but whether the moral picture is good. Rousseau does not ask whether the correspondence is real or fictional but whether the book is good or bad. These replacements mark a hermeneutical difference between the interpretative principles employed by N. and Rousseau; Rousseau does not equate real with good or fiction with bad as N. does. The reality of the writing has no *obvious* meaning for Rousseau: "I don't see that it matters." N. insists on the importance of the reality of the work, especially in this case: "It matters a great deal for this one." Situated as author, N. introduces "portrait" and "tableau" to explain himself.

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[56] For Kelly, Rousseau uses this question "as a sort of test of the reader rather than of his own veracity…The reader must decide whether the book is fiction or not, but Rousseau implies that they themselves will be judged by their verdict. If they decide (correctly) that it must be fiction, that decision will show that they are too corrupt to believe in the possibilities shown in the novel." Christopher Kelly, *Rousseau as Author: Consecrating One's Life to the Truth* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003), 113.

N. introduces "portrait" and "tableau" in the text for the same reason he invites the Persius comparison—again, he is situated as author. As author, N. is responsible for providing a tableau or portrait for his audience to view and review. The author, not the editor, sets the subject and context of the work. Though Rousseau is really the author of the preface and N. a fictional interlocutor, the movement of the dialogue and the invocation and introduction of certain key points highlights Rousseau's commitment to figural positioning and the importance of placement within a text.

Portraits and tableaus, as N. conceives them at least, do not differ in what they depict but in the reality of what they depict. Both portray human figures, but a portrait, N. argues, ought to depict a real person whereas a tableau may depict a fictional, but realistic, one. To say whether *Julie* is a portrait or tableau is to answer whether Julie is real or fictional. N. is still interested in the reality of the work, but his concern here has shifted from the reality of the letters to the reality of the people. The shift relaxes the standard: classifying the book as either a portrait or tableau is to decide that the letters are fictional, even if the characters exist. Portraits and tableaus are both products of their author and are thus both fictional, though to varying degrees. As works of fiction, portraits and tableaus require an external purpose and audience. The letters are not really a correspondence between lovers even if they "really" were. Someone else is intended to read them for a different purpose. For N., the purpose is pleasure. Portraits should "interest" a few and tableaus should "please" the public. N. is thus an author for Persius's Rome: writing is for pleasure and the reader is the true judge. N. cannot judge (perhaps *no one* can judge) from the authorial position. He, like the Roman interlocutor, relies on public opinion instead of cultivating self-knowledge for moral judgment. But where the Roman interlocutor realizes Persius is "mocking" him, N. the author is entirely unaware both he, and the society he embodies, are being ridiculed by Rousseau the editor.

According to N.'s definition, Rousseau and Persius themselves are both "portraits" in their respective dialogues, and N. and the unnamed interlocutor are both "tableaux." The dialogues themselves, as conversations between real and non-real persons, are likewise "tableaux." Rousseau and Persius ought to be depicted "such as they are," or, if they are the respective authors of the works which they inhabit, as they wish "to represent" themselves (*CW* 6:9). So long as their portraits provide "a good likeness," they have "some value," however "strange" the originals, but will only "interest" a "few People" (*CW* 6:7). N. and the unnamed interlocutor, as tableaux, ought to "possess features common to mankind, or else" they are "worthless," though if they "are good," they "alone can please the Public" (*CW* 6:7). If we follow Rousseau's textual positioning, N. occupies an impossible role—he is an imaginary, but self-determined, author, allowed to depict himself as he wishes so long as he is a good likeness to his "real" counterpart. Rousseau no longer has to resemble the real Rousseau, so long as he possesses features common to mankind. Whether it is N. or Rousseau who pleases the Public or only interests a few depends on whether we follow the characters' "real" roles or their respective positions in the text.

N. presents his understanding of "portrait" and "tableau" for a book (*un Livre*), and not a "correspondence." N. judges the goodness or badness of the letters on their reality, but the book of letters on the reality of its characters. According to N.'s standard for judgment, letters cannot be portraits or tableaus because letters must be real, and portraits and tableaus must be fictional. Rousseau, however, responds by once more switching the kind of work in view: "If these Letters are Portraits, they are of no interest; if they are Tableaux, they are poor imitations" (CW 6:7). Rousseau changes the terms of the argument unnoticed. N. agrees to what, according to his understanding, ought to be incoherent. Rousseau's alteration effaces N.'s hard distinction between the particular portrait and the general tableau, rendering the work incomprehensible to N., and thus "a bad piece of work:" "These Letters are no Letters; this Novel is no Novel" (*CW* 6:7). The seemingly slight substitution by Rousseau requires a redefinition of portraits and tableaus, suggesting an alternative understanding which will unfold in the course of the discussion.

This turn demonstrates that the application of the preface against itself, so to speak, is not merely a trivial and self-referential (and thus self-indulgent) scheme; at stake is nothing less than Rousseau's own distinctive attempt at self-knowledge that is introspective without being psychoanalytical and rooted in a genuine system of morals and metaphysics without being tied in a limiting way to some pre-defined external reality. The status of the work, as letters or as novel, is bound up with the status of its characters, both Julie and Rousseau and N. There is a superficial presentation of the problem of self-knowledge, through the problem of universals, in the intricate and quasi-absurd status of Rousseau and N., as both real and imaginary portraits and tableaus of authors and readers, in and outside of the text. They are at once characters alongside Julie, and people of another world. The prolonged comparison to Persius and the unnamed interlocutor only highlights and exaggerates this dynamic.

Savage Solitaries and Fantastical Men

Without immediately resolving what a portrait or tableau is, Rousseau provides the reader with a truer image by redefining the terms of the conversation. N.'s commitment to what is "real" and what can be found in "nature" is a kind of claim to loving the truth. Persius's rebuke of his interlocutor is instructive here: "You say, 'I love the truth. Tell me the truth about myself.' How, actually? Do you really want me to? You're a fool."[57] Rousseau does not directly confront N. at this point in the dialogue, "I might… No, I see the turn your curiosity is taking." This silence is not for fear of persecution or ridicule by the so-called "great" but an inability to communicate the problem to N. N. is curious about more than the 'truth about himself,' but it is not yet clear if this is in the mode of knowledge or self-knowledge.

The suspension of the previous trajectory of the dialogue signals a new beginning, where the original question, posed by N., on whether Julie or *Julie* is real or fictional is replaced by a series of questions posed by Rousseau. The new investigation amounts to the following: "Who is daring enough to assign exact limits to Nature, and assert: Here is as far as Man can go, and no further?" (CW 6:7). The "daring" in the new question mirrors the lack of daring ("I dare not") that yet "dare[s] everything" in the opening of the dialogue. The subject under review is not Julie, N., or Rousseau but the "un-heard of Monsters, Giants, Pygmies, fantasies of all kind, anything [at all that] could be specifically included in nature." This is Rousseau's own version of the "I dare not" that "dare[s] everything" (*CW* 6.7).

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[57] Susan Braund, edited and translated *Juvenal and Persius* (Loeb Classical Library 91) (Cambridge, MA and London: Harvard University Press, 2004), 1.55-56.

That the "Conversation about Novels (*romans*)" is primarily concerned with the pastoral is an accident of context and not a philosophical, moral, or political necessity. The same figures that appear near the outlines of the species, giants and pygmies, could just as easily be reviewed in a scientific context, as will be seen. Notice of this flexibility or ambiguity, however, is not to downplay the importance of context in any given work of Rousseau's, but to suggest the importance of a right understanding of context. Context as text is, on the one hand, to treat the work holistically, without extracting and decontextualizing certain details, phrases, or figures. It is not, on the other hand, the collapse of all distinctions between different aspects or parts of the work. Comparisons within and between Rousseau's writing is not only permissible but necessary for understanding his system of thought. We cannot compare, however, if we mistake an image of man for the image of Man.

If the pastoral setting and the pastoral people are a moral or philosophical necessity for Rousseau, and not a means by which to approach Man as Man, then we have so separated them from other images of man, whether natural, solitary, civic, or bourgeois, that we can no longer consider both men. In other words, we would have, like N., created a new species for every variation of man—considering "giants" and pygmies," for example, as separate beings, whether separated by time or by Being itself.

Rousseau examines these very same fringe figures, giants and pygmies, in his *Discourse on Inequality,* in both the main text and in the notes. Likewise, the comparison between Rousseau and the French and Persius and the Romans, particularized here in dialogue form, can be found among the prefatory material of that same *Discourse.* In "Tableaux of humankind," whether pastoral and romantic or scientific and material, “Man must be recognizable to everyone” provided “one also knows how to distinguish what constitutes variations from what is essential to the species” (*CW* 6:8). Reading the *Second Discourse* as a portrait of natural man or a tableau of humankind is not a strange or alien framework. The same problem of self-knowledge, through the lens of the problem of universals, is studied in that Discourse and *Julie*, in different contexts. In the *Second Discourse,* Rousseau speaks of this problem in connection with or even through tableau: “Every object received at first a particular name, without regard to genus and Species, which these first Institutors were incapable of distinguishing; and all individuals things appeared to their minds in isolation as they are in the panorama (*tableau*) of Nature” (*CW* 3:32). The “first Institutors” of language are not so different from N., and similarly struggle to disentangle what “constitutes variations from what is essential to the species” (*CW* 6:8).

Where N. sees essential differences between men in “French costume,” and men in different times and places, Rousseau sees “our own,” everywhere (*CW* 6:8). From this perspective, “natural man” as “early” or “original” man is not *so* different from man as we see him today: “If I have spent so much time on the supposition of this primitive condition, it is because, having ancient errors and inveterate prejudices to destroy, I thought I ought to dig down to the root and show, in the panorama (*tableau*) of the genuine state of Nature, how far even natural inequality is from having as much reality and influence in that state as our Writers claim” *CW* 3:40). Though Rousseau has a different figure and audience for the *Second Discourse* than the Second Preface, he is interested, in both places, in drawing out man as man for his contemporaries, who are unable to see him *anywhere*. In both places, Rousseau highlights the common mistake among French intellectuals, whether men of letters or “Historians,” and “travelers” (*CW* 3:80), who take “for natural” differences that “are uniquely the work of habit and the various types of life men adopt in Society” (*CW* 3:40). Rousseau uses giants and dwarves to illustrate this point: “should a Giant and a Dwarf walk on the same road, every step they both take will give fresh advantage to the Giant” (*CW* 3:41). Rousseau borrows these “chimerical creatures” from romance in his *Second Discourse* to discuss and establish the place of tableaux even in an unromantic and un-*Roman* text.

Giants and pygmies do receive, however, a more “realistic” treatment in the notes on the *Discourse*, where Rousseau condescends to treat whether such men, if men, exist or could ever have existed—not unlike N.’s primary interest in Julie: “Among the men we know, whether by ourselves, from Historians, or from travelers…there have been, and there are perhaps still are, Nations of men of gigantic size; and apart from the fable of the Pygmies, which may only be an exaggeration, it is known that the Laplanders and above all the Greenlanders, are well below the average size of man” (*CW* 3:80). The readers of the notes of the *Second Discourse* share N.’s concern for the reality of the figures portrayed. They do not judge, as Rousseau thinks they ought, the goodness or badness of the figures or the goodness or badness of the author. Historians and natural scientists who are concerned with what is real and what is fiction—who are as far from Rousseau the “scientist” or “historian” as N. the author is from Rousseau the editor—make N.’s own error. Rousseau draws attention to this problem in both texts.

N.’s insistence that the species ought to be not only recognizable but familiar to himself and those like him, that what Man is ought to be collapsible to a single, common model, confuses the singular character of morality or nature with the need for a singular, phenomenal manifestation of that morality or nature. And, what is worse, N. does this without any concern for morality or nature at all. His desire for a recognizable but extraordinary model, a man in

“French costume,” that is altogether different than “what anyone can see every day in his own home or in his neighbor’s,” is an understandable impulse but one which Rousseau rejects by returning to the form of the work.

The recontextualization of the characters and events under review reminds the reader what he is judging and how he ought to judge it. *Julie* is not a novel for N. and Rousseau, even if the real *Julie* is, because it lacks an author—not really, but textually. N.’s inhabitation of the authorial role in the beginning and end of the preface signals his need for an author to assess, even if it means he needs to supply one. His unwillingness to provide judgment of *Julie* is here revealed as his refusal to consider the work on its own terms. He is not wrong to judge the “style” of the work (CW 6:9-10), but he is wrong to reduce it to style alone. When Rousseau “refer[s]” N. to the “inscription for the Engraving,” N. sees nothing moral among the figures in the image or, more accurately, in the written inscription of the image. The inscription is commentary provided *by the Editor* and is not a literal image but is nonetheless the location of the moral judgment in the portrait. Where Rousseau sees “beautiful Souls,” N. sees nothing but a “beautiful phrase.” The kind of “philosophy” N. represents or embodies “shrink[s] hearts, to make men little” (*CW* 6:8). The pygmies of romance or the dwarves of antiquity or afar are not the kind of little unbefitting of Man. It is the “philosophy” of historians, travelers, and men of letters that belittles and, in so doing, belittles itself. Philosophy which neglects men in the name of Man is far more chimerical than a fictional portrait: “No one is perfect: that is the fantasy (*chimere*)” (CW 6:8). For Rousseau, no man is Man but every man reflects Man. Man is not *imago Dei* but *imago Hominis*.

Julie does not possess recognizable traits—no one resembles her in Paris. She is beyond what exists or could “exist” in the French imagination. Whether letters or a novel, “the characters are people from the other world" (*CW* 6:7). N. conflates the unfamiliar and the other worldly to avoid direct moral judgment, though he does imply both that it would be good if Julie "existed," and that she is in good company among the "fools" of the other world. Maintaining his standard, N. praises Julie if she is real but calls her foolish if she is not. N. insists that the work is "surely no more than a fiction" and decides that the figures "are not in nature," not because he knows this to be true but because he cannot imagine otherwise (CW 6:7). N. removes Julie from the "other world" and merely places her outside of "nature," questioning the possibility of her existence either here or beyond, both in the past and present. Even if Julie and "[Rousseau's] characters are in nature," N. entreats Rousseau to admit that the style of the text and characters, "their style is not very natural" (*CW* 6:9).

N. concludes his "judgment" by appealing to the Public,[58] arguing that they will see it as he does, maintaining his "preference," for "Letters written to be printed," grounded in "observation," and "knowledge of the world" (*CW* 6:9). Rousseau admits that, "given [N.'s] point of view, that is the way it must seem," but he is careful to distinguish that from the way that it *is*. Without "calling" N.'s judgment "unjust," Rousseau offers a positive response to the mistaken perspective of the French men of letters through the portraits and tableaus introduced by N., but re-envisioned by Rousseau (*CW* 6:9). Rousseau's response is a response and is thus situated in the dialogue and relies on all that has hitherto transpired. The positive response cannot be extracted from its place in the text and must be viewed as part of the larger picture of writing and reading that Rousseau provides in the preface. His response revises rather than replaces, transforming N.'s popular appeal to the Public into a republican one, much as Rousseau grounds his social contract on a republican, rather than popular, basis. In the same way that popular opinion seems like the general will, N.'s evaluation about how the work will be received seems like republican literary criticism to those who cannot recognize the "Public."

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[58] Cf. Persius's *Satires*: "I: What does public opinion say? P: What do you think? That poetry now at last flows with smooth rhythm, so that critical fingernails glide smoothly over the joins. The modern poet knows how to make a line as straight as if he were stretching a plumb line with one eye closed. Whether his project is to speak against morality, luxury, or the banquet of lords, the Muse provides grand material. Look! We're now teaching people who used to dabble in Greek doggerel to produce heroic sentiments, people not skilful enough to depict a grove or to praise the plentiful countryside" Susan Braund, edited and translated *Juvenal and Persius* (Loeb Classical Library 91) (Cambridge, MA and London: Harvard University Press, 2004), 1.63-72.

Ecstasy and Imagination: Discovering the Source of the Letters

Only now, following his corrections of the man and men of letters, does Rousseau respond to N.'s original question: "Is this correspondence real, or is it a fiction?" (*CW* 6:7). In the precise sense, Rousseau offers his view of the Letters in response to N. but does not apologize for or justify them to N. He is not telling us "the way" he "see[s] these Letters" to "excuse the defects for which [N.] faults them," but to "discover their source" (*CW* 6:9). Rousseau approaches the question only indirectly, looking "to discover their source" without claiming authorship. Of course, it *almost* goes without saying, Jean-Jacques Rousseau really is the author. He admits as much in his *Confessions*:

> All the world was persuaded that one could not express so vividly sentiments that one had not at all experienced (*éprouvés*), nor thus paint the transports of love except according to one's own heart. In that one was right and it is certain that I wrote this *roman* in the most burning ecstasies; but one was deceived in thinking that real objects were necessary to produce them; one was far from conceiving to what point I can inflame myself for imaginary beings (*CW* 1:548).

This Rousseau, the author of the *Confessions* who presents himself as it were before the deity, whether he (himself) is properly “real object” or “imaginary being,” indicates the superiority of ecstatic imagination, as real experience, over the mere reality professed by “all the world.” Thus the figure of Rousseau the Confessor, so to speak, praises a kind of imaginary imagination and not only the imagination as such. The Rousseau of the dialogue, however, continues to distance himself from the letters and insists on suspending this line of investigation, even while he finally answers N. The answer he gives is not the answer N. wants—or even the best way to answer N.’s question—but signals the new and better question that has replaced N.’s original inquiry. Rousseau really seeks to discover the source of the letters, but what it means to do so is not to identify their actual author. Jean-Jacques Rousseau, author of *Julie,* is not entirely removed from this confusion. Though the problem takes a different form, he nonetheless is similarly faced with readers who are preoccupied with the “real objects” behind the *roman.* They are “deceived” in thinking that “real objects were necessary,” and, in their fascination and fixation over the “real,” miss Rousseau’s point.

Both Rousseaus—*all* Rousseaus perhaps—must convince their respective audiences to look beyond the reality of the figures and to the real source. The conversation is still fully positioned within the already established framework and cannot be extracted or confused as Rousseau’s view as such, even if we can identify parallels elsewhere in Rousseau’s writings. Jean-Jacques Rousseau of the *Confessions,* as author of *Julie,* directs his reader to his heart to discover the source of his writing. Rousseau of the dialogue, positioned as reader, shows us how to discover the source by rightly judging the text and distinguishing between good and bad authorial motivation.

Rousseau analyzes the text to discover its source and not the source to analyze the text. Where N. needs to know the source of the letters—whether from the lovers or from the hand of an author, real or fictional, letters or a novel— to assess them, Rousseau assesses the letters, reading and taking the claims that the text makes about itself seriously, to determine the status of the letters. The language of the letters resembles the "conversation of Solitary Folk": it is profuse and extraordinary (*CW* 6:9). It lacks the force and fire of "Dramas and Novels," written in cities by "an Author in his study, by a wit trying to shine" (*CW* 6:10). If the author "has at least a little fire in his brain, his letter will, as we say, scorch the Author's paper." His letter may be "stirring" but only with "a stirring that is fleeting and arid" words. Men of letters judge their writing only by its immediate effect and reception—there is no truer or deeper source. These are *not* the burning ecstasies of Rousseau the Confessor but only the sort of thing vividly satirized by Persius. It is "hot tripe," the cold comfort of a "worn-out cloak."[59] It is only like the passing stench of perfume or rotten fish.[60] The stirring provoked or pricked by such an author is fleeting and arid and capable only of perverse or 'unnatural' pleasure rather than being pregnant (or susceptible of being impregnated) with meaning.[61]

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[59] Cf. Persius's *Satires*: "You [poets] know how to serve up hot tripe, you know how to give some poor shivering client a worn-out cloak" Susan Braund, edited and translated *Juvenal and Persius* (Loeb Classical Library 91) (Cambridge, MA and London: Harvard University Press, 2004), 1.53-54.

[60] Ibid: "Is there anyone who would disown the desire to earn the praise of the people?—or, when he's produced compositions good enough for cedar oil, to leave behind him poetry which has nothing to fear from mackerels or incense?" (1.41-43).

[61] Compare Persius' colorful or indeed *visceral* description: "We shut ourselves away and write some grand stuff, one in verse, another in prose, stuff which only a generous lung of breath can gasp out. And of course that's what you will finally read to the public from your seat on the platform, neatly combed and in your fresh toga, all dressed in white and wearing your birthday ring of sardonyx, after you have rinsed your supple throat with a liquid warble, in a state of enervation with your orgasmic eye. Then, as the poetry enters their backsides and as their inmost parts are tickled by verse vibrations, you can see huge Tituses quivering, both their respectable manner and their calm voice gone" (1.13-15).

Rousseau argues that “a letter really dictated by love; a letter from a truly passionate Lover,” will lack the technical flourishes and pleasing prose of an authored letter (“real” or “fictional”) but will possess something far more precious: it conveys truth from one heart to another (CW 6:10). The “heart” of the author, both here and in the *Confessions*, is more important than the author himself: “If you read them as the work of an Author who wishes to please, or who has pretensions of writing, they are detestable” (*CW* 6.10).[62] If his heart is in the right place, he will “affect” us with “truth” and “melt” our “soul,” whether writing “by love” or as “a truly passionate Lover” (*CW* 6:10). When Rousseau asks N. to “take them for what they are, and judge them according to their kind,” he is not lying. The letters are not a vanity project meant to impress the French bourgeoisie, but the portrait of “two or three simple but sensible youths discuss[ing] among themselves the interests of their hearts” that reveals something to us about Man.

Julie does not require real lovers any more than it needs to claim its author. The portraits of the lovers are tableaus, both in the figures themselves and in connection to their author. Rousseau establishes that the textual claims of a text are far more important than the “reality” of those claims. The imaginary “universe” that Rousseau creates and peoples with “objects that do not exist, or to which [he] alone has given being” is, in some sense, more “real” than Paris and its inhabitants (CW 6:9). “Love is but illusion” is *not* a tragic concession to the impossibility of human intimacy or an argument for the nonexistence of the concept but a methodological statement about how to portray the conceptual. It is not the “precision or sequence” of figures that makes a portrait remarkable but the creation of "an authentically new spectacle" that captures an unknown aspect of the tableau of Man (CW6:10-11).

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[62] Ibid: “Is your knowledge so worthless unless someone else knows that you know it?” (1.26-27).

The lovers are not themselves philosophical or political, but the image of the lovers deepens our knowledge of man: "They talk about everything; they get everything wrong; they reveal nothing but themselves; but in revealing themselves, they make themselves endearing. Their errors are more worthy than the knowledge of Sages." There is nothing to glean from Julie or the others but in the interaction of the figures within the portrait. Rousseau thus has his readers pursue not knowledge of the figures as real or fictional but self-knowledge, not the fame for knowledge among the public but self-knowledge, not the inner workings or inner fire of the soul but self-knowledge.

Instructing Authors

After Rousseau revises and responds to N.'s original question, N. revisits and expands *his* original answer to Rousseau's first question: "All the way through? I see: you expect few will do the same?" (*CW* 6:7). Just as chivalric or pastoral romance is a new attempt at capturing the old and presents a kind of modern antiquity or antique modernity in fantasy, the return reinforces the new beginning discussed in the previous section but reverses the order of the *original* beginning. The question of origins (what the source of the letters is and whether they are real or fictional) now precedes the question of readership. Rousseau, like Persius, despises writing for vainglory and detests writing for writing's sake. Writing must have a purpose—a moral purpose that speaks to the heart of man about Man.

Strictly speaking, Rousseau's original question about readers has been answered while answering N.'s original question about origins. N., however, does not yet understand or see the essential connection. He redoubles his criticism of Rousseau's inattention to audience, and the letters' unsuitability for bourgeois mores. N. may find the repetition vain—repetition for no one—but Rousseau the author evidently does not.

N. complains that "the end of the collection makes the beginning all the more reprehensible; one would say that they are two different books which the same persons should not read" (*CW* 6:12). The "two" readers from the beginning (*vel duo)* may each enjoy a part of the book, be it the beginning or end, but no one (*vel nemo)* could read the whole thing and benefit from it: "The childish games that precede the lessons of wisdom dissuade the reader from waiting for them; the evil scandalizes before the good can edify; finally, indignant, he gives up and casts the book aside just when he was about to profit from it" (*CW* 6:12). If it is a book at all, it is two books for two readers, the (foolish) child and the (old) wise man.

In fact, the figures themselves are doubly depicted: "Setting out to depict reasonable people, why begin at a point where they have not yet reached that stage?" (*CW* 6:12). N. takes for defect what the author intends for affect, so to speak. Rousseau's "young people" are reasonable and unreasonable in two senses: they are depicted at once as both reasonable and mad, and as children and adults. N., concerned with propriety rather than self-knowledge, divides rather than merely distinguishing the readership of the book. "The chaste spouse, the thoughtful woman, the worthy materfamilias" is, or ought to be, a wholly different character than the "guilty mistress" who talks likes a "Philosopher" at "eighteen" (*CW* 6.11). N. not only separates "variations" of men from an idea of Man but separates the same men and women from earlier depictions of themselves. The problem portrayed in the species in the *Second Discourse* and in the comment on giants and pygmies from the original beginning is here depicted in individual figures. The variation between men and variation in man are both aspects of Man. Julie is Julie, in childhood and adulthood, in folly and virtue just as men are men across time and place. N. sees "two or none" exclusively where Rousseau depicts two or none inclusively; this procedure goes so far as to include N. himself, the man of letters, within Rousseau's tableau, rather than as a merely external observer of the work.

The two locations of this investigation, in the portraits of individuals and in the tableaux of man, are captured in the preface in the Romantic and the Roman. Drawing on Persius and Tasso, Rousseau combines or recombines these two traditions to depict the same philosophical and political investigation of man. Rousseau himself demonstrates the two modes of inquiry across his writings, most famously in the *Second Discourse* and *Emile.* What the *Second Discourse* depicts across the species *Emile* depicts in an individual. The *Second Discourse* explicitly draws on Persius, placing it in the same Roman tradition. *Emile* draws on Ovid and, like Ovid, is at once both romantic and Roman. Or rather it is like Ovid and like those who are like Ovid, the Roman and the romance. Written by the citizen of Geneva but culminating in the courtship and marriage of Emile and Sophie, the *Emile* cannot be flattened into one but clearly contains elements of both. The *Second Discourse* is addressed to men. The *Emile,* though not written to children, is nonetheless a book concerning children and childhood—or "what [a man] is before being a man."[63] The second Preface teaches us how to recognize Man across genre and subject, in singular figures and fantastical archetypes, in the here and now and in imaginary states timeless or distant. It is thus instructive for all of Rousseau's texts in helping to explain a neglected feature of his pedagogy and yet one that he is especially careful to remark upon.

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[63] Jean Jacques Rousseau, *Emile, or On Education*, trans. Allan Bloom. (New York: Basic Books, 1979), 34.

Indeed, further discussion will help to show that this negligence is expected by Rousseau, and he prepares for it without preventing or even desiring to completely prevent such an effect.

The second Preface is undoubtedly for adults. The two interlocutors are themselves older men: "Look at the snow on my head. There is an age for experience; another for memory" (*CW* 6:11). The textual "audience" of the conversation suggest the appropriate audience for the dialogue. Moreover, Rousseau repudiates the attempt to address a younger audience: "Some have tried to make the readings of Novels useful to youth. I know of no more stupid design" (*CW* 6:17). Without conceding N.'s point, Rousseau recognizes the difficulty of being read well and is aware that he faces the same problem in Geneva and France that Persius faced in Rome: "Am I forbidden a mutter? Not even in secret? Not even in a hole? Nowhere? Never mind: I'll dig a hole for it here. I have seen it, yes, have seen it for myself, little book: is there anyone who does not have donkey's ears?"[64] This is, after all, Persius' loud silence about what he is almost not permitted to discuss; as before, it is not so much fear of persecution that drives the matter but fear that even when the thing is demonstrated openly it will not really be seen by the poorly judging public.

To "get the attention of those who ought to put" what he has to say "to use," Rousseau "changes" his "means" but not his "purpose:"

> When I tried to speak to men no one listened to me; perhaps by addressing children I shall be better listened to; and children do not relish the taste of naked reason any better than that of ill-disguised medicines. (CW 6:12)

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[64] Susan Braund, edited and translated *Juvenal and Persius* (Loeb Classical Library 91) (Cambridge, MA and London: Harvard University Press, 2004), 1.119-121.

Following Tasso in his crusader romance, Rousseau speaks to “men” habituated to live as less than what they are in order to make them what they ought to be. Rousseau quotes from Tasso's own prologue or proem, as he had from Persius’. Tasso’s proem, like Persius’s prologue or Rousseau’s own preface, is a self-conscious reflection of the writer on writing. The stanza from which Rousseau quotes recognizes the dichotomy between what readers want and what they ought to want, and supplies a means by which an author can, through his writing, remedy this problem:

> Just so, in order to get a sick child to take medicine,
> are we accustomed to rubbing the edge of the vessel with some sweet liquor.
> He nonetheless swallows that bitter liquid,
> and obtains his cure from the deception we have perpetrated. (*CW* 6:12)

Tasso’s historical romance, perhaps as disputed in facticity as in orthodoxy, is not idly quoted here: the same public that adores (and remains ignorant of) the love of Abelard and Heloise is enraptured by tales of Jerusalem, of Godfrey, of Tancred, no matter how self-consciously or clearly the author lays out his method of avoiding this unfortunate mistake.[65] The same “authors, men of letters, philosophers” that dispute all the wrong things in Abelard and Heloise, however elevated they may think themselves, are tempted to dispute all the wrong things in Tasso. As in the rest of his own writing, Rousseau here must make use of that admirable sort of deception used to treat the sick child, all without introducing a worse disease.

The deception is essential, and yet it really means to deceive *no one,* since it is done out in the open and belongs, as with the child and parent, to the nature of the case. Yet it is precisely the apparently tyrannical character of such a pedagogy that Rousseau resists in his formulation of the practice in *Julie* and in his dispute with N. The figures of *Julie* grow, before the readers eyes, into men and women. They are pagan models of justification, sanctification, and glorification. "How can you speak of Letters, of epistolary style? When writing to one's beloved, who cares about that! It is no longer Letters one writes, but Hymns" (*CW* 6:11). Rousseau compresses the distance between the authors, the provincials, and the figures of the text, pointing to a singular process of purification even while allowing for the different appearances this process will take. Where the figures of *Julie* need only grow up, the authors need to humble themselves and appreciate their shared humanity with provincials. The provincials, reading the same text, will recognize in themselves and in their estate the same possibility for manly civic engagement and self-knowledge. Opposite insights are instilled by the same image: men of letters learn to love all states and estates where men are (or can be) found, and solitary provincials learn to love their own. Thus, once more, no one is deceived, and *Julie* is not many books but one.

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[65] Cf. Torquato Tasso, *Jerusalem Delivered* trans. Anthony M. Esolen. (Baltimore, MD: The John Hopkins University Press, 2000).

"Authors, Men of Letters, Philosophers" people their novels with "the smart crowd, fashionable ladies, the high and mighty, the military," advancing "the refinement of city taste, the maxims of the Court, the paraphernalia of luxury, [and] Epicurean morality" (*CW* 6:13-14). Provincials appear in novels only as sources of comedy and objects of derision. Novels convince the country-dweller he is unhappy and "give him an aversion for his station, by extending and reinforcing the prejudice that leads him to scorn it" (*CW* 6:13). It is enough for Rousseau to convince N. that country folk are not as different as N. imagines: it's not a matter of making provincials into "illustrious Peasants tilling their fields with their own hands and philosophizing about nature" but "demonstrating to well-to-do people that rustic life and agriculture offer pleasures they cannot know; that these pleasures are less insipid, less coarse than they imagine" (*CW* 6:14). Rousseau no more presents the "noble peasant" than he does any "noble savage."

Rousseau does not correct the “prejudice and opinion” of the men of letters to convince them that they ought to be solitaries but to persuade them that solitaries participate in their society. Men of letters, authors, and philosophers “never cease proclaiming” how “to fulfill your duties as a citizen,” but never examine themselves. Their writings reinforce “the effect of political systems” and propel “Europe in rapid strides toward her ruin” (*CW* 6:14). They guarantee the impossibility of “human happiness” through their “poisoned maxims” (*CW* 6:14). The failure to pursue self-knowledge thus ruins themselves, others, and their politics as such—the inverse of Rousseau’s method here and elsewhere.

The citizen author cannot simply extol his fellows to “be good,” as preachers do, but must make him “love the estate that helps” him do so (*CW* 6:14). Rousseau believes in the doctrine, so to speak, that effectual change comes from men, not God, and thus places all moral responsibility in man. It is as un-calvinistic as possible, a salvation through works, or through faith alone—in man. Novels are harmful not because they are imaginary but because they set “before their readers’ eyes the pretended charms of an estate that is not their own” (*CW* 6:15). (This would seem likewise to be the harm in the preacher, in setting before the people such things as are not really part of man’s estate.) The citizen author makes his reader learn to love his state (or his estate) through reading and to be satisfied with himself. No external change will occur in his reader; he will live as he did before but “with a changed soul and will do as genuine Patriarchs what they had been doing as peasants.” (The contrast with the preacher again reveals itself: the citizen author alone makes men like or better than Father Abraham or the other subjects of scriptural emulation.) The transformation of authorial intent and audience, from recognition in the cities to moral instruction in the country, cleanses the hearts of both author and audience, of both socialite and solitaire.

Rousseau resists the charms of the social reformer from the city who wishes to uplift (or scorn) his country fellows as well as the temptation to valorize the good old ways of the provinces over against the corrupt city-dwellers; at the same time, he gives up the strength of neither attempt by revealing the citizen author, by revealing *himself* as citizen author, uniquely or especially capable of writing to both or all. Rousseau's praise of the provinces and the provincial folk is directed at the authors, men of letters, and philosophers who believe to "flee Paris is to hate the human race," not to transform them into someone else or transport them somewhere else but to instruct them how to write novels (CW 6:14). The novels written in Paris "are read in the Provinces;" they are written for one audience but read by another. The prejudice of Parisian intellectuals is not necessarily untrue but unhelpful; one must therefore resist asking only about reality and fiction in this case also. The whole work is an exercise in methodology: *Julie* is less a *roman* than a model for *romans.* The book instructs provincials only secondarily. The conversation on novels is not primarily an interpretative guide for *Julie* but an instructive dialogue to authors on writing. A misreading here would entail misreading elsewhere: the *Second Discourse* would become nothing other than a scientific account of man's development or the *Emile* nothing other than a manual for the education of children.

Rousseau's concern for morality motivates his writings and is, in his view, the *only* defensible motive for authorship. His standard, however, is not shared by N. and other authors. N. mistakes the figures in *Julie* as "other worldly" and unnatural because of his view on the relationship between morality and reading. The sheer volume of "new books" on morality written "alternately state the pros and cons, destroys the effect of the former by the latter and nullifies the whole" (*CW* 6:13). Or, to the extent select books are elevated and reread, either "support worldly maxims" and "are superfluous," or "oppose them" and "are futile." The productivity of intellectual activity in the cities works to reinforce social vices and suppress morality: "The man of the world who wants his soul stirred for a moment to put it back into the moral order, encountering invincible resistance on all sides, is always forced to maintain or return to his initial situation." N., convinced of his superiority, regards "the morality of books as babble of idle people." This is precisely the opposite effect of Rousseau's methodology or pedagogy; his competing figures do not, as it were, cancel each other out. It should be no surprise that his system is reputed to be contradictory, as Rousseau expects and prepares for this very mistake to be made. The man of letters, N., is already depicted in such error.

Readers, however, removed "from the bustle, from great cities, from large gatherings," are in "no hurry" to show off their reading (*CW* 6:13). In isolation, whether literally or metaphorically, "books can be of some use" since their morality "is no longer counterbalanced so strongly from without; it has a much greater effect within." (*CW* 6:14). Rousseau appeals to the vanity of authors, arguing that they can make an impact in the country where none can be made in the city. The sweet deception, the sugar on the rim of the medicine is this appeal to authorial vanity which will heal both the author and reader in turn. The civic purpose, masked by romantic flourishes and pastoral dress, is persistent throughout. The Roman and the romantic influences in Rousseau's writings are not in conflict anymore than *Emile* or *Julie* is in conflict with the *Second Discourse.* Rousseau uses various portraits of man to discover the tableaux of mankind, allowing for variation of appearance but insisting on singularity of purpose—a morality of Man and for men.

This morality must be attainable in every state or estate where men can be found. Julie's own standard for judging books, which Rousseau offers to N. to judge the present one (*CW* 6:17), admonishes works which place the possibility of human goodness and hope in the world beyond and praises those which inspire the soul to goodness now (*CW* 6:214). Julie favors the one which promotes human action. Her standard is compatible with “real” or “fictional” writings, so long as they inspire moral sentiment. Rousseau and N. are nearing the end of their discussion and have addressed both of their primary questions. They have “discovered” what makes a book good or bad, who will read books, and what determines who will read them, and how to inspire moral action in readers and authors alike. Before the dialogue ends, the conversation turns to an explicit discussion of the formal structure of the dialogue and the textual positioning of its characters. The focal shift from Julie and friends in *Julie* to Rousseau and N. in the preface recalls the reader from the pastoral figures and returns attention to the broader context of portraiture. The move reminds the reader of the broader purpose and application of the preface.

The Honorable and Daring Editor

Rousseau and N. finally discuss explicitly what the beginning of the preface models structurally: the figural positioning of or the figure of the relationship between author and text. Without claiming authorship, Rousseau models “honorable” behavior by naming himself “Editor” and acknowledging what he “dares to print,” actively rebuking the contemporary norm of anonymous publication (*CW* 6:19). The contrast between the unnamed man of letters and the fully named Jean Jacques Rousseau highlights Rousseau’s willingness to take moral accountability for his writings. Rousseau will “answer for the book,” be it good or bad: “If the book is found to be bad in itself, that is all the more reason for putting my name on it. I do not wish to be thought better than I am” (*CW* 6:19). French authors readily accept accolades from their supposed works but avoid, to the extent possible, the real and moral consequences of their writings. Rousseau’s insertion of himself into his writings is not mere vanity—it is a response and rebuke of the vanity of his contemporaries.

N.’s concern for the “beautiful souls” depicted marks a shift from his earlier derisive dismissal of the figures but not a complete transformation. N. is still reluctant to name himself in the dialogue and reveal his participation in the conversation. He does not see the connection between authorship and citizenship—the moral responsibility he bears for the moral corruption he does not recognize. Rousseau disowns his title as the “Citizen of Geneva” for *Julie,* not to avoid responsibility—he has already claimed the work—but as a recognition of the style and form of the work. Rousseau is not textually (that is, in the figure of the text) the author of the work; the work is a collection of letters between two passionate but delusional lovers. The lovers are not citizens and do not write as citizens; they are not concerned about their fatherland or the moral impact their letters will have. Rousseau presents the letters not as an author who has imbued the letters with moral meaning for his reader but as an Editor who wishes to demonstrate the variety of Man through foreign but true portraits to the French bourgeoisie. He refreshes the search for self-knowledge without directly engaging in that search. Rousseau thus contributes to and enables the pursuit of self-knowledge by refusing to depict himself as the author of that pursuit and instead requiring of his readers the very approach he defends as editor in the preface. The “childish” medicine therefore becomes not pedagogical paternalism but an appreciation for the maturity of the reader who would really benefit from the work.

Rousseau’s refusal to claim authorship is not a lie, noble or otherwise, fatherly or otherwise, but the suspense of a more immediate truth for a higher one: the true but fictional portrait of *Julie* is impossible if “reality” or “fiction” are the only meaningful measures of writing. The “new spectacle” Rousseau wishes to present to N. is literally unportrayable if he must really and textually claim authorship: “To declare that one wishes to keep truth unspoken is still to honor it” (*CW* 6:20). He forces N. to judge the work again; this time, N. agrees that the work is a collection of Letters but insists that they are certainly written by Rousseau. He searches the Letters for an image of their author, recognizing Rousseau in some but not in others. He once again refuses to “conclude” and reiterates he previous judgment: if it is “just fiction, you have made a bad book: but say that these two women have existed; and I shall reread this Collection every year for the rest of my life” (*CW* 6:21). N. maintains his judgment that the letters, as tableaux of Man, are bad and unrecognizable. He does not see Man differently. If the letters are portraits, however, they are no longer uninteresting but worthy of life-long study. Without expanding his conception of Man, N. allows for more variation among men.

The new interest in the portraits does not mark a fundamental change in N. but reflects the same error in a new way. N. is still fixated on the reality of the figures. The new error of the man of letters more closely resembles the error of the historians, travelers, and scientists of the *Second Discourse,* worried about what can be observed before knowing how to observe:

> R. Oh! what does it matter whether they ever existed? In vain would you would seek them on the earth. They are no more.
>
> N. They are no more? Then they once were?
>
> R. This conclusion is conditional: if they once were, they are no more.
>
> N. Between us, admit that these little subtleties are more determining than embarrassing.

Rousseau’s unwillingness to commit to either the reality of the figures in *Julie* or the state of nature depicted in the *Second Discourse* is a frustrating and futile quirk for readers like N, who are unable to see the value of conceptualizing Man in portraits and tableaux. Man, for them, is nothing but the collection of “real observations;” the idea of man is wholly worldly and material. There is nothing moral or metaphysical in or about Man. The political consequences of this view are dire.

N. encourages Rousseau to “write down this conversation” and use it as “Preface” (*CW* 6:22). Rousseau agrees, arguing that the dialogue form “better” conveys what he “would have said on [his] own” (*CW* 6:22). N. “advises” Rousseau to “transpose,” their roles, pretending N. is on the one “urging [him] to publish this Collection, and that [Rousseau is] reluctant” (*CW* 6:22). He argues that, by giving Rousseau the objections,” and himself “the replies,” Rousseau “will be more modest, and make a better impression” (*CW* 6:22). Without responding directly, Rousseau once more arranges the conversation such that N. is positioned to judge. This time, however, the object of judgment is Rousseau’s character: “R. Will that too be in the character you praised me for earlier?” N. does not see Rousseau’s artistry and does not recognize his hand in the trajectory of the dialogue. N. believes that he, not Rousseau, has orchestrated the situation: “N. No, I was setting a trap for you. Leave things as they are.”

The final face-off between the “real” author of *Julie* and the “fictious” representative of Authors, as a class or category of men, prepares Rousseau’s “real” readers to read his writings in their greater context—which does not consist in his personal or intellectual quarrels with Diderot and others but in the contrast between his moral perspective and all competing moral perspectives. Readers of the *Second Discourse, Emile, and* the *Social Contract* ought to approach those works with careful attention to the portraits and portraitist. Without appreciation for Rousseau’s portraiture, Rousseau’s readers will find themselves in N.’s position: in the judgment seat without the self-knowledge requisite of a judge of Man and Man’s apologist—Rousseau.

Chapter 2: Prefiguring Man for the Second Discourse

Abstract: The front matter of *The Discourse on the Origin and the Foundations of Inequality Among Men* introduces Rousseau's portrait of natural man. In the first chapter, I presented Rousseau's portraiture in contrast to artistic representation in literature and literary writing more generally. Establishing the conceit of portraiture and standards for judgment, the examination of the "Second Preface" of *Julie* allows for metanalysis of Rousseau's method as the explicit subject of the text but abstracted from particular portraits. The methodological framework Rousseau presents in the prefatory material to the *Discourse* is inextricable from his portrait of natural man and prepares us to view this portrait without prejudice and with the appropriate outlook. Rousseau's own philosophic perspective, which is concerned with politics and morals, conflicts with those modes of observation that one would ordinarily employ to investigate man's origin. On their own terms, comparative, historical, legal, and scientific approaches are unable to uncover what man is. Through the lens of portraiture, Rousseau prepares us to study the moral origins and political foundations of men, to know what man is as a moral and political being. Portraiture allows us to reexamine natural man—one of Rousseau's most challenging and contentious images.

No one reads the *Discourse on Inequality* correctly. This sentiment is common enough among scholars with distinctive views on this much controverted text. In fact, the feeling goes, two read it right: Rousseau and myself. It might be better to say that *No One* reads it *wrongly*. N.'s mistakes are precisely of the kind that Rousseau attempts to court and correct, first in the prefatory material to the *Discourse* and then in the text proper. Is Rousseau's man in the state of nature real or fiction? Is he the stuff of romantic fantasy, or is he drawn from experience or experiment? Is he fit for city life, or has he been unfitted by the civitas? Is all this science or *political* science? Who will bother to read the thing in its entirety? The man of letters asks all the wrong (but no unexpected) questions.

As Rousseau's whole system seems to be scattered, the prefatory material for the *Discourse* appears to lack coherence. Each part of the front matter differs in form, content, and approach. These rapid shifts in perspective actually prepare the audience for the portrait of natural man. The prefatory material is therefore various but not inconsistent. The irreducible complexity of the front matter requires us to radically reorient our perspective before approaching the question. Though Rousseau explicitly says as much in the preface (52), the claim is not always appreciated in all its particulars. The form of the front matter informs and reenforces the substance of these sections.[66]

Close study of this material will therefore duplicate without repeating lessons learned from the second preface to *Julie,* and the relation that that dialogue bears to the whole of Rousseau's literary production is like (though distinct from) the relation of preface and discourse here. N. and his fellow men of letters tend to be like those "First Institutors" of language who fail to rightly understand the distinction and interplay of essence and variation. They are, so to speak, poor metaphysicians and moralists because they cannot really get at what Man *is* or his situation except through a dichotomous distinction between type and individual. Any portrait of natural man—or any other type or individual—will be misunderstood apart from a reorientation toward self-knowledge. As indicated already, however, the problem of self-knowledge is a problem for all men; it does not differ among "types" of men, as if there were multiple "species" in the human genus.[67] Instead, the elements of Rousseau's prologue or preview for the portrait of natural man constitute the necessary steps all men need to take to learn to see themselves.

The frontispiece appears at the beginning of the *Discourse* and prepares Rousseau's audience for his depictive investigation. The reader or viewer sees a half-dressed man, adorned with a necklace and a sword. A bundle of clothes lays in front of him, and he points down to a group of huts, inhabited by barely visible people, along the seashore. Ships are visible just beyond the huts. The gesture is for the sake of a group of men he is conversing with—fully-clothed (from head to toe) in European dress. The clothes spilling out from the bundle match this group's dress. The first man is seated, contemplating or considering whatever our half-dressed hero is saying. The rest stand huddled behind him, looking down but not necessary seeing what the half-dressed man is saying (their eyes do not follow his pointed hand). Behind them looms a large, European building. If the reader has just set down some chivalric romance, he may see a Crusader castle from Tasso. It is not the literal portrait, however, that constitutes the decisive importance of the frontispiece; it is instead the literary portrait that appears in the *note* on the frontispiece that introduces in the *Discourse* the method of portraiture that I have examined in and from Rousseau thus far. In that note, Rousseau criticizes European mores and morality through the examination of European travel accounts of so-called "savages," preparing his later arguments about the nature of right for man and men. Next, the Dedicatory Letter, addressed to his native republic of Geneva, criticizes that republic, offering an imaginary model which prioritizes the happiness and well-being of the terrestrial fatherland and its citizens. To ask whether the letter is real or fiction, sincere or satire, is to miss the complete picture, if not to completely miss the picture. A note there on Herodotus's *Histories,* however, provides insight into the correct use of historical example and the appropriate moral reading of such examples, in the figure of Otanes, discoverer of and co-conspirator against a false king. The spectacles of the foreign and the divine give way to right observation of nature through morality and politics.

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[66] For another treatment of Rousseau's prefatory material for the *Discourse,* see John T. Scott, *Rousseau's Reader* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2020), 79-104.
[67] Cf. Matthew Mendham, "Gentle Savages and Fierce Citizens against Civilization: Unraveling Rousseau's Paradoxes." *American Journal of Political Science* 55 (2011): 170–87.

In the preface, Rousseau introduces the distinction between natural philosophy and philosophy, establishing the need for moral and political understandings of apparently physical phenomena. While the natural scientists provide the most reliable observations, it is precisely this accuracy which poses the greatest obstacle to truth, as, it seems, the obvious character of a picture tends to be as much a barrier as an invitation to right understanding. Drawing out that problem, Rousseau uses Persius's *Satires* and Socrates's image of the statue of Glaucus to clarify his use of scientific language, using the idea or image of natural phenomena to investigate Nature. It is Rousseau's exordium, as the transition from this front matter to the discourse proper, that prevents any sharp distinction between the preparation for the investigation of natural man and that investigation itself by bringing together various elements from the front matter and by functioning as a kind of preface within the discourse itself. The discourse that aims to explain man rather than men, or to move from man to men, thus begins or is preceded by the move from men to man. If Rousseau seems to clear the field in his dismissal of other accounts of human origins, the front matter preserves and indeed improves upon what pedagogically (if not historically or scientifically) comes before the work of the discourse.

Rousseau does not need to review the original data to be a better observer of origins. He does not need to be a better observer of the type respected in Europe. The traveler, historian, and natural scientist provide observations that Rousseau himself is able to interpret and understand, in a way that the original observer is unable or unequipped to do. As an observer (and not necessarily as a person or as an individual in the abstract), Rousseau is not farther removed from but closer to natural man because he possesses the true philosophic, moral, and political vision needed to investigate what man really is. He presents his investigation of man, the origin of his moral inequality and the foundations of politics, through portraiture, which is uniquely able to convey not only the object of observation but the entire picture of observation. By reframing our approach to the portrait of natural man through careful observation of the interplay between

Rousseau as author, his audience, and his subject in the front matter, we are prepared to examine man—whether "savage," natural, "nascent," or civil—in a moral and political light.

Literal and Literary Portraits

Rousseau begins his *Discourse* with an image, as everybody knows who can see. Beneath the image, Rousseau writes: "He returns to his equals"; he directs our attention to a note.[68] Following Rousseau, the reader passes over the prefatory material, the first part of the discourse, the notes from the first part of the discourse, and the second part of the discourse, beginning instead with an endnote. The endnote is the first note from the second part of the discourse, the sixteenth note overall, and called note thirteen in Rousseau's original numbering system. Thus, even symbolically, Rousseau's investigation of origins and foundations does not begin at the apparent beginning. The structure of the discourse itself suggests that origins and foundations may not be at the start of things. Whatever analysis one could provide for the frontispiece, Rousseau redirects the reader's gaze from the literal image to the literary image in the note. This shift in focus corresponds to and forecasts Rousseau's later call for a reorientation away from the physical to the moral study of man. This must precede (and therefore does precede) any turn to an examination of political right in the context of Rousseau's Geneva or natural right in his account of the history of mankind. Without this perspective, Rousseau's arguments about political and natural right would be incomprehensible and indefensible.

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[68] The frontispiece receives comparatively little dedicated study in the scholarship. For studies of the significant and meaning of the frontispiece, see Brandon Konoval,Brandon. "Between Aristotle and Lucretius: Discourses of Nature and Rousseau's Discours Sur L'inegalite." *Modern Intellectual History* 14 (2017): 1–33; Jerry Combee and Martin Plax, "Rousseau's Noble Savage and European Self-Consciousness." *Modern Age* 17 (1973): 173-182; and John T. Scott, *Rousseau's Reader* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2020), 83-88.

In this polynomial note, Rousseau remarks on Europe's failure to convert so-called *sauvages* to their own "way of living" and their own "morals," even with "the assistance of Christianity" (147). It is not that the savages "do not possess sufficient enlightenment to judge soundly between their condition and ours;" on the contrary, it is precisely "the savages' ideas" that might enable them to access the necessary "frame of mind" to "conceive" of the European "way of life" (148). Rousseau reverses the common prejudice that so-called savages, as their pejorative name suggests, lack the intellectual capacities to correctly see and judge various human lives, and he argues instead that European ideas themselves inhibit "the frame of mind required to conceive of the taste savages find for their way of life" (148). Through "observation," the savages are able "to see that all our labors are directed toward two objects alone: namely, the comforts of life for oneself and being esteemed by others" (148), self-satisfaction and self-promotion rather than self-knowledge. Even using these flawed standards, "savages" are better judges of what really comforts and elevates. Rousseau uses the example of some "Chief" from North America being brought European goods and rejecting all of them as not only unnecessary but ill-suited to their end. The "woolen blanket," which of all the European finery he reviews seems "almost as good," as the simple, "savage" alternative, would not have been judged as such if "he had worn them both in the rain," or in conditions that really test the object in question. The "savage" observers perceive the moral picture of European life, which is directed at physical or material goods.[69] The European observers consider only the physical or material characteristics of the savages, remarking only on the visible reception of European morals and not on the underlying morals that cause this rejection. European observers see facts without moral implications. Both European moral life and moral vision is physical and materially directed. Rousseau's critique is twofold. He attacks both the European way of life and the European way of conceiving of life. Their mores and morality are flawed.

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[69] This reading of "savage" morality runs counter to prevailing understandings of what makes "savages" more moral than bourgeois Europeans. Melzer, for example, argues that the "primitive

It is the "savages," and not the Europeans, who correctly observe men and see ideationally. The so-called savages have moral clarity. Rousseau asks: "What means do we have for imagining the sort of pleasure a savage takes in spending his life?" (148) It is not a lack of understanding because of cultural or historical differences that deprives one of such means. The "savages" really understand themselves and Europeans; the Europeans believe they understand both but understand no one. Whereas the savages examine Europe through its religion, ways and customs, Europeans study savage civilization through ecology, biology, and anthropology. Rousseau prefers the "savages" not because they are natural, asocial, unified, or sincere, but because they are better situated to observe and judge. Both groups possess "ideas" about "religion, ways, and customs," but only the savages really recognize this and pursue the kind of moral reasoning that can properly cognize such ideas (149).[70] The Europeans do not treat the religion, ways, and customs of the "savages" as a real moral alternative to their own way of life but as an outgrowth of what is "natural" for man. It is not a sub-rational intuition or instinctive

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savage," who lives "together in loose tribes," is said to be "essentially good" insofar as he possesses, or approximates, the "presocial, arational, subhuman," and "brutelike" qualities of natural man. Arthur Melzer, *The Natural Goodness of Man: On the System of Rousseau's Thought* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990), 16.

[70] Marks argues that "savage religion" is like "popular religion;" both "arise from fear and uncertainty above all." Jonathan Marks, *Perfection and Disharmony in the Thought of Jean-Jacques Rousseau*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 44.

understanding that separates the “savages” from Europeans and benefits them but rationality itself.

Europeans see “savages” as historically or developmentally prior to themselves; any difference is explained only on the grounds that they are either predecessors to or variants of themselves. The evolutionary perspective leaves only categorization or cataloging rather than moral reasoning. Whatever lip service Europeans pay to morality, which Rousseau reduces to concern for public esteem, they fail to recognize that their method for examining savages has serious consequences for themselves and would preclude Europeans from moral reasoning about themselves. Rousseau diagnoses both European moralists and scientists, on account of hypocrisy or ignorance, with the failure to treat morals morally. It is not the possession of these ideas but the specific substance of these ideas that matters. Ideas should not be treated as cultural artifacts akin to physical artifacts. The social scientific view of man is inferior not to some pre-scientific perspective but to this moral alternative.

European Christianity poses a particular problem for European imagination and observation. Rousseau offers an example for “the admirers of European civilization” to examine (149). Rousseau is not the author of the example, which is drawn from the *Histoire des voyages,* a collection of European travel journals. The excerpt moves from a general to a specific critique of Christian missionaries. Beginning with remarks on the effectiveness (or ineffectiveness) of Dutch missionaries, Peter Kolben, the author of the account, turns to “Van der Stel, Governor of the Cape,” who raised a “Hottentot” from infancy “in the principles of the Christian religion and in the observance of European customs" (149).[71] Kolben purports to confirm his own racialist understanding of the distinctions among men through a report of this simple but seriously flawed experiment. In Kolben's telling, the Hottentot was sent away from the Cape on business, returning after the death of his employer. When he returned, the Hottentot visited some of his relatives, where he decided to wear sheepskin and discard his European dress. Returning his clothes to the Governor, the Hottentot delivered a discourse: "Be so kind, Sir, as to take note that I forever renounce this apparel. I also renounce the Christian religion for the rest of my life…" (149). The Hottentot ran off before Van der Stel could respond and was never seen again. To Kolben, the narrative is self-explanatory and self-evident: the facts are supposed to present an obvious conclusion, which itself was foreordained on the basis of the definitive and ineradicable distinction between Dutchmen and Hottentots, or between European Christians and the savage races. The narrative, of course, depends upon a political problem masquerading as biological science.

Kolben is a poor observer if he believes that the child's parentage prevents his adoption of Christianity and European customs. The "Hottentot" is culturally European. He is raised by a European with European customs in the religion of Europe. He judges Christianity not as an outsider but as a culturally European Christian. In this way, the Hottentot more closely resembles the "Frenchmen and other Europeans" who "have voluntarily taken refuge among these nations" than a “savage” who refuses “to become civilized” (148). The man is civilized: “He was richly dressed, he was taught several languages, and his progress answered very well to the care taken for his education” (149). He does not look like a “savage” or natural man—he must discard his “European finery” to resemble the other members of his family, who themselves don sheepskins and have been educated in their own ways and religion. Kolben takes biology as destiny, but this would be to ignore the man’s moral account of himself.

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[71] Griswold reads Rousseau's use of Kolben as Rousseau's confirmation of Kolben's perspective. Likewise, Johnson reads Rousseau's claim "to know that 'it would be most simple-minded ... to accept the authority of uncultured travellers'" as hypocrisy, noting that Rousseau "himself drew heavily on travel writers of questionable reliability in order to assemble his own influential impression of 'savage nations.'" Charles Griswold, "Genealogical narrative and self-knowledge in Rousseau's *Discourse on the Origin and the Foundations of Inequality among Men." History of European Ideas*. 42 (2016): 280 and David Johnson, "Representing the Cape 'Hottentots,' from the French Enlightenment to Post-Apartheid South Africa." *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 40 (2007): 533.

In his discourse, the man is clear that he is renouncing European civilization and Christianity for an alternative civilization and religion, *not* civilization and religion as such. Despite his explicit renunciation of European apparel, he maintains “the necklace and cutlass” he wears for his “love” of the Governor. His particular love of a European thus includes a general critique of European civilization, and these things are not at odds. According to the man’s judgment, the Governor is most faithfully represented by European luxury goods and weapons. The Governor’s title and status as a political figure is here important for understanding the broader applicability of the example: European political communities, despite their claimed commitments to learning and religion, are primarily concerned with luxury and war. The man maintains these physical artifacts of the European pursuit of personal comfort and public esteem not because he fails to recognize the distinction between artifact and idea but because he recognizes this distinction. The artifacts are the sum of what Europeans are, as shorthand for their morality, and capture what he rejects. This nonetheless makes them effective tokens of who the Governor is as an individual. The European has made a fetish of the necklace and cutlass; the “savage” has rendered them moral.

Rousseau does not only offer the example of this man with a complicated moral and political identity to “the admirers of European civilization,” but Kolben’s entire account is presented or depicted as representative of the men of letters and of the failure of European civilization to be concerned with self-knowledge. This includes Kolben's observational perspective, the man himself, and the anticipated reception of the vignette. The example rebukes these admirers not purely or even primarily because of the man's judgment but criticizes the comparative blindness of European observers. What is inconceivable for Kolben and his readers is perfectly comprehensible for the man: like Rousseau himself, the "Hottentot" is a culturally European Christian who can see beyond Europe. It is not that the "Hottentot" or Rousseau is closer to nature or more natural than Kolben or his readers but that both can perceive and conceive of man in another light. Rousseau's discourse, like the man's, is a renunciation of European finery and the Christian religion, as practiced and understood in Europe, not from an outside perspective but within that moral and political community. The preacher and the man of letters are thus taken, or taken away, together.

Tableaux of the Fatherland

Rousseau turns from the figural discourse (that is, the figure of the discourse or the discourse of the figure) of the "Hottentot" to his own address to his native republic of Geneva.[72] The "virtuous citizen" is "convinced that it is fitting" to offer a public homage to his "fatherland" on this "happy occasion" (41). Rousseau calls himself a "Citizen of Geneva" on the title page, although he was not and had not been a citizen of Geneva since he renounced the Protestant faith and left the city when he was sixteen years old. Within the text, Rousseau's appeal to republican citizenship of a kind occurs in between the "Hottentot's" renunciation of the Christian religion and his subsequent departure from the Dutch colony (in the note on the frontispiece) and Otanes's rejection of monarchical rule and his consequent self-legislation (in the note in the Dedicatory Letter). The erstwhile European Hottentot and the loyal and honest Persian rebel are as surprising (or as appropriate) as the apostatizing bastard in the reorientation of one's perspective on citizenship. Rousseau uses Kolben, Herodotus, and *Rousseau* as figures of authors to prepare for the investigation of man's origins through the study of decidedly political regimes and peoples.

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[72] For the importance of Geneva and his Genevan citizenship in Rousseau's thought, see Helena Rosenblatt, *Rousseau and Geneva* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997);Helena Rosenblatt, "Rousseau's Gift to Geneva." *Modern Intellectual History,* 3 (2006): 65-73; Michael Palmer, "The Citizen Philosopher: Rousseau's Dedicatory Letter to the *Discourse on Inequality*." *Interpretation,* 17 (1989):19-39; and Leornard Sorenson, "Rousseau's Authorial Voices: In His "Dedication" of his "Discourse on Inequality" to "The Republic of Geneva" *History of Political Thought.* 30 (2009) 469-491.

As in the correction to Kolben's observational principles through the discourse of the man depicted on the frontispiece, Rousseau indicates in the Dedicatory Letter the city and the citizen themselves are misunderstood by those immediately engaged in the enterprise as well as by the men of letters who attempt to reflect upon such things only for the sake of their own comfort or vanity. It will not be enough to treat political or natural right as an independent object of study, whether historically or scientifically. The letter, like the frontispiece, points both to a literal and, so to speak, a literary image. The rights of citizens do not belong among those artifacts which may be literally observed but must be understood through moral reasoning. Thus it is not sufficient to list or to categorize the rights, privileges, and duties of citizens of this or that regime.

Rousseau's approach to right is therefore unavailable to those who have not understood his presentation of Kolben or who will treat Herodotus as a mere complier of antiquities.

Rousseau's Geneva, like his Genevan citizenship, cannot be understood in terms of the real and fictional but on the same grounds established above; historical or scientific study of Genevan law or a biographical account of the 'real' Rousseau will not get at the heart of the matter. Likewise, archeological study of ancient Persia is not likely to lead to better information on the Herodotean account of the coup against (false) Smerdis and the subsequent dialogue on the best regime that even Herodotus assumes will be disbelieved by the men of letters of his own day. Rousseau's imaginary reconstitution of Geneva, and his appeal to the Herodotean account of the reconstitution of Persia, serves as the next preface to the matter of the whole discourse.

Rousseau does not honor but criticizes Geneva by claiming citizenship that he does not have. Lacking the "right that ought to authorize" him, Rousseau appeals beyond the ruling of the "magnificent, most honored, and sovereign lords" to address and dedicate to them this meditation on the "the equality nature has placed among men and on the inequality they have instituted" (41). The right Rousseau refers to is ambiguous. Already, he suggests a difference between the right that exists and the right that ought to exist. In establishing the gap between political right in the actual republic of Geneva and the right he ought to possess, Rousseau does not appeal to heaven. His appeal beyond the city is notably not to God, or at least not the Protestant deity recognized by Geneva. Rousseau's civic virtue and animating "zeal" is not Christian and does not come, as it were, from the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. And yet the zeal of Rousseau's soul and his claim to the right to criticize or pay homage comes from a source higher than or prior to the republic and the city fathers. The repeal of Rousseau's citizenship is a conspicuous example of the inequality instituted among men, forcing a former citizen and equal to speak to his fellows as an inferior addressing lords. Rousseau will depict how a man is "virtuous" without faith and a "citizen" without citizenship in the "tableau" he offers to the Genevan people (42).

Writing from exile, Rousseau imagines a birthplace of his choosing, substituting the artificial separation from Geneva for a natural one. His imagined fatherland prioritizes the duties of the individual while minimizing the importance of individual happiness. Each person ought to have a task with which he alone is charged and capable of fulfilling without deference to his fellow citizens. The size of the state is limited by "the extent of human faculties" (42). Within the state, all individuals know one another and cannot escape the moral judgment of the public eye. Rousseau replaces the moral objects of European morality, transforming personal comfort and public esteem to duty without deference and public accountability. Individual duties directed toward the happiness of the whole supplant individual labor for the attainment of personal comforts. That the duties are performed for the citizens without deference to the citizens reverses the current relationship, where actions are performed with deference to all but for the sake of one. While public accountability ensures that no one escapes moral judgment, it is good apart from the satisfaction of personal desire for public esteem.

The visibility of their actions and their habit "of seeing and knowing" one another makes "love of the fatherland a love of the citizens" (42). It is a directed and distinctly human love, not an abstract patriotism. The indistinguishability between the sovereign and the people emerges from this general and particular love of fatherland and citizens. The emphasis on the common happiness of this state is only possible in a state where "the people and sovereign were one and the same person," and is contrasted to the "happiness of private individuals" that the actual republic of Geneva promotes (41-42). Paradoxically, it is Geneva's focus on private individuals and its distinction between the people and sovereign that has caused the most harm to Rousseau.

Only the sovereign acting against the people might think it fitting to strip Rousseau of his literal citizenship on account of his belief, as it were, in a higher and better (but still *Genevan*) citizenship that depends upon the unity (and not the mere dissolution) of people and sovereign, of private and individual good.[73]

Rousseau's happiness is separable from the happiness of his formerly fellow Genevans, not least because he has lost the freedom of being "so subject to the laws that neither [he] nor anyone else could shake off their honorable yoke" (42). To say nothing of the city fathers themselves, his own ability to renounce his Genevan citizenship for any reason would be incompatible with his conception of a just, democratic republic. What particularly exacerbates his situation is that the loss of his citizenship was not born out of a desire to "be above the law" of his country but from his country's insistence that all citizens "recognize" and submit to "outside" law (42). Rousseau inverts the common Christian idea that God's law is an honorable yoke, arguing instead that Geneva's commitment to the Protestant understanding of God's law above and before its own makes it "impossible" for it "to be well obeyed and for the state to be well governed" (42-43). The national head (*chef)* of state is no head at all if subject to a foreign head—even a divine one. Rousseau maintains the Christian idea of freedom through law but replaces the divine with the political.

In a note on this passage, Rousseau shares a story from Herodotus's *Histories* that speaks somewhat obliquely to such matters of law from the (supposedly) law- and truth-loving

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[73] Cf. Roger Masters, *Political Philosophy of Rousseau.* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1968), 194. Masters notes especially the distinction Rousseau makes between the people and magistrates, referring to the people alone as sovereign.

Persians.[74] The following sentence prompts the note: "For regardless of what the constitution of a government may be, if there is a single man who is not subject to the law, all the others are necessarily at his discretion (I)" (43). Whereas Rousseau argued above that law subjected to law destroys law, here he argues that a person not subject to law makes those under the law his subjects. The note relates the deliberation among the seven liberators of Persia following the murder of "the false Smerdis" (a lookalike who had impersonated the *real* Smerdis after his death, until Otanes's daughter alerted her father). In the *Histories,* Herodotus includes Otanes's speech to his fellow liberators, despite its disputed status: "Some Hellenes...do not believe the following speeches took place at all, but they certainly did" (*Histories* 3.80). Rousseau does not include Otanes's discourse in his note, relaying only that "Otanes was strongly in favor of a republic" (119). He adds that the "opinion" is "all the more extraordinary in the mouth of a satrap since, aside from the claim he might have to the empire, the great fear more than death any sort of government that forces them to respect men" (119). Without directly doubting Herodotus, Rousseau remarks on the extraordinary character of the opinion on its own terms and especially in the mouth of Otanes. Rousseau conveys the opinion to his reader but does so in his own words, replacing one extraordinary advocate of republicanism with another.

The reception of Otanes's speech foreshadows the reception of Rousseau's dedication: he was ignored by his fellows. Recognizing "that he had lost the argument," Otanes once more addressed the others (*Histories* 3.83). Rousseau again excludes Otanes's discourse from the note and instead offers his own summary: wanting “neither to obey nor command,” Otanes “voluntarily gave up his right to the crown to the other competitors, asking as his only compensation that he and his posterity be free and independent, which was granted him” (119). Rousseau’s summary very nearly paraphrases the entire discourse but does so in his own voice. Otanes is forced to legislate his own freedom outside of the monarchy because of the defects of his state. Similarly, Rousseau is forced to renounce his citizenship to free himself from his defective state, transforming his own judicial punishment into a positive good. Rousseau’s authorization for his own exile is not a legal fiction, but it is in effect a moral one.

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[74] Few scholars treat Herodotus and Rousseau together, despite Rousseau's invocation of the historian across his works, including the *Emile,* the *Essay on the Origin of Language (EOL),* and the Second Discourse. For a treatment of Rousseau's use of Herodotus in *EOL,* see Emma Planinc, "The Figurative Foundations of Rousseau's Politics." *Modern Intellectual History*, 20(2023): 1-26. For a discussion of Herodotus in *Emile,* see Christopher Kelly, *Rousseau's Exemplary Life: The Confessions as Political Philosophy*, (Cornell University Press, 2019), 15-18, 31-33.

Rousseau acknowledges that Herodotus includes information on the limits placed on this exception but argues that such information would “necessarily have to be assumed,” even without Herodotus’s account. Rousseau once more omits the specific limits placed on Otanes. In the *Histories,* Herodotus only notes one limit: Otanes and his family must not “transgress Persian laws” (*Histories* 3.83). Otanes is effectively a republican citizen of the monarchy: free from rule but subject to law. Rousseau argues that a man “capable” of being “satisfied with such a privilege” would not be “capable of abusing it” because no man would find himself in that position without already possessing those qualities which would prevent such abuse (119). Whatever Geneva really is, Rousseau claims republican citizenship through his renunciation of Genevan rule but recognition of Genevan law (which is separate and separatable from the divine law its rulers insist be followed). For both Rousseau and Herodotus, subjection to the laws is separate from rule. Rousseau is no longer ruled by the Genevan magistrates or his fellow citizens, but he nonetheless cannot transgress Genevan law properly understood.

Rousseau is clear, as the dedicatory letter continues, that his imagined republic will rule and be ruled by its own laws. It is free from outside rulers and laws and has been for some time.

The time between the initial freedom of the state and this ideal period is not exact but determined by the disposition and habits of its citizens. He seeks a “happy and tranquil republic” where robust temperaments are accustomed to the taste of freedom and where its antiquity has been “lost in the darkness of time” (43). The comparison to Persia is particularly instructive on this point. Otanes is prepared to be a republican citizen without a state because of his former political office. A satrap enjoys freedoms that his subjects do not. He has experience ruling himself and a robust constitution accustomed to the taste of freedom. The Persian regime is largely characterized by its unfreedom. Its subjects lack the disposition and habits of republicans, not because of some innate deficiency but because of their political environment. Yet it is the free Hellenes, like the free Europeans, who would doubt the story in the first place.

The effect of the regime on the pursuit of self-knowledge is further revealed in Rousseau’s indications about the relationship between political and personal maturity. The golden age of a republic cannot be one that looks back to the greatness of the founding or founders precisely because that would make the nascent republic superior to the “middle-aged” republic. By definition, “governments immediately...emerging from the state of nature” are not in their golden age (45). Nascent states are thus not the answer to the problems posed by the transition from the state of nature to society and the subsequent innovations associated with that movement. Nascent man is not the answer, nor can man in his own golden age, man at his peak, really look back in this way to natural or pre-political man as the model for the regime within himself. Rousseau apparently prefers the stability and banality of uneventful freedom to the epoch-making, revolutionary moments even as he makes room for such moments, rightly limited in scope and memory, in the education of citizens.

Extraordinary characters may be admirable, but it is the unremarkable free citizen Rousseau is after here. Even the “Roman people—model for all free peoples—was not capable of governing itself upon being released from the oppression of the Tarquins” (43). The change in regimes must also become legendary, like the founding of Rome itself, for the people to begin to be capable of the self-rule that characterizes citizens. Otanes, on the other hand, was capable of governing himself as a kind of free citizen outside the Persian monarchy but under its laws, despite the lingering memory of the oppression of the former king and the freshness of the debate about founding a new regime. It is precisely because Otanes becomes a citizen and not a founder that he and his descendants, who share in the privilege granted by the liberators, avoid the problem that good laws require good citizens and good citizens, good laws. Otanes’ discourse has become Rousseau’s own.

Rousseau does not emphasize the loss of natural freedom but of freedom from unfreedom for the creation and maintenance of a free republic. Freedom from unfreedom involves liberation from the oppressor (the Tarquins, the false Smerdis) in the most literal sense. It also involves freedom from the memory of that unfreedom and even from the memory of a temporal inequality between contemporary citizens and the founders in some early republic. Fundamentally, this constitutes freedom from the unfreedom of lawlessness and requires the education and cultivation of souls within the republic. The initially “stupid mob” is slowly transformed through wise governance into “souls” who possess “that severity of morals and that pride of courage which eventually made of them the most respectable peoples” (43). As Rousseau finishes his tableau to and for Geneva, he follows the narrative movement from societal freedom to individual freedom by turning inward and reflecting on his own soul in this image: in this imagined picture and imagined life, no matter the circumstances of his life or the whereabouts of his person, he would always nurture "in my soul those same sentiments I was unable to put in use in my country" (45). Not Geneva itself but Rousseau's imagined republic thus would also benefit from his imagined exile through his civic education even beyond its (imagined) borders.

The shift of Rousseau's location and situation within the tableau extends and transforms the image. Imagining now that the version of himself born in the country of his choosing was faced with similar (though importantly different) circumstances as he now faces with his native Geneva, he delivers the discourse he would have dedicated to his fellows under those circumstances. Thus the image is again doubled or duplicated but not repeated. The perspective moves from Rousseau as a citizen of an imaginary fatherland addressing Geneva as an outsider to Rousseau as a citizen residing outside of his own imaginary fatherland addressing *that* fatherland as a citizen abroad (rather than as the exiled alien Rousseau may be with respect to Geneva itself). Though he is now an outsider of his imaginary fatherland, he retains the status of citizen. He is "still united by laws" with his "dear fellow citizens, or rather, [his] brothers" (45).

In *this* address, Rousseau performs the same meditative and reflective activity as his initial address to Geneva but makes clear what was oblique or ironic there. How, Rousseau asks coyly, could he not think of Geneva when considering natural equality and political inequality? The original mediation on Geneva concerns "the profound wisdom" with which natural equality and institutional inequality have been "happily combined in the state," in such a way as to "most approximate natural law," in maintaining public order and private happiness (41). But it is not examination of the Genevan regime and its supposedly happy combination that Rousseau will actually pursue; rather, in seeking "the best maxims that good sense might dictate concerning the constitution of a government," Rousseau "sees them all in operation" in the city (41-42). This does not constitute direct praise for the implementation or practice of these maxims, and it certainly leaves open the possibility that this discourse will set out to replace those opinions grounded in good or common sense with what is true about the constitution of government. In the new address to his imaginary fatherland, then, Rousseau praises the current “political and civil situation” of *that* state as the best “the nature of human things” could offer (46). What Geneva aspires to, the image has realized. In fact, the imaginary republic has improved the disposition of the natural and the political by corresponding not to some combination in “natural law” but to the kind of political situation which is compatible with human things.

Indeed, Rousseau continues to praise the “established” happiness of this fatherland through an explicit comparison to “all other governments,” including Geneva, who offer only “fanciful projects” or “at the very most mere possibilities” when it comes to “ensuring the greatest good of the state” (46). Geneva’s commitment to “a more holy and more sublime fatherland” prevents them from establishing, or attempting to establish, a perfectly happy “terrestrial fatherland” (49). Only the moral failings of the “zealous trustees of the sacred dogmas authorized by law” produce “any love” for their earthly state (49). The one example Geneva can provide is not of freedom or happiness but of “a perfect union among a society of theologians and men of letters” (49); this turns out to be the meaning of Rousseau’s observation that the city has achieved a regime in accord with “natural law.” The city has not combined for citizens the natural and the political but, for these kinds of men only, divine law as preaching and philosophy as literacy and literature. The “great art of preaching cultivated in Geneva” highlights the disparity between “things spoken in one manner and done in another” (49). Rousseau is emphatically not authorized by law but “ought” to be, and the “zeal” that he feels in the beginning is markedly different than the “zeal” felt by the trustees and ministers of Geneva. His zeal motivates his civic virtue whereas the “zeal” of his fellows is not for the state but for the dogmas authorized by the state—those entrusted with its "prosperity" look outside the laws and city for moral action. Rousseau once more repeats his hope for "the common happiness of the citizens," and not for the "private happiness of individuals" (50, 41).

Rousseau ends his dedication, and thus this tableau for Geneva, with an explicit discussion of spectacles. The true advantages of the imagined fatherland, portrayed above, "will not shine with that brilliance by which most eyes are dazzled and the puerile and fatal taste which is the most mortal enemy of happiness and freedom" (50). Men are a "spectacle" with "value;" those "who seek it out" also have unappreciated "worth" (50). By ending the dedication and thus the tableau of the fatherland with a call for the appreciation and search for the "spectacle" of "men" Rousseau prepares his readers for the remainder of the discourse and, in particular, the portrait of natural man and his relationship to a free republic.

Philosophical Physiognomy

Like the "Second Preface" of *Julie,* the preface to the *Second Discourse* invokes Persius's satire. The preface culminates in a quotation taken from the third satire that might otherwise sound pious or even sententious: "Learn what the god has ordained for you, and what is your place in human affairs" (56). The third satire is a dialogue between two unidentified interlocutors. The first man has overslept and wakes up with a hangover before begrudgingly turning to his work. The second man, who is the primary speaker in the dialogue and indeed takes over the conversation early in the satire, reprimands his interlocutor and delivers a sermon against those who resist philosophy. Rousseau's quotation is taken from that sermon. The speaker has just criticized his interlocutor's lack of purpose and calls him to consider the “rationale of existence” or, more literally, the “causes of things” (*causas rerum*). It is not philosophy or its difficulty, but the deficiency of the person, that prevents the acquisition of self-knowledge. This preaching from Persius is hardly like that delivered by men in black Genevan gowns, who nevertheless must often have preached against drunkards who resisted the Gospel. Rousseau’s own preaching against Genesis *and* the natural scientists may be better understood from this starting point, that is, from the apparent similarity between the moral and moralizing accounts of man. Not divine affairs but human ones are Rousseau’s concern here.

Persius uses bodily metaphors throughout the third satire to illustrate moral and philosophical points, and the core of the protreptic to the life of philosophy is an analogy between physical and moral sickness. The first interlocutor’s fatigue and hangover correspond to his moral state and philosophical unseriousness. The speaker uses disease and decrepitude to warn against complacent moral attitudes and neglect of philosophic inquiry. He ends his sermon with an example of the mortal illness and death a centurion had suffered by neglecting his doctor’s prescription. (A Genevan reader might be reminded, by contrast, of the faithful centurion who reasons that Jesus, being a man of authority like himself, need only say the word if he would have the soldier’s paralytic servant healed.) Just as the centurion did not turn to a “medical” way of life in accord with his doctor’s precepts but returned to those things which produced his illness, the man who is the object of this lesson is liable to suffer morally if he returns to his non-philosophic way of life. Reducing the analogy or metaphor to a flat equivalency, the first interlocutor naively calls the second to examine him; his pulse and temperature are normal. He is clearly not dying like the centurion and therefore needs no medicine. He misses the point of the sermon and assumes the conversation has been about physical health only. The man’s drunkenness, however, was not the problem in the first place but rather the moral degeneracy that may accompany it but must be understood distinctly. The man himself points to what is true about man as man in relation to the philosopher.

Rousseau follows Persius in his initial presentation of "knowledge of man," by situating the question in natural history. Here too the natural and physical depiction of man presents a compelling metaphor for his moral condition but not in such a way that the latter may be reduced to the former. Citing Buffon, Rousseau presents the problem of the "inscription on the Temple of Delphi" as a physical difficulty: "Provided by nature with organs intended solely for our self-preservation, we use them only to receive foreign impressions… [our interior sense] has remained without exercise in the midst of the tumult of our bodily sensations, it has been dried up by the fire of our passions; the heart, the mind, the senses—everything works against it" (120). We cannot know ourselves because of the way that our organs are designed. Or rather, this is an accurate picture of man's moral condition.

Rousseau, through Buffon, recognizes the pervasiveness of the problem of self-knowledge. It is not a special case or a contemporary issue but the state of human beings as such. We are not only corrupted when we are drunk or physically out of sorts, as the first interlocutor of Persius's satire is, but man is fundamentally in such a condition. The contribution of Persius' metaphorical presentation of man's corruption is its emphasis on the contrast between the drunk degenerate and the philosopher, where the ordinary status of human beings is like that of the drunk degenerate. Rousseau combines the insight of Persius' satire with Buffon's reflections on man's physical limitations to produce this moral (and not physical) account of man.

In the note, Buffon suggests that man's physical constitution prevents the acquisition of self-knowledge.[75] If the barrier to self-knowledge is simply a physical obstacle, it would seem that the most promising path to knowledge of man is through the scientific study of man, which primarily views and treats man as a physical being. By examining man "as nature formed him, through all the changes that the sequence of time and of things must have produced in his original constitution, and to disentangle what he retains of his own stock from what circumstances and his progress have added to or changed in his primitive state," Rousseau suggests that man can know himself. The logic of the excerpt indicates that the answer to the problem of self-knowledge lies in the study of natural philosophy and scientific experimentation, but this, like the story of the centurion, is the example cited in the sermon and not the substance of the teaching itself. The illustration of natural man must point to what man is morally.

While scientists like Buffon may provide more faithful observations than travelers like Kolben, philosophers alone know how to "discover and appreciate" these observations (120). This is not the collapse of philosophy and natural philosophy, as though the philosopher discovers and appreciates natural observations because these are properly part of his study or because he is better or wiser only by degree than the traveler and the biologist. Rousseau immediately turns to the *Republic* for clarification, and it is here that the reader sees more clearly the way that Rousseau employs the physical and scientific language of the discourse. The examination of man is "like the statue of Glaucus," the human soul "has, so to speak, changed in appearance to the point of being unrecognizable" (51).[76] Man, or man's soul, may indeed "resemble" God's, but he has become so "disfigured" that his only apparent likeness is a "ferocious beast" (51). Like Glaucus, who resembled a beast more as a god than as a man, man has come to see himself as an animal as he has cultivated his intellect and advanced his understanding. Scientific advancement has outpaced moral and political progress, resulting in a distorted view of man.

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[75] Planinic reads this note as confirmation of the affinity between Buffon and Rousseau and suggests that Rousseau "links his own quest to help man 'know himself' to Buffon's." Emma Planinc, "Homo Duplex: The Two Origins of Man in Rousseau's *Second Discourse*." *History of European Ideas.* 47 (2021): 9.

The paradox Rousseau outlines at the beginning of the preface is resolved through a reorientation away from knowledge of man to self-knowledge. In much the same way that Socrates compares the statue to the soul and Persius compares physical ailments to moral ones, Rousseau adopts the language of natural philosophy to explore man's moral constitution. The extended analogy mirrors the second interlocutor's sermon in the satire; the reader, like the first interlocutor, may lose sight of the image and confuse the representation for the object represented but that confusion only demonstrates or even reinforces the degeneracy of his current moral state. The observed image redirects the reader's gaze inward, from merely physical examination to a true physiognomy of the soul. Whether the audience sees a peaceable man in a natural paradise or an evolving animal in his natural habitat, Rousseau directs them through the image and corrects both errors by way of authorial intervention and instruction.

The preface borrows the language of materialism popular among natural historians to present an alternative philosophic perspective. The scientific and material investigation of man is not advancing self-knowledge but rendering it impossible: "It is, in a sense, by dint of studying man that we have rendered ourselves incapable of knowing him" (52). The relationship between the study of man and self-knowledge here identified depends entirely on what “sense” Rousseau means. The connection between the preface and Persius’s satire is doubly effective in explaining the sense. The hungover interlocutor thinks he is fine because his pulse is fine. He does not understand the kind of examination that is required to overcome his moral illness. Medicine, as a kind of study of man, tells him he is fine because he is physically fine but causes him to miss his moral diagnosis and subsequent prescription. Rousseau’s criticism of this scientific sense prepares his criticism of the moralists and theologians, in the same way that the literal drunkenness of the interlocutor foreshadows his moral drunkenness. Rousseau does not “hope” to resolve the question but clarify it and reduce it “to its genuine state” (52). The question does not involve natural philosophy but moral philosophy of a particular kind. Somewhere between the natural scientists and Christian moralists, Rousseau offers his “political and moral research” in search of the same “spectacle” he identified in the dedicatory letter— man (56).

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[76] Cf. Richard Velkley, *Being After Rousseau: Philosophy and Culture in Question.* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2002), 37-38.

The civic audience of the dedication and the philosophic audience of the preface read the same portrait of natural man that follows. Rousseau speaks as a citizen to his “fellow citizens” in the letter and as a citizen author to his fellow authors in the preface, neither of whom are animated by the civic and moral spirit that motivates Rousseau’s research. Rousseau’s praise of philosophy is motivated by his care for citizen-souls and for politics more generally, and it is on this point that Rousseau finds himself separated from the other philosophers and men of letters of his time. He uses philosophy “to disentangle what is original from what is artificial” in the human soul, to uncover “the real foundations of human society,” and to establish a just state with just citizens (52-3). His concern for the political state and the citizen precedes and motivates his investigation into the state of nature and natural man, “which no longer exist, which perhaps never did exist, which probably never will exist, and about which it is nevertheless necessary to have correct notions in order to judge our present, [political] state properly" (52). The state of nature and natural man are of interest to us only insofar as they provide "the true definition of natural right" and proper understanding of "law" (53). Rousseau's interest in knowledge of man is as a political philosopher and only as a political philosopher. This explains or qualifies both the apparent appeal to natural science and the apparent appeal to political activism. Both frameworks provide observable phenomena but neither sufficiently conceives of its moral and political significance.

Rousseau's investigation thus begins by "setting aside" all "scientific books" and by meditating on "the human soul" (54). Rousseau does not use natural history to understand what man is. To the extent he employs examples drawn from "scientific books," he does so to study the human soul in a language and perspective that is comprehensible to his audience. His primary investigation in the discourse is a philosophic one. Without rendering it "impossible to understand the law of nature and consequently [impossible] to obey it without being a very great reasoner and a profound metaphysician," Rousseau avoids the problem common to philosophic investigations by setting aside natural law and surveying natural right. Law obligates the will and requires it "to submit to it knowingly." Law depends on natural man's intellectual faculties and assumes at least as much aptitude in its object as its observer. Right is established in reason but does not require its subject to be reasonable. Rousseau's study of natural right does not presuppose natural man's understanding.

Without deciding whether Buffon or Moses presents a more compelling account of man's origins, Rousseau finds a shared foundational principle for right and subsequently law in the common denominator of man's lower or bodily nature. What Rousseau asserts in the preface about natural right he will defend in the main text, but his dismissal of natural law is intentional.

Rousseau’s rejects part of the academy’s question—whether inequality is authorized by natural law—and therefore discusses it contemptuously. He is not unaware of the controversies surrounding natural law; his awareness of both the substance and nature of these arguments is what leads to his flippant treatment of the subject and which necessitates delaying analysis of the relationship between natural law and natural man to the examination of the discourse proper.

Whatever natural man is, he is subject to natural right because he is a sensitive being. The idea and rules of natural right apply to beings “devoid of enlightenment and freedom,” unable to recognize “this law,” but who nonetheless “share something of our nature through the sensibility of which they are endowed” (55). Whether natural man is able to recognize natural law or not, it is clear that beasts cannot. Since beasts, however, “share something of our nature through the sensibility with which they are endowed,” it must be concluded that they participate in natural right. By basing politics and morality in man’s sensitivity, Rousseau relies only on what is common between “beast and man” and not what is common between man and God. Man as the image of God is the foundational assumption of the natural law tradition. Rousseau rejects and replaces this disputed conception of man with a widely accepted one. Despite the myriad of debates on man, almost no one denies that man is an animal. Rousseau offers a foundation that does not depend on a divine or specific understanding of original man. By emphasizing the part of our nature shared with beasts, Rousseau provides a largely undisputed basis for right and subsequently law.

Rousseau’s emphasis on what man shares with beast, however, does not prove that man is only a beast. The preface concludes with the excerpt from Persius, an imperative command to "learn what the god has ordained for you, and what is your place in human affairs" (56).[77] The investigation of what man is as man, separate from both beast and God, has only just begun. Rousseau cannot decide man's likeness until he has prepared his audience to view man "left to ourselves," without divine intervention but with man's moral and intellectual developments. Persius's first interlocutor does not reprimand the second because of the physical effects of drunkenness on the body but the moral consequences of his actions and indeed the morality of his way of life even apart from his habitual drunkenness. The second interlocutor does not philosophize because he is preoccupied with the body. The first man discusses the soul through the body for the sake of the second man, in much the same way that Rousseau will observe the figure of natural man to study the soul of man, for the sake of his audience.

Notes on the Notice

In his "Notice on the Notes," Rousseau describes the relationship between the notes and the discourse from his authorial perspective, as well as the consequence of different audience approaches to the notes and the discourse.[78] Three notes, however, precede this notice: the note on the frontispiece, the note in the Dedicatory Letter, and the note in the preface. These three notes are the only notes in the prefatory sections—and thus the only notes which escape the jurisdiction of the notice. Taken together, the three notes provide instruction on how to understand the notice on the notes and interpret the remaining notes in the discourse. With the exordium, which is properly part of the discourse rather than the front matter, the "Notice on the Notes" serves as a more straightforward introduction to the work of the discourse. The three extraordinary notes, however, show an affinity for ancient history over new observation and yet for political man over his divine or animal antecedents.

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[77] Strong reads Rousseau's turn to Persius as a rejection of self-knowledge, arguing that it "will still not prove enough." He reasons that Rousseau assumes the "passive position" in the Discourse as author as a consequence. Tracy B. Strong, *Jean-Jacques Rousseau: The Politics of the Ordinary* (Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Incorporated, 2002), 52-53.

[78] Cf. Roger Masters, *Political Philosophy of Rousseau* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1968), 108-109. Masters argues that "Rousseau's seemingly playful 'Avertissement sur les notes' to the *Second Discourse* takes on a very precise meaning" in light of Rousseau's "emphatic assertion that his philosophic works cannot be understood without being read at least twice:" that is, the notes are "implicitly directed only to Rousseau's philosophic readers."

Both the first and third notes contain excerpts. Rousseau is directly quoting a contemporary, without appropriating or adopting the sentiment expressed. He leaves the commentaries in the words and voice of their original author. This practice highlights the distance between Rousseau and his contemporaries. He simply reports their observations, offering the observations themselves to his readers for review. Conversely, Rousseau collapses all distance between himself and Herodotus, reporting Herodotus's writing in his own voice. Without any mediating quotation, Rousseau and Herodotus speak together. Rousseau is textually closer to the ancient author than to modern ones, in much the same way that Rousseau allies himself with ancient republics in the letter and ancient philosophers in the preface.

The two modern quotations speak of Christianity and man's physical nature, respectively. The two notes correspond to the God and beast dichotomy established in the previous section and discussed in the preface. The Dutch missionaries conceive of men as image bearers of God. The natural scientists study man as an animal. The central note, where Rousseau is identified in his capacity as author with Herodotus and as subject with Otanes, concerns man—the sought-after spectacle identified at the end of the Dedicatory Letter. The man under review is neither a reflection of the divine nor a beast among beasts but a free political and moral being.[79]

The notes concern the same subject, man, but from three distinct perspectives. Rousseau examines observation through the notes, as he portrays how one ought to observe in the main text. The remainder of "these notes sometimes stray far enough from the subject," because they are not primarily concerned with the correct observation of man but correcting observations of men (57). The discourse itself provides "the straightest path," to the promised spectacle, and thus there is "little harm" in not reading the notes at all. The notes, nonetheless, may "amuse" those who want a fuller picture, who are willing to "start over again," and read a second time "beating the bushes." They do not undermine or complete the portrait of natural man provided in the discourse but demonstrate how to view competing observational accounts. It is not necessarily the case that the notes are "real" and the main text "fiction" (or vice versa), or that the one or the other is satire or irony and the other sincere. Nor is the reader only to be concerned with the converging conclusion of each "path." Nor can each journey be assigned (only) to a particular and overly determined audience. The notes complement the main text, aiding and instructing, giving sight to the blind and showing them how those with sight see.

Discourse within the *Discourse*

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[79] Emma Planinc argues that Rousseau sees "the human being as a compound of the animal and the spiritual in the theological-natural science of [Buffon's] Histoire Naturelle." Emma Planinc, "Homo Duplex: The Two Origins of Man in Rousseau's *Second Discourse*." *History of European Ideas*. 47 (2021):71-90.

The exordium marks the beginning of the discourse proper and functions as a kind of preface within the text, while also being a conclusion to all the front matter. It stands apart from the two main parts of the work and contains no notes. It directly follows Rousseau's reproduction of the question posed by the Academy of Dijon: "What is the source of inequality among men, and whether it is authorized by natural law." While noting that Rousseau changes source to origin in his reproduction of the question, the amended question is still not the true subject of the discourse. What is missed by focusing on the slight but perhaps significant change from source to origin is the more fundamental transformation of the terms of the investigation. The Academy asks about men and, in particular, the relationships among and between men. Rousseau speaks "of man" (61). The subject shift from men to man indicates a methodological shift from the observational study of relationships to the conceptual investigation of man as man. Like the preface, the discourse clarifies how it will study man. Rousseau will set "aside all the facts" to survey the "moral or political" aspect of man; he will not examine his "physical" nature (61-2).

"The question" under examination does not identify the subject of the discourse for Rousseau, but it does "tell" him that he is "going to speak to men." It establishes his audience as "those who are not afraid to honor the truth." Rousseau's new audience, men, is itself "a spectacle" with some "value" (50). Rousseau's real or immediate audience, the judges of the Academy, is replaced by an imaginary audience of men, much like the actual citizens of Geneva are replaced by an imaginary citizenry at the end of the Dedicatory Letter. The audience as spectacle prepares Rousseau's actual audience to read and compare the way in which they approach and understand man with the way they ought to approach and understand man. Rousseau is not concerned here with flattery or insult but with the way in which the investigation of man is only defensible as the pursuit of self-knowledge. Recalling those bad ends among the

Genevans of vanity and personal comfort, Rousseau begins to get at the study (of the study of) man without merely tedious navel-gazing, by elevating his audience.

After identifying his subject and audience, Rousseau clearly states his purpose: "To defend the cause of humanity." Whether his defense is ultimately legal or political, it resembles a theodicy, where the cause of God is defended to men. In this defense, however, humanity supplants God. In his conversion of a theodicy, where the cause of humanity is defended to "wise men," only man is under review. The discourse provides a full portrait of man, where men occupy every position—the author of the defense and the painter of the portrait, the audience of the spectacle and the examiner of the image, and the object of study and the subject of the painting. This is the fuller picture of Rousseau's displacement of the imago Dei with self-reflective man. Man is his own image and likeness, and so the justification of the ways of man, to man, will be comprehensive and self-contained.

Rousseau draws attention to himself as the defender of humanity and author of the argument by providing a metric for self-reflective judgment: "I will not be dissatisfied with myself if I prove myself worthy of my subject and my judges." Rousseau not only presents himself as a man defending what man is, but as a man before men. He is a republican citizen, delivering an apologetic for a moral and philosophical vision of mankind. The beginning of the exordium unites two apparently disparate aspects of the prefatory material: the republican citizen of the Dedicatory Letter and the philosopher of the preface. The following image of natural man is presented through Rousseau, as citizen, philosopher, and author. What he conceives is informed by these observational roles. The image is not physically observable but intellectually perceptible. The two types of inequality that he conceives of are natural inequality and moral or political inequality. The two kinds of inequality are apparently analogous to the two ways of seeing, but the existence or idea of both types belongs to the second kind of sight—the kind of sight appropriate for moral or political meaning. It is not that physical traits are unobservable but that the categorization and conceptualization of the physical is itself non-physical. Medicine—to take only the premiere example—belongs to natural science, but the meaning of health belongs to political philosophy.

In his presentation of the two kinds of inequality, Rousseau collapses the distinction between the moral and the political. Inequality that is "moral or political" is different than inequality that is "moral and political." In the preface, Rousseau discusses "the political and moral research occasioned by the important question," where the moral and political are separable but connected. In this articulation, the moral is the political— the terms are synonymous. This kind of inequality may be called moral or political "because it depends upon a sort of convention and is established, or at least authorized, by the consent of men" (61). Moral inequality does not come from God or nature but from men. Rousseau's theodicy does not defend the cause of humanity in terms of natural but moral inequality, where the inequality established or authorized by men is justified to men. Rousseau is careful to distinguish this justification from its slavish counterpart. Rousseau is not asking "whether those who command are necessarily better than those who obey." He does not seek to justify the current inequalities among men, as does the Academy of Dijon, but whether the idea of man, his freedom and his right, is compatible with any community of men. The research is moral and political because it concerns man and men respectively, but the inequality is moral or political because it involves the unification of the conceptual and relational. Just political foundations require a moral conception of man.

Though Rousseau employs historical or temporal language, “the moment when, right replacing violence, nature was subjected to law,” is not itself a historical or temporal moment but a theoretical transition from the general study of man as a particular to the particular study of men as we generally see them. Rousseau is clear that his approach is responsive. On the one hand, “philosophers who have examined the foundations of society have all felt the necessity of going back to the state of nature;” on the other, “the Sacred Books” begin with “the first man” (and have something to say about the “second Adam” and his relation to men, which Rousseau does not raise here) (62). The philosophers approach man generally, applying what is true of the species to any given man. Christianity begins with a particular man and applies his nature to men generally. Against both of these approaches, Rousseau presents the conception of man where man is both a particular and a general. If successful, this would resolve the problem facing the preachers of Geneva, who only emphasize through their hypocrisy the gap between what is said and what is done, who set before their hearers things that do not really belong to man’s estate.

Rousseau uses the language of depiction to clarify his correction of the error of the philosophers (and the Christians): “They spoke of savage man and they were depicting civil man” (62). The philosophers do not merely mistake the characteristics of types of men but mistake men for man. Savage man and civil man are not concepts but conceptualizations, particular images of man. What man is may be found or findable in either depiction, but not if we begin with a categorical confusion. Rousseau calls us to “begin by setting aside all the facts,” not as a precaution against censorship or derision (of the philosophers and of the Christians, perhaps), but because they genuinely “have no bearing on the question” (62). Facts about savage or civil man, their similarities and differences, can tell us no more about man than any given man or group of men. “The research that may be undertaken regarding this subject must not be taken for historical truth," not because it is offensive to church authorities or to delicate sensibilities but because it is "hypothetical and conditional reasoning," an abstract study of an abstract concept. Rousseau does not seek the "genuine origin," understood as what is first, but the genuine "nature" of the things in question. "Similar to the reasoning our physicists employ all the time with regard to the formation of the world," whatever the historical reality, it is, in some sense, the theory which more truly or fundamentally approximates or approaches nature. The supernatural, or rather the metaphysical, is superior to the natural precisely because it really gets at the nature of things in a way that mere observation of nature cannot.

What "religion orders us to believe," much like what philosophers purport to provide, tell us only about the inequality among men but not, Rousseau argues, "what the human race might have become" left to its own devices given only "the nature of man and of the beings surrounding him" (63). Given only what man is, in contrast to the divine and the beastly, what should men do? "This is what is asked," Rousseau claims, "and what I propose to examine in this discourse" (63). Rousseau is concerned about men and the inequality among men, but only as a secondary matter. Without knowledge of man, what he is in himself, no one can provide a moral foundation for politics. His "subject is man in general," undifferentiated by "language" or nation, outside of "times and places." The discourse is a particular defense of men to men by a man. Rousseau uses his imagination to conceptualize the concept of man, dramatizing his converted (or apostate) theodicy, imagining himself "in the Lyceum of Athens, rehearsing the lessons of my masters, with the likes of Plato and of Xenocrates as my judges, and the human race as my audience."[80] He replaces the categorical roles of the portrait, the idea or method of portraiture he has laid out, with a specific portrait that contains a specific image of an author, of an audience, and of a subject.

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[80] Storey notes the importance of Rousseau's signification of his audience without explanation: "Rousseau's desire to present his thoughts to this audience is somewhat mysterious; it is unlikely

The discourse thus begins with a direct address to "man," without place or opinion but who nonetheless possesses a history. As we observe the portrait of man that Rousseau provides, we must keep the entire framework of portraiture in mind. Rousseau is addressing "the human race" from the "Lyceum," offering an image, that is, a particular conceptualization, of "man in general" not to judge, which is only appropriate for "the likes of Plato and Xenocrates," but for our benefit. The history of man is "such as I have found it read, not in the books of your fellow men, who are liars, but in nature, which never lies." It is not natural history, as ordinarily understood, but the history of nature—the imagined history of the imaginary natural man. This history is natural but mediated through Rousseau and Rousseau's capacity as a reader and relator: "Everything that comes from nature will be true; there will be nothing false in it except what I may have unintentionally mixed in it of my own." Such a method necessarily rejects psychological or morbid introspection as the source of self-knowledge.[81]

Rousseau uses spatial language, more appropriate to portraiture as an artistic medium, to describe time: "The times of which I am going to speak are very far off." Time conceptualized as distance can be portrayed in an image, without conceding that time is the "real" or "true" measure of man. The man in the portrait embodies "the life of [his] species," without

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that he expected any response from them, as they are so few. Nonetheless, he consistently identifies such readers as those he cares about." Benjamin Storey, "Self-Knowledge and Sociability in the Thought of Rousseau." Perspectives on Political Science, 41 (2012): 152.

[81] For Neuhouser, the question of the Second Discourse is essentially psychological: "What element of human psychology must be added to his picture of human nature in order to understand why humans create inequalities beyond those that nature bestows on them?" Frederick Neuhouser, "The Critical Function of Genealogy in the Thought of J.-J. Rousseau." *The Review of Politics* 74 (2012): 371–87.

determining or being determined by his species. Man is an individuated general idea, but this man is a particular manifestation of that individuated general idea. Rousseau suggests this in his speech by distinguishing between the “age at which the individual man would want to halt” and the “age at which [you, the image of man] would wish your species had halted.” Natural man is not man in nature but the Nature of Man, imagined by a man among men as a “criticism” of contemporaries and a correction to the course of human affairs.

Chapter 3: A Discursive Portrait of Man

Abstract: The first part of *The Discourse on the Origin and the Foundations of Inequality Among Men* contains Rousseau's portrait of Man. In the previous chapter, I presented Rousseau's prefatory materials as a series of apparently distinct but methodologically consistent pieces to prepare his readers to view this portrait. The larger framework teaches us how to see and observe before we attempt to know Man. Man, as Rousseau portrays him in the *Discourse,* is doubly depicted—seen physically and metaphysically, solitary and social, savage and civil—without questioning or even approaching the question of whether men are (or were or could be) unified. The citizen-author's metaphysical and moral portrait of Man as a metaphysical and moral being does not locate the problem in Man but among men, dispelling both materialists' observations that enfeeble by classifying man as this or that by nature and Christian revelation which emasculates by wedding him to his Bridegroom. It is first and foremost a political project: the pursuit of self-knowledge reveals the need for a more-than-material but non-transcendental vision of Man that defends Man by accusing men. Man *is* free and perfectible, but by that very means he has made himself unfree. His free act toward unfreedom, however, cannot alter man's nature or being, and so while men are guilty, they are not damned. Rousseau justifies the ways of Man (and not God) to men, and this justification offers salvation: men may be saved by becoming what they are, free and perfectible Man. The radical denaturing of Man is excluded either as a description of his condition (as in a certain Calvinistic soteriology) or as a solution to that condition (as in a certain materialist anthropology or a certain critical theory); at the same time, men are restored not to an *imago dei* but to their own self-image, Man.

The men of letters not comprehended in the figure of Rousseau's reimagined Lyceum are probably as apt to misread or to persist in their misreading of the *Discourse* as they were before all Rousseau's preparations. They are, after all, *men,* and men are those precisely who are about to be shown in the corruption of their nature and in their ignorance of Man as such. If the prefatory materials to the *Discourse* accomplished the restoration of his image or enabled men to pursue self-knowledge adequately, then the discourse proper would be superfluous. The paradox of salvation thus presents itself ironically in Rousseau's system. Is faith of grace or a work of the free will? If men may be saved by their free choice, then why do they need to be restored?

Rousseau, in effect, takes up the old Genevan doctrine: neither the initial or initiating repentance (the reorientation or change of mind) nor the completion of the transformation of soul comes from within corrupt men. And yet this restoration belongs not to any transcendental source or to the satisfaction of divine justice but to the figure of the image of Man. This figure, as in the old christology, is presented as irreducibly doubled and not as unitary. And yet rather than being god and man, this figure of man is all and only Man, seen physically and metaphysically, as solitary and social, or as savage and civil. Men, even men of letters, must come to see the figure of Man in this way—not by seeing men out in history or in their interior selves, not by tracing their own genealogy in body or soul—but by coming to view his metaphysical and moral portrait in all its appearances.

Whatever work has been done thus far, it is not a *fait accompli*. Rousseau begins in the first part, or in the final preface, by recasting the study of man's physical nature, with a sort of literary flourish, as already moral and therefore in need of self-conscious reflection exactly where the natural scientist or psychologist is likely to be ignorant of this fact. In his note on the natural manner of walking, however, Rousseau seems to concede a role to scientific observation that would depart from his general method; in fact, though an unnecessary and even unhelpful diversion in one sense, this treatment reinforces a more strenuous criticism of other modes of observation. Rousseau turns to his depiction of "physical man" *as* a metaphysical and moral subject, thus modifying both the theological problem of God's goodness in the light of cosmic and human evils and the naturalistic version of this same problem that contrasts some original good state from man's present condition in nature. The moral contrast between savage and civil man further underlines this procedure, especially as a critique of the men of letters in philosophy or politics and science. Men's natural limitations—infancy, old age, and illness—are also transformed into pictures of their moral problems as men. When Rousseau does turn explicitly to Man's moral and metaphysical side, this constitutes both a new beginning and a continuation of the same principles already well established.

An Observation of Observation

Because (or signifying that) the prefatory materials are neither repetitive nor radically disconnected from the discourse itself, Rousseau begins the first part of his discourse with a final statement on his method and purpose, which he contrasts with apparently similar but fundamentally different possibilities for approaching the inquiry at hand. "Important as it may be, in order to judge the natural state of Man correctly, to consider him from his origin and examine him, so to speak, in the first Embryo of the species," Rousseau rejects all ordinary modes of observation for physical subjects. He "shall not follow" man's "organic structure through its successive developments," nor "stop to investigate in the animal system what [man] could have been at the beginning in order to become at length what he is" (*CW* 3:20). At first this approach seems to exclude altogether the observations of natural science, while preserving the legitimacy of such study for those who would undertake it. The reader, it seems, may take Rousseau at his word and thus not as a natural scientist of any kind, or one may doubt the distinction and regard him as achieving this end and this kind of truth through this kind of inquiry, even if he avoids certain elements. In fact, his very avoidance of these things, whether to appease ecclesiastical or philosophical critics, seems to promote a (straightforwardly) ironic reading: he would do these things if he could; he really does them in the end, only hiddenly.

The problem with these two readings, but especially with the latter, is that Rousseau provides a clear and convincing correction to such approaches, rooted in his more comprehensive correction of the observational perspective of the men of letters. Although he seems to imply that such an organic or animalistic study of man may be important in its own right, Rousseau does not actually indicate whether he considers this study "important," as has sometimes been supposed.[82] However important it may be—which may be much, little, or not at all—it is neither the subject nor purpose of his discourse. His "so to speak" transforms the otherwise scientific terms into a literary image—it provides his reader, who may be inclined to the evolutionary or anthropological project he foregoes, with a familiar idea that Rousseau can then recast.

Rousseau causes the reader to reexamine and reincorporate rather than merely reject this alternative method or hermeneutic. The scientist who studies man literally in embryo only studies man qualifiedly and metaphorically, that is, in a way that is inappropriate to the method of natural science. There is, literally, no embryo of the species that corresponds to the embryo of the individual, and a grave mistake is made when the scientist mistakes metaphor for reality. Rousseau emphasizes that such a person would only be studying man from his embryo "so to speak." The scientific terminology, properly understood, is remade as literary image. Another kind of analysis, which comprehends and rightly observes the scientific approach, is therefore required.

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[82] For scientific readings of the Discourse, see Larry Arnhart, *Political questions: political philosophy from Plato to Rawls* (London: Macmillan, 1987), 264-73; Asher Horowitz, "'Law and Customs Thrust Us Bank into Infancy': Rousseau's Historical Anthropology." *The Review of Politics* 52 (1990): 215-241; Arthur Lovejoy, "The Supposed Primitivism of Rousseau's 'Discourse on Inequality'." *Modern Philology* 21 (1923): 165-186; Roger Masters, *The Structure of Rousseau's Political Thought, in Hobbes and Rousseau*, ed. Maurice Cranston and Richard S. Peters. (Garden City, NY: Doubleday: 1972), 403-404; Roger Masters, "Jean-Jacques is Alive and Well: Rousseau and Contemporary Sociobiology." *Daedalus* 107 (1978): 93-105; Francis Moran, "Between Primates and Primitives: Natural Man as the Missing Link in Rousseau's Second Discourse," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 54 (1993): 37-58; Francis Moron, "Of Pongos and Men: Orangs-Outang in Rousseau's Discourse on Inequality." *The Review of Politics* 57 (1995): 641–64; Robert Wokler, "Perfectible Apes in Decadent Cultures: Rousseau's Anthropology Revisited," *Daedalus* 103 (1978): 107-134; and Robert Wokler, "The Ape Debates in Enlightenment Anthropology," *Studies on Voltaire and the Eighteenth Century* 192 (1980): 1164-75.

The natural scientist's focus on external environment, and, as it turns out, the psychologist's focus on internal environment, falters on the same point, in a failure to recognize the moral and metaphysical assumptions (not to add the moral and metaphysical conclusions) that are necessarily attached to and are actually unexamined in their uncorrected mode of inquiry.[83] The broad correction, which is to be observant of observation, is supplemented by and indeed deeply connected to a substantive one. Rousseau's initial presentation of his study thus emphasizes the physical space surrounding the subject and not the subject himself. What is being judged is "the natural state of Man" and not in the first place natural Man or Man. Man's natural status or condition must have reference also to his position or place, to his state understood politically in this sense. This is not a literary or philological fancy. Spatial observation is uniquely suitable for portraiture because this method recognizes the need to acknowledge and understand metaphor in the investigation of man without transforming this method into a merely linguistic exercise.[84]

The natural history of man becomes the image of the natural state of man. The temporal component of the examination is qualified or eliminated. There is a subtle difference between what Rousseau will and will not be doing in the discourse. It is not that Rousseau will not consider man from his embryo *at all.* Rousseau *will* consider him, "so to speak," from the conception of his species but will not "stop to investigate," him as he "could have been at the beginning." He "shall not follow" his "successive developments," to "become at length what he is" (*CW* 3:20). Man may be in time, but, in so much as it is possible, Rousseau sets aside the temporality of his subject and inquiry, supposing him "to have been formed from all time as I see him today."

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[83] Cf. de Man: "The theoretical interest of a text like the *Second Discourse* is primarily psychological." Paul de Man, "Theory of Metaphor in Rousseau's 'Second Discourse.'" *Studies in Romanticism* 12 (1973): 478.

[84] Cf. Paul de Man, *Allegories of Reading: Figural Language in Rousseau, Nietzsche, Rilke, and Proust* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1979).

Man is thus uncreated or indeed like the deity "eternally begotten...before all worlds"—not a neutral idea but a rejection both of Christian creed *and* of the naturalistic assumptions of science. Ordinary observation and extraordinary revelation tend to focus on what has happened in time. By privileging spatial and deemphasizing temporal observation, Rousseau further differentiates how he sees and perceives from his contemporaries. Rousseau is studying the concept, Man, which does not exist in time. What man *is* is not timebound. Thus, the psychological interpretation of man's being would only be a deepening of the mistake of natural science if it tries to draw moral and philosophical meaning from merely physical and historical phenomena. The internal history of men, as much as the external history of men, is liable to mislead the observer who does not see *what* and *that* he is observing.[85]

Rousseau clarifies his own perspective as he introduces natural man and his observational capacity. "I shall not examine whether, as Aristotle thinks, man's elongated nails were not at first hooked claws; whether he was not hairy like a bear; and whether, if he walked on all fours (*3.) his gaze, directed toward the Earth and confined to a horizon of several paces, did not indicate both the character and the limits of his ideas." Readers of the discourse might expect Rousseau to agree with Aristotle because of the epigraph of the work. Those familiar with scholarship on the *Discourse* might expect him to disagree with Aristotle for the same reason.[86] Whether Rousseau accurately characterizes Aristotle's thought here, he nonetheless follows Aristotle's characterization of the relationship between biology and political philosophy. Whatever is true about the historical changes in the make-up of man, we can still confidently discuss the nature of man. What man is by nature is not a physiological but a philosophical question, which does not depend on the length of nails or pattern of hair growth.

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[85] Cf. Neuhouser: "The key to explaining the origin of moral inequality is to discover how the human mind must differ from what it is like in the original state of nature if moral inequality is to acquire a significant place in human affairs. As I have already noted, the actual historical events that have shaped human development are of little concern to Rousseau. The question that interests him instead is, What element of human psychology must be added to his picture of human nature in order to understand why humans create inequalities beyond those that nature bestows on them?" Frederick Neuhouser, "The Critical Function of Genealogy in the Thought of J.-J. Rousseau." *The Review of Politics* 74 (2012): 377.

Rousseau carefully distinguishes between his presentation of the moral and metaphysical through physical metaphor from some equating or searching for the moral and metaphysical in man's being. The relationship between physical sight and moral vision, though remarkably like and easily mistaken for his subject, is not his subject. Rousseau is no more interested in examining whether there is some relationship between these two faculties than in inquiring whether there is "some essential link between the two inequalities [natural or physical and moral or political]" in the exordium (*CW* 3:18). Like his derisive dismissal of the comparison there, Rousseau clearly denies the productivity of such questions "for reasonable and free Men who seek the truth" (CW 3.18). He does not seek a moral justification for our organic structure or search for self-knowledge through biological study.

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[86] Cf. Roger Masters, *Political Philosophy of Rousseau* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1968), 112-113.

Rousseau is not a physiognomist; he is not a slave to what he sees. The "Romantic" approach to physical features, which portrays a character in a particular way to convey something about his or her character, or the "Roman" approach of Persius, which satirizes Roman morality through bodily mockery, are both closer to Rousseau's own approach than the materialist who derives his moral outlook from the structure and operation of man's eyes. The moral and metaphysical precede and inform the physical, as though Rousseau, like the deity or the poet, the author and the author of existence, were forming Man according to what he *is*.

A Note on Observation

Rousseau does, in this sense and not contrary to it, examine what "way" of walking "must have been most natural for us" in the first note on the discourse proper, the fourth note overall, and the third note in name (*CW* 3:68). Readers may be surprised that Rousseau takes up this examination which he seemed to foreclose and leave to other kinds of observers, especially travelers, historians, and scientists. The question of whether man was once a quadruped does not seem altogether different than questions about our organic structure and its successive developments or what we must have been given what we are now.

The apparent disjunction between the kind of investigation set aside in the text and the kind pursued in the notes must be understood in light of the "Notice on the Notes." The note on our way of walking asks an apparently scientific question not because Rousseau is secretly or really concerned with this investigation but afraid of censorship and persecution (this is, after all, Rousseau's first major work he publishes using his full name) but because some of his readers are really concerned with this question and this type of investigation. The note does "stray so far from the subject" that it is "not good to read with the text," because it is not principally or primarily concerned with the subject but with correcting observations of the subject (*CW* 3:16). Though it is not necessary, and, perhaps, not good, to turn to the note, it is nonetheless helpful for those unaccustomed to (or not yet entirely accustomed to or persuaded by) Rousseau's way of seeing. There "will be little harm" if those, who know how to see, skip the note altogether. It will perhaps be little harm also to those who, not knowing how to see, are not inclined to understand Rousseau at all and so will be no worse off for having skipped the note than they already are for having, in effect, skipped the text itself.

In the note, Rousseau presents the threefold argument for claiming that man once walked on all fours: "The changes that a long habit of walking on two feet could have produced in the conformation of man, the relationships still noted between his arms and the Forelegs of Quadrupeds, and the induction drawn from their way of walking, have given rise to doubts about the way that must have been most natural for us" (*CW* 3:68).[87] He is nevertheless critical of each part of the argument. The first mistakes possibility for probability, while the second and third privilege the one observation in favor while ignoring the "great number" against them (*CW* 3.69). Rousseau initially rejects the arguments on their own terms—as bad natural science—but not only on their own terms. Like the note on the frontispiece, he borrows examples purported to supply evidence for scientific hypotheses and portrays them in a new light.

Rousseau seems to begin like a good natural scientist, by weighing observational evidence. He reviews six examples in support of man as quadruped, four of children and two of men.[88] Only two of the six examples are drawn from "savage nations." The rest, including the two examples of men, are drawn from Europe. Not only does Rousseau suggest that there is no inherent difference between "savages" and Europeans, but he also reverses his readers expectations by relying primarily on European examples to support this hypothesis. Europeans are textually, if not actually, closer to "savages" then so-called "savages." Supporting the interpretation of the first note on the frontispiece discussed above, which argued that the discursive, self-conscious, and thoughtful so-called "savages" are much closer to European self-conception than Europeans themselves are, Rousseau's method here goes further and replaces the temporal vision of scientists and historians with images of men now. Rousseau is not examining the fossil record or attempting to reconstruct the 'embryo' from the 'adult'; instead, he is looking at men as they appear (imaginatively if not literally) to us. Men as they are (now) indicate, without being identical to, Man as he *is*.

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[87] Masters reads the note as Rousseau's commitment to scientific rigor and fact-based anthropological and experiential arguments. Roger Masters, *Political Philosophy of Rousseau* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1968), 115.

Instead of speculating on how man could have been or what is like or unlike man, Rousseau looks to contemporary examples of men walking on all fours to examine what "must have been most natural for us." He replaces the temporal focus at both the individual and species level. He is especially critical of the use of the examples of children to say something about men. Though men are children before they are men, "the example of children, as it is taken from an age when natural forces are not as yet developed nor the limbs strengthened, proves nothing whatever" (*CW* 3:69-70). For Rousseau, neither early man nor man at an early age is more natural than developed man. This is quite contrary to certain expectations about what Rousseau is doing in the whole discourse. Once more the "natural" standard is man now—or Man as he is.

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[88] For an extended treatment on the examples drawn from wild children, see Nancy Yousef, "Savage or Solitary?: The Wild Child and Rousseau's Man of Nature." *Journal of the History of Ideas* 62 (2001): 245–63.

Rousseau's final criticism of his contemporaries' use of examples reinforces and broadens his commitment to man now as his standard for judgment and starting point for his investigation, and this criticism is especially important to understand, given some interpretations of Rousseau's own project. Rousseau is not seeking the democratization of evidence, a kind of scientific populism which derives its claim to truth in the proliferation of individual cases which are held to establish the facts for the whole species or the whole state: "Particular facts also have little force against the universal practice of all men, even Nations that, having no communication with others, could not have imitated anything from them" (*CW* 3:70). "Universal practice" as a standard for moral and metaphysical truth does not mean only the sum of a great many cases, taken together and yet still separately. The universal is not the aggregate. The practice is universal not because of imitation but because it belongs to who or what Man *is.* Just as the general will is not the sum of particular wills, universal practice in this sense is not the sum of particular facts regarding men here and there, then and now.

The isolated examples, of either individuals or nations, are unhelpful in determining what natural man is. Natural man as an isolated man in the remote past would itself be subject to Rousseau's criticism here. So conceived, natural man cannot serve as a proposal for radically transforming nations and individuals. What Rousseau presents in the main text cannot resemble or be understood like these examples. Natural man, not as a real or imagined individual alone in nature, but as a singular portrait of Man essentializes man's Being such that men anywhere can recognize himself in the image. Metaphysics is Rousseau's concern here, not mere hypothesis or imagination on the one hand or some collection of scientific facts or observations on the other. The discourse is a picture of Man as such, not an experiment in archeo-biology or in thought.

Rousseau is ultimately critical of the quadruped argument, arguing that there are "far better reasons to state in affirming man is a biped," but his preference for the latter should not be mistaken as a concession to natural scientists and the natural scientific perspective (*CW* 3:69). While those who support the biped argument may, in Rousseau's view, be better natural scientists, the argument itself is beside the point. Rousseau is not lying to or misleading his reader in the Notice on the Notes—the notes can and do stray from the subject. But in their wandering, in "beating the bushes," the reader of the notes is corrected through Rousseau's treatment of peripheral material. The similar but categorically different images in the note instruct through comparison, teaching his reader what he is portraying and how to view it.

The shift from the quadruped to the biped in the main text is not a result of the note, and it is not because of scientific evidence that Rousseau paints natural man on two legs. Whether man historically walked on twos or fours has no bearing on the portrait. Rousseau is not philosophizing the way people once walked but portraying his moral and political perspective through physical metaphor. That the figure of natural man is upright matters in the interpretation of his portrait, and it is within this context that the connection between his "physical gaze" and his moral vision matters. The analogy is "fixed" for the reader by doubling it within the metaphor itself. It is not an analogy between image and reality or the metaphysical and the physical, but an analogy within the metaphysical and moral portrait of man's physical and moral nature.

Without teleological science or God's ordered creation, Rousseau's natural man has purpose because his author has thus painted him. Rousseau finds Man without recourse to "the observations of naturalists," or "supernatural knowledge." Through his own moral vision, Rousseau sees Man, begotten and unchanging, "formed from all time as [he sees] him today: walking on two feet, using his hands as we do ours, directing his gaze toward the whole of nature, and surveying with his eyes the vast expanse of heaven."

Metaphysical Analysis of Man's Physical Side

After much prefatory work, Rousseau finally considers man, or at least, "Physical Man" (*CW* 3:25). Rousseau does not call this figure "Physical Man" until the end of this initial consideration. It is only when we "try to look at him from the Metaphysical and Moral side" that he is named. Even within the portrait, naming is a moral and metaphysical faculty, considered only within the moral and metaphysical examination of the moral and metaphysical. What Rousseau means by "Physical Man" and what he means to distinguish between this figure and "Man" simply requires coupled comparisons of man's physical and moral sides, of "savage" man and civil man, and of savage or natural man and men.

Before Rousseau portrays what he sees, he removes anything of man that is not simply or wholly man. Rousseau considers "this Being," in his being, without "all the supernatural gifts he could have received and of all the artificial faculties he could only have acquired by long progress," as what he is without God or nature, time or progress. Rousseau once more qualifies the way he will consider what he considers. In the same way that Rousseau examines him, "so to speak, in the first Embryo of the species," he considers him, "in a word, as he must have come from the hands of Nature." Rousseau does not consider man in nature but from Nature. His personification of Nature points to a conceptual understanding of the term, and away from our ordinary understanding of nature. It is a consideration in (a) word—not just briefly but in speech—and proceeds metaphorically.

When Rousseau observes natural man, he sees “an animal less strong than some, less agile than others, but all things considered, the most advantageously organized of all” (*CW* 3:20). Though he talks of man’s physical organization and his place in the animal system, Rousseau is not literally discussing either.[89] He has already clarified his subject by telling us what he will not “follow” and what he will not “investigate” in the previous paragraph. Rousseau proceeds by sight alone, treating his observations of his subject, and its likeness or unlikeness to other figures, as simply true. His method is unscientific. The “animal” that Rousseau sees is to be understood as a moral phenomenon. The “animal” is the very foundational figure needed for Rousseau’s investigation of natural right, previewed in the prefatory material. The “animal” is an animal among the animals but set apart from the others. Its being is obviously different, and it is set apart and above from the onset.

The first image of natural man is comparative but static. He is presented as an animal in contrast to the other animals, but he is not active or acting. We are told he is less strong, but we do not see a contest of strength. We are told he is less agile, without witnessing a race. He is said to be the most advantageously organized of all, without example. His first appearance places him among the animals, but his first action occurs when he is alone. “I see him satisfying his hunger under an oak, quenching his thirst at the first Stream, finding his bed at the foot of the same tree that furnished his meal; and therewith his needs are satisfied.” Rousseau delays the violation of right by placing acting man alone in the image. No external force necessitates or initiates evil because no external force is present. Man is the only actor.

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[89] Inston reads Rousseau’s discussion of man’s ‘animality’ as a lowering of man and denial of his superiority, resituating man as the equal of beast. Kevin Inston, "The Human–Animal Relation in Rousseau's Discourse on Inequality." *Paragraph* 42 (2019): 37-53.

Active man, however, is pictured in nature, and the (natural) theodicean question arises from this observation. His environment provides for his physical needs as it provides "Storehouses and shelters to animals of all species" (*CW* 3:21). If Rousseau were justifying the ways of nature to man, as others have tried to justify the ways of God, then there would seem to be an important difference in the analogy. The original goodness of nature does not pose the same problem as the (continuing) goodness of God; the most serious problem for theologians is not that man has fallen from his perfect state at all but that he has done so in apparent violation of God's just providence. Nature may be good for man in the beginning without requiring any defense or apology for nature's parsimony toward man under any other conditions or at any other time.

Rousseau, who does not seek a naturalistic account of man's physical departure from some original perfection, cares less about defending nature's justice than giving a moral account of man.[90] The theodicean framework thus approximates the question at hand, but it may obscure more than it clarifies. Rousseau's opposition to a biblical account of the natural world does not offer a purely naturalistic account of man or a moral one derived from nature. The portrait of natural man is neither evolutionary history nor creation story. Rousseau flips the order of both accounts in various and countervailing ways, beginning with man rather than his environment, introducing the animals before the earth, and skipping to men without introducing women and children. First there are men, then there are children, but women are noticeably absent altogether. The "fertility" of the Earth and the presence of children only highlight this omission (*CW* 3:21). Moreover, the fertility of the Earth is the opposite of human fertility: it is most productive when left alone. Without women, the temporal progress of the species is suspended, and the biblical fall is avoided, thus distinguishing Rousseau's natural state of Man from both scientific and revelational alternatives.

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[90] Ernst Cassirer, *The Question of Jean-Jacques Rousseau*. 2d ed. trans. and ed. Peter Gay (New Haven: Yale University Press: 1989) and John T. Scott, "The Theodicy of the *Second Discourse*: The 'Pure State of Nature' and Rousseau's Political Thought." *American Political Science Review* 86 (1992):686–711.

The focus on the portrait is on man alone. Without violating his criticism of isolated examples, Rousseau uses "men" to show the universality of his idea of man. Without studying either the relationship between men or a large-N study of individual man (as in modern qualitative or quantitative social science or its precursors), Rousseau demonstrates the consistency of his concept of man in his moral picture by looking for Man both in a man and in men. These "men" are pictured among the animals but not with others, allowing Rousseau to make moral comparisons to refine and sharpen his idea of Man without yet descending into the diversity of men among men. The kind of moral comparison Rousseau makes as author is not unlike the kind of metaphysical and moral judgment he will turn to later in this first part and that the keen reader will notice our man making in his environment. The primary difference between these comparisons is what is being compared. The man in the image cannot compare himself to the idea of Man or to other men—he simply is Man.

The imagined men, "dispersed among the animals, observe and imitate their industry, and thereby develop in themselves the instinct of the Beasts; with the advantage that whereas each species has only its own proper instinct, man—perhaps having none that belongs to him—appropriates them all to himself" (*CW* 3:21). Nothing is given to man by nature, and nothing is natural to man. Though man is an animal in need of food, water, and shelter, he is not a particular kind of animal in need of a particular kind of food or a particular kind of shelter. The accompanying note, which suggests that the diet of man may have some role in determining whether he is peaceable and compatible with the state of Nature, is based on a faulty premise. Even if man's physical features more closely resemble those of frugivorous animals than carnivorous, man lacks a corresponding instinct. Whereas the physical features of these animals correspond to some natural instinct, man lacks the same essential connection. He is free to will what he eats and where he sleeps, to appropriate what he judges as good. Besides, the physical characteristics described and ascribed to the frugivorous and carnivorous animals pertain to quadrupeds only. Rousseau has already decided, both in the note and main text, that man is a biped. He neglects "many favorable points" he could "exploit," because they are untrue. He highlights them only to show that what is rhetorically persuasive to readers of the note is not sufficient for him.

The suggested vision of the state of Nature in the note, undermined by the note, is immediately replaced by a new view of Nature in the main text. Nature in this image is not so much a peaceable and leisurely environment as a strict mother raising her children for war. The fertility of the Earth, diminished by both man and animal, becomes such that men need to "develop a robust and almost unalterable physique" to survive (*CW* 3:21). It is man that makes his environment what it is, which in turn molds him. Nature's fertility or barrenness, her generosity or harshness, depends entirely on the actions of men—and thus any justification of nature or natural theodicy is dependent on man. Nature, in this sense, is not so different from society. The men in the image make nature thus, much like men make society thus, and then that environment makes them what they are in turn. Man is still entirely to praise or blame, and it is here that we can most clearly see the groundwork Rousseau lays for his theodicy of man to men in his initial preparation of the image in the main text.

In an unexpected transformation of the ordinary images of the motherhood of nature and the fatherhood of God, Rousseau continues to resist both major alternatives to this presentation. The introduction of the father/child relationship is a metaphorical depiction of the conception of the connection between nature and society, men and man, theodicy and naturalism: "the excellent constitution of their Fathers," make nature what it is, and nature then "fortifies" their children "with the same training that produced it." "Nature treats them precisely as the Law of Sparta treated the Children of Citizens: it renders strong and robust those who are well constituted and makes all others perish, thereby differing from our societies, in which the State, by making Children burdensome to their Fathers, kills them indiscriminately before their birth." The contrast is not between nature or artifice, wholeness or dividedness but an embrace of Man or a disdain for him, imaged here through abortion but understood in science's preference for material conceptions and Christianity's for divine. Man, in the embryo of the species, is maimed by both material and Christian conceptions of origins and ends, which locate man's morality outside or beyond man.

Man is not only free from Nature but in nature. Man determines his rank among the animals. He is not "naturally" at "war" with any other species nor "destined by Nature to serve as food for the other" (*CW* 3:22). Likewise, Man is not naturally given dominion (or commanded by right to take dominion) over the Earth and its creatures, as Adam was in the garden, but he is not subject to God either. By refusing man a definite place in the order of things, Rousseau ensures his freedom to choose his state, placing all moral responsibility in the hands of man. What man is by nature is nothing but what man has made himself in nature—the artifice of the portrait, drawn of man by man for men, perfectly captures “Man’s natural state.” Man is the author, audience, and subject of his own portrait, and it is through this portrait that man comes to know himself. Man is not self-determining or self-expressive in some way that takes away his essence as man, and yet his freedom and perfectibility are his essence.

Savage Man, Civil Man, and Man Himself

Rousseau here introduces savage man to illustrate his point, taking up the problem of man’s freedom and perfectibility and turning more fully from his opposition to a biblical or creational perspective on man to his critique of the men of letters devoted to or professing a progressive or evolutionary science. It is not that savage man has been our figure this entire time and is only now named; on the contrary, savage man is here introduced for his reader who, unaccustomed to seeing Man’s portrait, is used to instruction by example in traveler's journals, histories, and scientific writings. Rousseau shifts from an investigation of what Man is, or the concept of Man, to a comparison between men, asking which man better embodies the concept, Man. The contest between savage man and civil man is not, despite appearances, about physical strength. The comparison must be understood within its context, as part of the moral picture of man.

Savage man is empowered by his environment and has a healthy relationship with his environment. Like fathers and children in nature or in Sparta, he is free to will and can employ his body for various uses. Civil man has made himself unfree—he cannot employ his body to various uses and is only able to operate the appropriate machine. He has outsourced his capacity to freely will and is constrained and enfeebled by his environment. Rousseau reminds his reader how he ought to understand this comparison as he concludes this example: “Put [savage man and civil man], naked and disarmed, face to face, and you will soon recognize the advantage of constantly having all of one’s strength at one’s disposal, of always being ready for any event, and of always carrying oneself, so to speak, entirely with one” (*CW* 3:21). Rousseau’s repeated use of the phrase, “so to speak,” is not merely a verbal tick, but explicitly signals his use of physical metaphor. Spartan man, as a sort of savage civilian, is only one indicator that the contrast is not a straightforward one.

The attending note underlines the connection between the portrayed physical strength of Savage man and self-knowledge. The reader ought to recognize that “carrying oneself, so to speak, entirely with one” is a description of this kind of knowledge, and Rousseau therefore begins the note with a discussion of knowledge.[91] Aware of his reader and the kind of reader reading the notes at all, Rousseau plays with prejudices and expectations, and “seems” to place “all knowledge that requires reflection, all knowledge acquired only by the linking of ideas” beyond “the reach of Savage man for want of communication with his fellows” (*CW* 3:71). Rousseau says only that such knowledge “seems” out of reach, not that it is in fact out of reach. Furthermore, the claim depends on whether Savage man is really isolated. If it is true that “knowledge that require reflection,” is out of reach for him, it is true because he wants for “communication with his fellows.”

Rousseau tests his readers’ observational capacity by supplying “reports of travelers,” which are “full of examples of the strength and vigor of men in barbarous and Savage Nations,” and require “eyes alone” to “observe these things” (*CW* 3:72). He once more turns to Peter Kolben’s account of the Hottentots of the Cape: “The Hottentots,’ the same Author [Kolben] says further, ‘having surprising dexterity at hunting, and the nimbleness of their running surpasses the imagination.’ He is amazed that they do not more often put their ability to bad use.” Rousseau mocks Kolben’s narrowminded naiveté, who is “amazed,” as Rousseau says, that the “Hottentots” possess the rationality to know how to direct and use their superior physical abilities. Where Kolben purports to reveal the superior physical capabilities of Savage man, surpassing those of the “Europeans of the Cape,” to his European readers, Rousseau makes Kolben, not the Hottentots, and his observational capacity his subject. Rousseau himself is “amazed” by Kolben’s dim-sightedness, and his inability to see beyond the merely physical phenomena. Kolben cannot comprehend what he is seeing and, like an animal, sees only the physical figure without “reflection” and without “linking” it to other “ideas” (*CW* 3:71). It is Kolben, not the so-called “savage,” who lacks knowledge.

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[91] Melzer reads this passage as the difference between the psychic unity of the savage and the disunity of civil man. Arthur Melzer, *The Natural Goodness of Man: On the System of Rousseau’s Thought.* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990), 72.

The repeated return to Peter Kolben, a particular European author, as the embodiment of European historian, travelers, and scientists in the notes rebukes European vanity, which insists on the singularity of European vision, certainly among “men” but even among themselves. The European tendency to distinguish not only French and German, Italian and English but this Frenchman and that one is so far removed from the search for self-knowledge that any given European is unable to recognize Man in his fellows or himself—he is only a particular without species, “not susceptible of any communication or progress from one individual to another” (*CW* 3:71). His corrupted vision degrades both its object and its subject. The nameless Hottentot, under the gaze of European observers and portrayed in European books, is denied his manhood, the very denial of which reveals the lacking self-knowledge and “Manhood” of his observer. In

Rousseau's eyes, however, the nameless Hottentot is not only a representative of "Hottentots" or "savage" men but of Man, as he appears everywhere and for all time. The picture of the strong Hottentot is a portrait of man and a tableau for men.

The reader who follows Rousseau and only reads the main text does not lose this insight—although he does avoid rebuke. Rousseau reinforces his metaphorical view of "strength" without condescending to European blindness. Without involving "civil man," Rousseau compares the strength of "savage man" to that of animals who are undoubtedly stronger: "Savage man, living dispersed among the animals and early finding himself in a position to measure himself against them, soon makes the comparison; and sensing that he surpasses them in skill more than they surpass him in strength, he learns not to fear them anymore" (*CW* 3:22). "Savage man" is only "strong" comparatively; his physical strength is not distinctive. What is distinctive is his ability to "measure himself" against others and accurately determine what he is and what he is not—what is distinctively "Man" and what is merely "animal." He "learns" through "comparison," and increases his "strength," which is not physical strength.

"Savage man" may be in the position of "civil man," when we compare his strength to other animals. He does not, however, "subsist" only as "other weaker species," do. Referring to our figure here not as "savage man," but "man simply," Rousseau notes that "man has the advantage that… he always has the option of accepting or leaving the encounter and the choice of flight or combat" (*CW* 3:22). This "advantage" is an "act of freedom," used well—a moral and metaphysical capability possessed by men and Man alone (*CW* 3:25). Rousseau explicitly discusses it as such when he turns to the "metaphysical and moral side" of man's portrait, that is, to the metaphysical and moral side, coming after the physical side, of the entirely metaphysical and moral study of man.

Moral Sickness of Men

The three remaining threats to man's freedom can all be characterized by man's physical nature and are thus outside of his ability to choose or perfect: infancy, old age, and illness. The first two are "common to all animals and the last belongs principally to man living in Society" (*CW* 3:22). The argument made above about the way in which Rousseau critiques an uncritical scientific or scriptural perspective on man or men "in embryo" is here extended to the end of things. The infancy of man and the infancy of men are potentially deceptive objects of study, in that the original of the species or of the particular may be sought without recognizing the distinction between those two cases or without understanding the metaphor which necessarily separates origins and original principles. Old age may be a token of man's *telos*, or merely of his termination, and the scientist who overemphasizes his decrepitude in that state will be in no better position than the theologian who looks to man's eschatological glorification for an understanding of his essence. In a similar way in the case of illness, there is a danger in misapplying a certain view of the Aristotelian proscription against studying corrupted things: one may overstate the difference between incidental and intrinsic corruptions of man's nature and thus fail to recognize both as a source for understanding man himself.

In his brief discussion of infancy, Rousseau compares a mother carrying her child to other animals that either do not or cannot carry their children. There is a parallel here between man and woman, where "savage man" carries himself entirely within himself and woman carries her child (*CW* 3:21). The uninhibited freedom enjoyed by man is denied to women by nature, but the seeds of society, the germ of civilization is carried within her bosom. This is the first appearance of woman in the discourse. She is introduced as "Mother" before she is called a "woman," and exists only in relation to others (*CW* 3:22). She is with her child, made possible by a previous encounter with man.

Though we have already discussed children and fathers, and even infancy, in the pure state of nature, mothers are only introduced in the section on "more formidable enemies, against which man does not have the same means of defense," or "natural infirmities" (*CW* 3:22). Infancy is a stage of dependence on women, which poses a unique set of challenges for making men. Rousseau avoids this difficulty in *Emile* by giving himself an orphan without a mother, skipping over the early stage of Emile's life altogether. Whether women themselves or the societies that they represent or both are the problem are discussed and explored more extensively in the *Emile,* but they nonetheless appear here as a real and unresolved roadblock to man's freedom. Woman or women are a political problem for Rousseau, but not in the sense that they need some physical or merely constitutional arrangement for this threat to freedom to be disposed of.

Old age receives the shortest treatment of these natural challenges to freedom. It often appears to us as a state of degradation. Our minds and our bodies are less capable, and we can no longer enjoy things as we once did. Rousseau, however, sees only a decrease in desire. It is not that we can no longer "act," but that we have less reason to "act" (*CW* 3:23). Our "need[s]" decrease in proportion to our ability (*CW* 3:23). Man is not constrained; his will is altered. The badness of old age is not old age itself but the perception and anticipation of death (*CW* 3:23). "Savage life," free from European superstition and fear, allows men to die "without it being perceived that they cease to be, and almost without perceiving it themselves" (*CW* 3:23). It is not, for Rousseau, the physical reality and inevitability of death but the perception or imagination thereof that seriously threatens man's freedom. The shift from the physical fact of death and aging to the metaphysical idea of each, as in the case of the change in perspective on women in man's natural state, removes the obstacle and places man's freedom—in as much as it is possible—within his control. Physical death need not be overcome for the preservation or recovery of this freedom any more than the physical dependence on women need be overcome.

Illness is, of all the enemies, the most treatable. Without repeating "the vain and false declamations against Medicine made by most People in good health," Rousseau uses "solid observation" to supply "fatal proofs that most of our ills are our own work" (*CW* 3:23). Our illnesses are not, for Rousseau, principally a physical problem and therefore do not most of all require a physical solution. It is not the fault of Medicine, whatever its faults are or may be, "if we give ourselves more ills than Medicine can furnish Remedies" (*CW* 3:23). It is the "extreme inequality of our way of life," or a "moral or political" problem, "established" by "convention" (*CW* 3:23; 18). It should hardly require repeating that the threat posed by medicine lies not in the physical ailments that may be attributed to some set of overzealous practices or to some misguided epidemiology or to any strictly scientific problem. Medicine will not be improved by better observation in the vein of the men of letters, just as old age (or women) will not be more bearable if only the solutions of the materialists (or the religious) are brought to bear on the situation.

This section is the most obvious callback and application of Persius's third *Satire,* where one Roman mistakes the consequence of his moral actions, a hangover, for a merely or primarily physical illness. The moral illnesses we give ourselves redouble the two inescapable weaknesses of human life, infancy and old age, prolonging and extending these states while shrinking or eliminating the period of manhood.[92] Illness, of all the natural infirmities, highlights man's role in his making or unmaking. He is morally responsible for his being, or not being, a Man both at the individual and species level: "One is strongly inclined to believe that the history of human illnesses could easily be written by following that of civil Societies" (*CW* 3:23). This is not merely to say that civil society is noxious in the sense that one may, for example, trace cancer clusters to actions taken (or not taken) in some place by civil authorities, or that the refinements of life together produce a greater rate of gout and gluttony.

Before leaving Physical Man behind, Rousseau returns to his final in-text preface, by reminding the reader that "Plato" is his proper judge: "This at least is the opinion of Plato, who judges..." (*CW* 3:23). By resituating the discourse here, the reader is prompted to recall the framework of the image in view before observing the other side or aspect of man. The subject is "man in general," not savage man, not civil man, not even natural man but Man. The author, Rousseau, citizen of Geneva, addresses his true judge, Plato, in "a language that that suits all Nations, or rather, forgetting times and Places in order to think only of the Men to whom I speak," before the "human Race," his "Audience" (*CW* 3:19). Taking "care not to confuse Savage man with the men we have before our eyes," or even with Man as such, Rousseau explicitly revisits the portrait as a portrait, prompting the reader to abstract from the particular figure and meditate on the relative goodness of our own moral choices, judging whether we have made ourselves Men.

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[92] Cf. Persius *Satire* 3: "You idiot, more idiotic by the day, is this the state we've got to? Oh, why don't you act like a pigeon chick or a little prince instead, and demand your baby food cut up into tiny pieces, and throw a tantrum and refuse to let your mommy sing you to sleep?" Susan Braund, edited and translated *Juvenal and Persius* (Loeb Classical Library 91) (Cambridge, MA and London: Harvard University Press, 2004), 3.15-18.

To say that “we would have avoided almost all [illness] by preserving the simple, uniform, and solitary way of life prescribed to us by Nature” is an act wholly “natural” to man—that is, Rousseau’s judgment against his contemporaries, as in Persius or Plato, is recognizably “unnatural” if we mistake “Savage man,” or the European idea thereof, with Man as he ought to be, but it is entirely consistent with the free and perfectible, self-created moral agent we come to see Man as. The civic sphere and character of the theodicean defense of Man to men is as much a part of the image as the “savage” alone in nature. “***If*** [Nature] destined us to be healthy, ***I almost dare affirm*** that the state of reflection is a state contrary to Nature and that the man who meditates is a depraved animal.” But Nature did not destine anything for us. Man designs and destines himself. Rousseau is careful to qualify his language and does not impute any kind of moral goodness or badness to Nature or what man is in nature or from nature, before he is a man and before an idea of Men.

Immediately after he dares to “almost” affirm the depravity of meditation and the unnaturalness of reflection, Rousseau asks his reader to come alongside him to reflect and meditate: “When one thinks of the good constitution of Savages…” (*CW* 3:23). Rousseau even makes judgments and distinctions among “Savage” constitutions, separating those “ruined with our strong liquor” from others, much as the Roman citizen of the *Satires* separates himself from his drunk fellow, placing him instead among the dead and enslaved.[93] Even if the “Savage” hopes in Nature and fears his illness, both apparently “unnatural” impulses that require, among other facilities, reflection, meditation, and foresight, his "situation" is "preferable to ours" (*CW* 3:24). Rousseau is not deciding between an unthinking machine and a poor judge, but between two men and the moral outlooks that shape them and their societies.

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[93] Susan Braund, edited and translated *Juvenal and Persius* (Loeb Classical Library 91) (Cambridge, MA and London: Harvard University Press, 2004), 3.103-106.

It is not in community per se that man loses himself but in his domestication; in "becoming sociable and a Slave he becomes weak, fearful, servile; and his soft and effeminate way of life completes the enervation of both his strength and his courage" (*CW* 3:24). The feminine motif once more appears as the enemy of man.[94] Where men are men, citizens in arms in the Lyceum of Athens or the Republic of Rome, they are free and good. But where man is domestic, not civic, social but not citizen, he is less than a Man; he is an "effeminate" slave to himself and others—without the characteristics or qualities of Man, a child or invalid, dependent and unfree. He alienates his freedom for things "that were hardly necessary, since he had done without them until then and since it is hard to see why he could not endure, as a grown man, a kind of life he had endured from his infancy" (*CW* 3:25). In choosing material comforts and little luxuries over freedom, he chooses badly and in such a way that robs him of the faculty to choose altogether.

The "reports of Travelers" conflate "the animal state in general" and "that of most Savage Peoples" because they do not recognize freedom from unfreedom. The accruements of society, "softness," "sensuality," and "delicacy," are for travelers the defining and distinguishing characteristics of men. These attributes separate man from animal and justify inequality among men. It is at this point in the discourse that Rousseau turns the conversation, not from one figure to another or one aspect of that figure to some other aspect, but from an unspecified consideration of “Physical Man,” to an explicitly “Metaphysical and Moral” investigation of him.[95] It is not that his consideration has hitherto been physical and is now metaphysical and moral, or that his consideration looked at man’s physical side and is now looking at his metaphysical and moral side. It is at this point in the discourse where the “reports of Travelers,” most directly conflict with his own view that Rousseau reviews our figure and invites his audience to revise their way of seeing and approaching, not only themselves but Man and men generally.

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[94] Cf. Susan Okin, "Rousseau's Natural Woman." *The Journal of Politics* 41 (1979): 393-416.

A Look from the Metaphysical and Moral Side

The new beginning in the discourse is remarkably like the original, varying more in point of emphasis than subject. In the first beginning, Rousseau “sees an animal,” among the animals that, though less strong or agile than some, is “all things considered, the most advantageously organized of all” (*CW* 3:20). Man is a particular in the general category animal and is, by virtue of his superior constitution, either apart from or the height of what an animal is. In the new beginning, Rousseau “sees” in “every animal” only “an ingenious machine,” where man belongs to the general category, animal, but does admit of being a particular in that category (*CW* 3:25). From this perspective, Rousseau does not “see” a difference between the animal and human constitutions but “perceives” this difference: animals are entirely dependent on Nature and defined by their nature, acting from nothing but instinct, whereas man "contributes to his operations by being a free agent" (*CW* 3:25).

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[95] Marks reads Rousseau’s turn to man’s metaphysical and moral side as “a further indication that man’s acquisition of instincts is boundup with history.” Jonathan Marks, *Perfection and Disharmony in the Thought of Jean-Jacques Rousseau*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 27.

The visual metaphor is maintained but clarified: it is not the physical differences which we see with our eyes but the moral and metaphysical difference which we perceive that separates or elevates man among the animals and allows for his particularized portrait in the general tableau of nature. The image of "Physical Man," was never physical or about his physical figure, but the section still ends with the erroneous judgment of travelers and their uncorrected and still corrupted sight. Rousseau doubles the image and supplies a double portrait of Man which does not produce a unified or simple figure, but which is nonetheless instructive for his double-minded and double-sighted audience.

What "advantages" man has over the animals returns in an altered but still apparently bodily metaphor. Where beasts "cannot deviate from the Rule that is prescribed" even if it "would be advantageous" to do so, man "deviates" from it in "an act of freedom," often "to his detriment" (*CW* 3:25-6). Cats and pigeons, representing carnivores and herbivores, and quadrupeds and birds, "die of hunger" amidst an abundance of food because of instinct.[96] "Dissolute men" give themselves "fever and death," by "abandoning themselves to excesses," and abusing their freedom (*CW* 3:26). The relationship between physical organization, whether quadruped, biped, or birds, and diet, whether frugivorous or carnivorous, discussed in the first section is here reviewed. The conclusion is the same, but the presentation more apparently draws out the metaphor and illustrates the moral and metaphysical concern at the heart of Rousseau's investigation.

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[96] Cf. John T. Scott, *Rousseau's Reader.* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2020), 121.

Rousseau does not privilege man over beast because of his rationality. He even argues that a sentient or feeling being necessarily "has ideas, since it has senses" (*CW* 3:26). Rousseau's reputation as a sentimental and romantic author arises from a foreign impulse to separate sense from idea, and reason from feeling. Rousseau himself rejects such a division, following Plutarch and even Montaigne in asserting that beast can reason because even it "combines its ideas up to a certain point" (*CW* 3:26). In this respect, "man differs from a Beast only in degree" (*CW* 3:26). The civilized, European traveler supposes that the state of "Savage people" must necessarily be the same as the "animal state" where each "thinking little, sleep so to speak all the time they do not think" (*CW* 3:25). Without condescending to justify the rationality of "Savage people," Rousseau instead shows that the travelers themselves are not, on this point, so removed from the "animal state" as they imagine.

It is not that Rousseau is a purely sensational or sentimental thinker but that he recognizes man's embodied rationality. Neither his reason nor his being exist or can exist only abstractly. Rousseau's audience is prompted to reexamine the sentimentality in his writing and figures in light of his comments on the close relationship between reason and sensation. Rousseau denies the traditional view that reason "constitutes the distinction of man among the animals" (*CW* 3:26). He himself utilizes reason to arrive at this conclusion but does so in an intentionally metaphorical way, perceiving with his mind and sensing, even non-physical phenomena, to form his ideas on the question. Rousseau's whole use of portraiture, the methodological structure of his system corresponds to this feature of his portrait of man here and to his own role in presenting that portrait.

Rousseau certainly assumes that man is an animal. This assumption, previewed in the preface, does not require an apology or justification; it is almost universally shared by all who study man. It is the idea that man is not merely animal, that he is a spiritual, moral, and metaphysical being despite his physical nature that requires defense against the rational materialists on the one hand, and that he can be a spiritual, moral, and metaphysical being without God that requires defense against Christians on the other. Rousseau locates man's distinctive character in his "being a free agent" and "the faculty of self-perfection" (*CW* 3:26).

While recognizing "the difficulties" surrounding the supposition of man's moral freedom, Rousseau nonetheless offers it as the first, and perhaps more compelling source, of what makes man Man:

> Nature commands every animal, and the Beast obeys. Man feels the same impetus, but he realizes that he is free to acquiesce or resist; and it is above all in the consciousness of this freedom that the spirituality of his soul is shown. For Physics explains in some way the mechanism of the senses and the formation of ideas; but in the power of willing, or rather of choosing, and in the sentiment of this power are found only purely spiritual acts about which the Laws of Mechanics explain nothing (*CW* 3:26).

If Man is free, in his nature and from Nature, and knows he is free, then "the spirituality" of his soul is obvious. Man's moral freedom is apparent in the portrait of Man as Man, in his willing and choosing without or in spite of external constraints, either from Nature or from God.

If man's moral and metaphysical character depend on rationality alone, then the materialists are right: physics can explain "the mechanism of the senses and the formation of ideas" without resorting to moral explanations or necessitating the existence of the human soul—the mind suffices. But if man is a moral and metaphysical being because of this "power of willing” and the “sentiment of this power” then “the Laws of Mechanics” can “explain nothing” about these “purely spiritual acts” (*CW* 3:26). Rousseau must go beyond the physical to the metaphysical to explain what Man is. Self-knowledge is at the center of Rousseau’s study of man, and it is a moral and metaphysical method. Psychology and physical science cannot explain the questions at the heart of this author and his portrait of man.

Without abandoning this freedom, Rousseau supplies a secondary “quality that distinguishes [man and animal] and about which there can be no dispute: the faculty of self-perfection” (*CW* 3:26). Where man’s moral freedom exists despite man’s current corruption and condition, discernible but veiled, viewable in the portrait of Man but hidden in the tableau of men, self-perfection exists “with the aid of circumstances” and is “successively develops all the others,” discernible “among us as much in the species as in the individual” (*CW* 3:26).[97] It is less disputed because it is more apparent. The *Discourse* itself assumes and exploits a similar prejudice among civil man, who very quickly acknowledge the vast difference between themselves and others, both now and historically. Rousseau acknowledges the diversity of men that the idea Man includes without denying or abandoning the uniformity of the concept Man.

In establishing the existence of this faculty by appealing to the prejudices of civil man, Rousseau anticipates the objection that self-perfection is less perfecting than degrading. He acknowledges that this faculty, apparent in civil man because of his Manhood, might be mistaken as “the source of all man’s misfortunes” (*CW* 3:26). Rousseau agrees that “it would be sad for us to be forced to agree," with these critics of mankind without actually agreeing that "this distinctive and almost unlimited faculty," in "the long run," makes man the tyrant of himself and of Nature" (*CW* 3:26). Rousseau only admits that it "would be horrible to be obliged to praise as a beneficent being" those who used this faculty in this way. With respect to both particular individuals and the species in general, Rousseau recognizes the legitimacy of these conclusions without accepting them or questioning their premises. Only in note 7 does Rousseau address the cause of man's tendency to tyranny. He does not defend self-perfection in the main text and only does so in the note in a political context—is this moral and metaphysical faculty that distinguishes man from animal responsible for personal and political tyranny? As in the question concerning the relation of natural and moral inequality, it would be slavish and unworthy of Man to adopt a view that would deprive him of his fundamental character.

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[97] Cohen, amongst other scholars interested in Rousseau’s conception of moral freedom, focus their study of the concept in the *Social Contract*. While the *Social Contract* mentions man’s moral freedom once, Rousseau says that he has “already said too much about this topic, and the philosophic meaning of the word *freedom* is not [his] subject” in that writing (*CW* 4:142). I argue that Rousseau elucidates the philosophic meaning of the word here in the Discourse. Joshua Cohen, *Rousseau: A Free Community of Equals*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010).

Without minimizing the importance of note 7 for Rousseau's thought, it is nonetheless a note among the other notes of the discourse and is as much subject to the Notice on the Notes as any other in the discourse. It is not strictly speaking necessary, but it is a particularly clear statement of his view for those who do not see or perceive as he does. The note, though separate from the text, is a response to the concern expressed in the text—that man is naturally tyrannical and doomed to enslave and enslavement. The moral and metaphysical freedom that is, for Rousseau, an essential feature of Man is undermined by this understanding of self-perfection. Man is naturally at war with himself, naturally divided as an enslaving and enslaved free agent.

The Natural Goodness of Man: A Noteworthy Observation

It is thus unsurprising that note 7 begins with an accusation against Man, or whomever or whatever is response for Man. Here the figure of the unnamed famous Author recalls the unnamed “author” of the second Preface, who, whether actually or aspirationally, benefits among men of letters by accusing Man and his fellow men. Though an author, he nonetheless employs a recognizably mechanical and scientific method, “calculating the goods and evils of human life” (*CW* 3:74). He does not judge as a citizen and departs from the method employed by Persius in his *Satires* or Rousseau in his writings. He concludes from his research that “all things considered life was a rather poor present to man” (*CW* 3:74). The form of his conclusion necessarily deprives man of all moral responsibility and makes him a victim of whoever or whatever made him what he is. Life is a present received—it is passive. Rousseau is “not surprised by his conclusion;” it follows not only from his method but from the limited scope of his subject. He considers only “the constitution of Civil man” and does not seek self-knowledge or what Man is simply.

Rousseau contends that if “he had gone back to Natural man, it can be concluded that he would have found very different results” (*CW* 3:74). This is the first of only two appearances of the phrase, “Natural man,” in the discourse and the second of three in the whole work. The first appearance occurs in the preface (*CW* 3:14) and the last in note 9 (*CW* 3:86). Nowhere does Natural man appear, by name, in the discourse proper and is altogether absent from the “*tableau* of Nature” (*CW* 3:32) and the “*tableau* of the genuine state of Nature” (*CW* 3:40). He is only imagined as a response to the tyrant and appears in the note that is or contains the “moral *tableau*” of “human life,” or “at least the secret pretensions of the Heart of every Civilized man” (*CW* 3:76). Natural man only exists in contrast to civil man; he lacks his own portrait. Natural man is neither man simply nor savage man, but a particular variety of Man—that may only exist abstractly. What Natural man adds to the Author's calculation is nothing but the realization that "man has hardly any evils other than those he has given himself" (*CW* 3:74). Natural man, or the idea thereof, relocates the moral responsibility of man's state in Man himself, justifying "Nature" only by extension. Nature is not responsible for our goodness or badness. What it means that man is "naturally good," is simply that Man is naturally free and perfectible, and is thus, by nature, free to make himself a morally good being.

The note is above all the culmination of Rousseau's promise previewed in the prefatory material—it is the explicit defense of a citizen-author on behalf of mankind against its accusers. Though it seems that Rousseau himself is guilty of condemning man, he only reprimands men, calling them "wicked" (*CW* 3:74). The species has made itself what it is and individuals have submitted to what they are over time, without changing what Man is as a universal moral and metaphysical concept. Rousseau reframes the author's calculation in visual terms, arguing that "one cannot fail to be struck by the astounding disproportion" between the "vast labors of man" on the one hand and "when, on the other hand, one searches with a little meditation for the true advantages that have resulted from all of this for the happiness of the human species" (*CW* 3:74). Men ought "to deplore man's blindness, which to feed his foolish pride and an indefinable vain admiration for himself, makes him run avidly after all the miseries of which he is susceptible" (*CW* 3:74).

Without belaboring the connection, Rousseau returns to the language of the main text, employing visual metaphor to see and perceive, to "search" and "mediate" on the "advantages" of man's moral choices. Nature appears here no more "beneficent" than she does in the main text. Through instinct, she "keeps" him from the miseries of civil man but she does not protect or provide for his happiness absolutely. Like the cat or pigeon who cannot preserve themselves because of Nature, man follows “instinct,” without will, to his own demise. This is not, nor has it been, man’s problem historically and is thus unhelpful in context. The portrait of Man for mankind is painted for men, to instruct and correct their vices and follies. It does not indulge their vanity by shifting moral responsibility and “justifies” Nature only in order to free man and renew the possibility of moral action.

Man is not at war with himself, but men are at war with each other. It is not a problem revealed by self-knowledge but a problem that arises because of a lack of self-knowledge. Men do not know Man and do not know themselves. They make false calculations on wrong premises, where “the reason of each individual dictates to him maxims directly contrary to those that public reason preaches to the body of Society” (*CW* 3:74). It is not civil man vs. natural man, or a contradiction in Man, but civil man vs. civil man, a conflict of men—a political conflict—solved through self-knowledge:

> Let us therefore penetrate, through our frivolous demonstrations of good will, what goes on at the bottom of our Hearts, and let us reflect on what the state of things must be where all men are forced to flatter and destroy one another, and where they are born enemies by duty and swindlers by interest. (*CW* 3:75)

It is not that society must be constituted such each man gains more by “harming” others than “serving” them, but that society is so constituted. Social or civil man need not be a tyrant of self and others, but he is. It is a historical claim—not a metaphysical and moral one.

The note itself confirms the problem. The famous author is a civil man who gains more by harming others than by serving them. What Man is, though, is not a historical claim. The disjunction between what men are now and what Man is simply has exacerbated the problem.

Man need not return to some original state back in time, but he must live up to what he is—whether in cities, “Savage nations,” the countryside, or alone. Man is not a moral problem. It is not about changing the being of man but correctly governing men. Men are the moral problem that can be solved with a political solution if, and only if, those tasked with the political organization of men understand what Man is morally and metaphysically.

The image we receive of man “at peace with all Nature,” is not Natural man, isolated and alone in the forest, but “Savage man,” “friend of all his fellows” (*CW* 3:75). It is man in society and in community—a political being. Savage man, as he appears throughout the text, is sometimes imagined alone but is always in society whenever he appears in particular examples. The isolated portrait is an artificial depiction that highlights a true feature, viewable now among men. “Savage man” never “comes to blows without first having compared the difficulty of winning with that of finding his subsistence elsewhere” (*CW* 3:75). He meditates and reflects before acting, maintaining peace except when it conflicts with his self-preservation. “Man in Society” is a slave to his own desires and cannot help but tyrannize over others because he is not even master of himself. It is not about self-preservation only but “the superfluous,” “delights,” “immense wealth,” “subjects,” and “Slaves;” he has no “respite” within himself and this overflows to others.

Rousseau refers to the “Man in Society” as “my Hero,” recalling the romantic language of *Julie* and *romans* more generally (*CW* 3:76). He is a tragic figure, “ruining everything until he is the sole master of Universe.” Where the figure portrayed in the main text mitigates, as much as possible, the inescapable evils of life—infancy, old age, and illness—civil man has compounded “suffering and death.” The catalog provided here repeats and extends the catalog provided in the section on illness from the main text—explicitly painting and mixing aspects from the “physical” side of Man into the “moral *tableau*” of man in society or civil man. Other repeated motifs include abortion, contrasted to the healthy, Spartan father and son relationship found in “nature,” and the “barbarous shame” of “Mothers” (*CW* 3:77). Not only are we to compare the portrait of civil man, savage man, and Man, but the portraits are inextricable from each other. Even civil man and savage man, as particular images of Man, share features because they both participate in the concept, Man, and are members of the species, mankind.

Despite the apparent superiority of savage man, “Man in Society” is still the hero of the “moral *tableau.”* In the preceding passages, it seems that the “Man in Society” is nothing more than civil man by another name, but Rousseau seems to hold out the possibility that this figure can improve his state and separate himself—in more than name only—from his apparent likeness. Savage man too is “in Society” in so far as he is found among his fellow, though he is not a man of “Society.” Rousseau scoffs at the imagined, false implication of his portraits: “What! must we destroy Societies, annihilate thine and mine, and go back to live in the forests with Bears? A conclusion in the manner of my adversaries, which I prefer to anticipate rather than leave them the shame of drawing it” (*CW* 3:79).

Rousseau can anticipate the ridiculous caricature of his portraits because he recognizes the blindness of “respectable People,” whether travelers, historians, men of letters, authors, philosophers, scientists, or clergy, who cannot see “Man in Society,” in any but their own appearance. In their view, a rejection of civil man is a rejection of man in society. They cannot conceive of “men like [Rousseau,]” who share and participate in the good found in savage man’s portrait, both of whom “respect the sacred bonds of the Societies of which they are members.” Rousseau is like a savage man in his own society, not because he is separate or solitary but because he, like the “savages,” “scrupulously obey[s] the Laws, and the men who are their

Authors and Ministers, honor[ing] above all the good and wise Princes" of his society. The note ends in the exhortation of a citizen author to his fellow men and fellow citizens, not unlike the exhortation of Fabricius that appears in the *First Discourse* and that is discussed in the introduction of this dissertation, or of Persius's "hero" in the third *Satire*, which appears at the end of the preface.

The note makes the framework of portraiture explicit and visible to those who have not yet taken their seats in the Lyceum. He addresses both his adversaries and his brothers, calling his entire audience to participate in his political portraiture. Rousseau treats his "judges" as better than they are because they are men, whether they recognize Man—conceptually or in themselves. Thus, whether his readers have properly understood all his preparations or whether they remain like those who read him as encouraging a return to the woods and to walking on all fours, Rousseau continues to elevate his audience though a self-reflective return to the fundamental features of his discursive method.

A Word to Close

Before reaching the end of the first part of the *Discourse*, Rousseau has depicted his subject. He moves away from the "physical" and "moral" features of his figure, having "demonstrated" already his "good" character, and dedicates the remainder of the section to previewing the relationship between this Man and men. Without losing sight of the portrait, the aporetic digression on the origin of language that follows presents the problem of universals as an aspect of the problem of self-knowledge. The quasi-historical exploration of language highlights the precarious relationship between species and individual, in and among men, as well as in the idea of Man itself.

"Without recourse to the uncertain testimonies of History," Rousseau does not engage in historical linguistics or even provide a historical picture of the development of language. Every advancement of technology, brought about through and over time, is left to the readers' imagination: "let us suppose this first difficult conquered; let us skip over for a moment the immense distance there must have been between the pure state of Nature and the need for Languages" (30). Rousseau places the burden on the reader to move between these static depictions. Rousseau's vision problematizes these moments without resolving them, raising them to the attention of the reader, who may be prone to overlook these difficulties as they are ordinarily presented in a scientific and historical context. It is not that Rousseau is primarily concerned with the historical possibility of language—that language exists at least mollifies this obstacle— but with contemporary attitudes which so much diminish these difficulties, even in their zeal as men of letters to see them resolved, as to obscure both the form and substance of the question.

Rousseau's reflection on the origin of language culminates in the need for abstraction and abstract reasoning in communities. Adam named creation when he was alone in the garden, but language, Rousseau argues, arises for want of communication. Communication requires names and things, particulars and generals, and a wholly artificial agreement on the relationship between the abstract sign and the object signified: "Men finally thought to substitute articulations of the voice…a substitution which cannot be made except by common consent" (*CW* 3:31). All abstractions, including this substitution, are "not very natural Operations" (*CW* 2:32). It is "moral or Political" because "it depends upon a sort of convention and is established, or at least authorized, by the consent of Men" (*CW* 3:18). The images of Man, pictured here and across Rousseau's writings, are moral and political, in both their conception and upon reflection.

The "first Institutors" of language, without "regard to genus or Species," perform a moral and political act in naming all "individual things" (*CW* 3:32). Adam is sovereign over the world even while alone in the world because he names the animals—he establishes and authorizes these name by his consent. Even though these things are isolated nominally and in the "*tableau* of Nature," the existence of their particular names and their appearance in the tableau point to a moral and political ordering by a moral and political being. A *tableau* of Nature is no more natural than a name—it is established by the moral vision of the depicter of the objects under view.

The organization and categorization of "beings under common and generic denominations," the creation of "genus" and "species," requires knowledge of "properties" and "differences," "observations and definitions," and "Natural History and Metaphysics" (*CW* 2:32). That "Natural man," is called "Natural man," and not by a particular name, that he is depicted through portraiture, in contrast to competing portraits of man, indicate that he is an object of either scientific or metaphysical study. He possesses a species and is recognizable—however obliquely—as the same kind of being with the same properties as the citizen or civil man, as men as we see them today. With the scientific questioned resolved or assumed (that these beings belong to the same species), we are left with the metaphysical differences that allow us to distinguish not between one kind of animal and another but between members of the same species—that allows us to see men in Man and judge what is best for the individual and the species.

Rousseau concludes the digression, and the broader framework of his portrait of Man, by "beg[ging]" his "Judges to suspend their Reading here to consider" the little care taken by Nature to bring Men together…and how little it contributed to everything men have done to establish Social bonds" (*CW* 2:33). As the preface prepares the portrait, the digression ends Rousseau's portraiture proper by not only suspending the investigation of the image of Man—which happens at, or just before, the beginning of the digression—but by addressing the audience and explicitly recontextualizing what has come before in the context of portraiture. Rousseau, as author, steps into frame to address his Judges and ask them to suspend their reading. He asks his Judges to consider a political question with fresh eyes. The "Judges" who ask whether inequality is "authorized by natural law" are called to examine anew the role of nature and "natural law" in both the established social bonds among men and in relations between men altogether. Rousseau, as a man among men, citizen in the Republic, addresses his fellows and clears their eyes, removing both materialist and religious assumptions and empowering men to see themselves as they are: free, moral beings with the ability to build political institutions befitting of men.

Chapter 4: *Imago Hominis, Imago Feminae*

Abstract: The *Emile* contains portraits of Emile and Sophie. In the previous chapter, I presented the portrait of man contained in the Second Discourse not as an *imago dei* but as an *imago hominis.* I begin this chapter by considering the problem of Sophie and of women for man's being made or remade in the image of man, considering the whole picture of Sophie, and likewise the whole literary chimera, in the whole picture of man. Without losing sight of our subjects, I turn to Rousseau's authorial presentation of himself as man, citizen, and midwife in the title page and preface, which constitutes the first important shift in his readers' vision of self-knowledge. This shift in perspective moves from the "ill-drawn" education of the age to the "true study" of man in Emile. Something like—and yet unlike—this procedure is repeated as the portrait entangles with further images and images of images are prepared and introduced. This is especially prominent in the introduction of Homer and Fenelon's Telmachuses and Athenas, where the tutoress is exchanged for the tutor amid other exchanges and complications. This complex of images comes to its climax in the meeting of Emile and Sophie that assumes and is interpenetrated by all these other relationships. Rousseau forms man in the image of Man, which is at once an arduous and delicate process, modeled in the *Emile* through masculine and feminine metaphor.

Emile and Sophie Depicted

Rousseau's rejection of biblical anthropology ought not to be a revelation: that man is *imago hominis* rather than *imago dei* is a doctrine almost as popular as it is impious. It might at first appear to mean only that he is, at his best, either the classical hero who determines his own fate or the modern master of self-determination and authentic identity. Each of these appearances has some warrant in Rousseau's writings, and yet neither adequately captures the role of the relationship between image and imagination, between the subject and the portrait. The revelation, then, is the mode in which Rousseau reveals this image. In the *Second Discourse,* as in the *Emile,* Rousseau does not merely set aside the facts of faith and science but recasts them into his own image.

Instead of the deity who walks with man in the garden in the cool of the day, Rousseau presents his tutor and his Emile. Because of his place of birth (the countryside), his nature (he has “eyes” to see), and his circumstances (he has leisure), the child will naturally notice men laboring in the fields (98). It belongs to “every age” of man, even children, to “want to create, imitate, produce, give signs of power and activity;” it is thus enough to expose the child to gardening to make him “want to garden in his turn” (98). “I,” says Rousseau the author or, more probably, Jean-Jaques the tutor, “in no way oppose his desire,” and, “on the contrary, I encourage it, I share his taste. I work with him, not for his pleasure, but for mine; at least he believes it to be so. I become the gardener’s helper” (98). The narrator works the earth and the child plants the beans. Each day, they return to the garden to tend to the beans and watch joyfully as they sprout. The narrator impresses upon the child that the beans belong to the child and explains what “belongs” means. The narrator, through his instruction, makes the child feel “his person” in the plants, “that there is on this earth something of himself that he can claim against anyone whomsoever” (98).

One day, when they return to tend to the beans, they discover that the beans have been “rooted out, the plot” torn up—the spot is unrecognizable. The “young heat is aroused” and begins to feel “the first sentiment of injustice.” the narrator joins in the child’s “pain and indignation” before they turn to investigating, searching, and looking for the source of this injustice (99). They discover the gardener, who readily admits to the deed, but explains that it is they and not he who has committed the injustice. The two have planted their beans over the gardener’s rare melons, destroying the irreplaceable fruit and depriving themselves “the pleasure of eating exquisite melons” (99). A dialogue ensues, begun by Jean-Jacques, between JJ, Robert, and Emile in which JJ repents and repays Robert by providing new melon seeds and promising never to work the land again without first “knowing whether someone has put his hand to it before” (99). Emile is unsatisfied with this arrangement—he still lacks a garden. Robert explains that almost all “fallow land” has been claimed and it is passed down from father to son. It is not Robert’s concern that Emile has no garden, but JJ proposes an arrangement whereby Emile may plant in a small section of Robert’s if he gives him half of his produce. Robert agrees and the dialogue ends.

The dialogue is the first narrative or ‘historical’ dialogue in the novel. One dialogue appears before this, but it serves as the “formula to which all the narratives of morality that are given, and can be given, to children can just about be reduced” (90). The first dialogue does not name its participants but refers to the speakers according to their titles and their relations to each other—one as master, the other as child. The master forbids the child from some action. When the child asks, “why,” the master responds that it is bad, and it is bad because it is forbidden. The child asks why it is bad to do what is forbidden and the master, without directly answering the child, responds that the punishment is the consequence for disobedience. The child tells the master that he will conceal, hide, and lie to the master to avoid this, to which the master responds that it is bad to do so, and the dialogue ends where it began, forming a vicious cycle. This dialogue is not a part of Emile’s education but a distillation of the alternative. The garden scene is easily taken in the context of the origin of property, with practical political application to social contract theory. Understood in the context of Rousseau’s method, there is a larger point to be made about the moral and metaphysical status of man: the contest between the biblical image of Adam and his helper, and their usurpation in God’s Garden, and the picture of Emile and his helper, and their appropriation of Robert’s garden, mirrors the contest between the two dialogues and their narrative depictions of morality.

In Genesis, God plants the garden (2:8) and puts man “in the garden of Eden to work it and keep it” (2:15). Though Adam mixes his labor with the trees of the garden, he is not the original planter and does not own them. Out of his abundant goodness, God allows Adam to freely eat of anything except the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. He commands Adam not to eat of this tree by his Authority (2:17). Like the master of the first dialogue, God forbids and punishes without condescending to explain himself to the child. That Adam will die if he eats the fruit is, for Rousseau, not the explanation of why it is bad to eat the fruit but the punishment that sidesteps the child's natural curiosity. Immediately after this warning to Adam, God provides a "helper fit for him," since "it is not good that he man should be alone" (2:18).

Where God gives Adam Eve, Rousseau gives Emile his tutor. His tutor is now textually located in her place; he will be tempted by the serpent. It is thus fitting that Rousseau frames the second dialogue, or the first narrative dialogue, thus: "On this earth, out of which nature has made man's first paradise, dread exercising the tempter's function by wanting to give innocence the knowledge of good and evil" (96). Where Eve is tempted by the serpent and tempts Adam in turn, the tutor shields Emile from the temptation in the garden. In their respective dialogue, Jean-Jacques speaks first, not as the master commanding his child, but as the tempted answering and taking responsibility for the wrong done—whether or not he was ultimately responsible for the sin in question. Where Adam responds like the child and hides from God, shirking responsibility, the tutor manages the situation such that Emile is not in the place of Adam before he is a man. He gives him "some idea of the relations of man to man and of the morality of human actions" while taking him "a long way" in his "first innocence" (97).

As a whole, the *Emile* presents the same kind of problem. The image presented in Emile and his tutor naturally leads the reader to think that the text is, fundamentally, on the practice of education. This reading, however, according to Rousseau, is akin to thinking that Plato's *Republic* is a work fundamentally concerned with the practice of politics: the *Republic "*is not at all a political work, as think those who judge books only by their titles." Rather, "it is the most beautiful educational treatise ever written" (40).[98] The subject of the portrait is indeed education; Emile and the tutor are the model—for the portrait rather than for the reader. That is, man's pursuit of self-knowledge here takes as its object of study the picture of Emile's education, not so that one may replicate the model but so that he may understand his own understanding. Rousseau‘s essentially political project, in presenting man's quest for self-knowledge or knowledge of knowledge, is embodied in Emile and in the *Emile*. It is not a syllabus or an outline for some course of study; rather, it is a moral, metaphysical, and political reflection on the formation on men or the development of man as image of Man.

As with Emile, so with Sophie—or, perhaps, as with man as man, so with woman as woman. The reader naturally considers Sophie in the context of some practical or literal point about Rousseau's attitude toward women or, with some reflection, as a superior model of education.[99] Whether, however, Rousseau ultimately subordinates woman to man or subverts such subordination, even this determination depends upon or explains man as metaphysical and moral rather than offering a realized political program of feminine subordination or exaltation. Consideration of Rousseau's consistent methodology encourages the reader to change perspective here, too. Rousseau's woman, in an almost perverse reapplication of the biblical mode, recapitulates the image of man that man is by making her, if not the glory of the glory of man, then certainly the image of his image. By the end of the *Emile*, in journeying to the realm where the social contract of the *Social Contract* seems to hold sway, the moral and metaphysical reading of man reaches another doubled climax. It is not some social- or natural-scientific experiment where the strictures and provisions of the social contract (or *Social Contract*) are implemented. This journey instead prepares the reader to take Rousseau's interpretation of the *Republic* to its natural conclusion: whoever reads that text as fundamentally concerned with the literal or low sense of the political is, in the end, anathema. This reading of the *Emile* prepares the reader of the *Social Contract* for something more than a hyper-literal presentation of various constitutional provisions; the social contract itself becomes a portrait of Man (and one with no less impious a suggestion about the relationship between the divine and human will than is Rousseau's broader account of Man).

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[98] For the connection between the *Republic* and *Emile,* see Allan Bloom, "Introduction" in *Emile,* 1979 and David Lay Williams, *Rousseau's Platonic Enlightenment,* 2007.

[99] For studies of Sophie and women in Rousseau's political thought, see Susan Okin, "Rousseau's Natural Woman." *The Journal of Politics* 41 (1979): 393-416; Denise Schaeffer, "Reconsidering the Role of Sophie in Rousseau's" Emile"." *Polity* 30 (1998): 607-626; Joel Schwartz, *The Sexual Politics of Jean-Jacques Rousseau* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1984; Penny Weiss, "Rousseau, Antifeminism, and Woman's Nature." *Political Theory* 15 (1987): 81–98; and Penny Weiss, "Sex, Freedom & Equality in Rousseau's" Emile"." *Polity* 22 (1990): 603-625.

The *Emile*, then, is no more educational than the *Second Discourse* is scientific or the *Social Contract* political—and no less. To that end, I begin with the problem of Sophie and of women for man's being made or remade in the image of man, indicating the necessity of considering the whole picture of Sophie, and likewise the whole literary chimera, in the whole picture of man. Next, I argue that Rousseau's triple presentation of himself as man, citizen, and midwife in the title page and preface constitutes the first important shift in his readers' vision of self-knowledge. This turn allows for the introduction of Emile to be first prepared (in the introduction or internal preface to Book I) and then enacted, moving from the "ill-drawn" education of the age to the "true study" of man in Emile as both idea and real likeness.

Something like—and yet unlike—this procedure is repeated within the portrait as Emile prepares for and begins to imagine Sophie, even as the picture becomes more entangled as further images and images of images are prepared and introduced. This is especially prominent in the introduction of Homer and Fenelon's Telmachuses and Athenas, where the tutoress is exchanged for the tutor amid other exchanges and complications. This complex of images comes to its climax in the meeting of Emile and Sophie that assumes and is interpenetrated by all these other relationships. Finally, I discuss Emile's introduction to the realm governed by the social contract, as an introduction to the study of the *Social Contract* itself. The image of such a society ought to be understood in the light of the image of Emile (and the *Emile*); similarly, the *Social Contract* is enriched when account is taken of its own status as a portrait of a state, which is the subject of the next and final chapter.

Although the introduction of Emile may seem almost unduly delayed in this presentation of Rousseau's method, the effect is intentional. As indicated in the garden dialogue, "In the career of moral ideas one cannot advance too slowly nor consolidate oneself too well at each step" (99). Rousseau does not delay to suspend innocent before the fall but deals with his pupil according to his nature and at the pace that is appropriate for his task—forming man in the image of Man is, at once, an arduous and delicate process, modeled in the *Emile* through masculine and feminine metaphor.

Text and Sex in the *Emile*

Rousseau's infamous discussion of women at the end of Emile comes within the fifth and final act of the work (357). What we find there, then, is not the climax to the education of Emile but its denouement: Emile's first meeting with Sophie and the beginnings of his political education which follows. As scholars have noted, Sophie's own education and role within the work speaks not only to Rousseau's conception of relations between the sexes but also to the status of wholeness within his broader project. Emile is the true natural man in society, to the detriment of Sophie, or Sophie and Emile are together supposed to be the unity of natural and social man, or perhaps Sophie herself disrupts the possibility for this unity in a way both more approachable and more possible for the reader. Whether they ultimately condemn Rousseau or not, these scholars demonstrate the fruitfulness of taking these sections seriously.

Rousseau's presentation of Emile's and Sophie's relationship problematizes not only the possibility of familial unity or feminine unity but also Rousseau's goal of unity as such.[100] A reconsideration of Emile's and Sophie's relationship, within the framework of competing alternatives (the Bible, Homer, Fenelon) which Rousseau himself invokes, suggests that Emile's condition is neither pure psychological unity nor a second-best alternative. Instead, Sophie and Emile embody a complex image that Rousseau explicitly declines to simplify or collate. The whole result is not merely a corruption of Rousseau's purported sources, and yet Rousseau does take on and twist (or re-imagine) them. His man, depicted in the image and images of Emile and Sophie, is likewise neither a separation nor a blending of the sexes. Man is entirely man.

It is important therefore to look at the whole picture, rather than, for instance, only the gap between Emile's imagination of Sophie and the 'real' Sophie. The idea of Sophie, provided by the tutor at the end of Book IV, is indeed markedly different from our actual Sophie. A comparison of the chimerical Sophie, whom Rousseau initially presents to Emile, and the 'real' Sophie, who is introduced to the reader before meeting Emile, highlights the discrepancy between not only the presentation of Sophie to Emile and Sophie to the reader but also of the actual meeting of Sophie and Emile. Just as the idea of Sophie is in some ways a “chimera,” Rousseau’s presentation of Sophie in “Sophie” or “La Femme” may in some ways be chimerical. In comparing Sophie’s reception of Fenelon’s Telemachus, Emile’s Homeric Telemachus, Sophie’s projection of Telemachus on Emile, and Emile’s subsequent use of her Telemachus, Rousseau does not amalgamate the imaginations of Sophie and Emile but presents them, with his own guidance, to the reader.

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[100] See especially Arthur Melzer, *The Natural Goodness of Man: On the System of Rousseau's Thought.* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990), 245-49 and Joel Schwartz, *The Sexual Politics of Jean-Jacques Rousseau* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1984), 43-45.

This complex image or complex of images is political without being programmatic for politics. Rousseau is not attempting to reconcile men and women as though to resolve the social difficulties of sex but to make man consider himself. The literary chimera remains the union of natural and not artificial objects, however conjoined, and so remains neither truly grotesque nor even truly multifarious. Rousseau’s Man would surpass his biblical counterpart by not being created both singly and jointly (as God creates *man* in his image, male and female he created *them*) but by adding to this apparently divine thing the very human conceit of literary diversity. Indeed, even this literary account of man and women is incorporated into Rousseau’s man, which must, if the argument holds, necessarily surpass by encompassing it. This kind of unity, which is both natural and literary, is entirely political, and thus the proper study of the *Emile* is not properly natural or literary but political. Whether Rousseau is ‘proto-feminist’ (on the grounds that Emile and Sophie are equal, or that Sophie is better) or ‘neo-patriarchal’ (on the grounds that Emile is better) is, once again, largely beside the point of the work as a whole. Rousseau’s transformed but derivative version of the ambiguity of the biblical narrative, along with the equivalents for the other literary sources of the work and the original compositions of the characters, indicates the chimerical character of his vision and defies easy categorization into existing or emerging political movements.

A Midwife of Self-Knowledge and of the Public and Private Good

The preface to *Emile* establishes this literary diversity in a way that bears comparison to both *Julie* and the *Second Discourse*. *Emile*¸ like Rousseau's *Julie*, is a "collection" or novel named after the central but fictional figure of Rousseau's own making. Whereas *Julie* is a collection of letters between the two imaginary lovers, *Emile* is a collection of Rousseau's "reflections and observations," recalling the reflections and observations of the *Second Discourse*. Whereas judges, both "real" and "imagined," invited Rousseau to reflect and observe man, these reflections and observations were occasioned by a "good mother who knows how to think" and in some way involve or connect to his chimerical pupil's education and development. Rousseau's "*mémoire"* of his life as a tutor to his fantastical student shares *Julie's* ambiguity of what is real and what is fictional, even while it more readily admits this ambiguity to its reader (50).

Drawn in by his "subject" (33) in *Emile* as he was "inflamed" for his "imaginary beings" in *Julie* (*CW* 1:548), Rousseau's judgment that "it is important to turn public intention in this direction," whatever the reception, leads him to claim and "present it as it is" (33). As in his other writings, Rousseau directs the gaze of his audience away from its current object and toward a new one, focused as much on how to see as what to look at. The frankness with which Rousseau presents his vision, even if an unpopular one, matches his posture in both *Julie* and the *Second Discourse*. The charms of pastoral romance and the rigors of scientific travel give way to the true *Julie* and the true *Second Discourse*, as scholarship and curriculum will give way to the true *Emile*.

Rousseau writes this novel and presents the education of his pupil as “a man.” He is perhaps advanced in age but certainly removed from active public life of the ordinary kind, without “boosters” or “party,” who “casts his pages out among the public,” without “knowing what is thought or said about them.” Rousseau enjoins those whose vision, as capacity and as object, he wishes to turn: “Readers, always remember that he who speaks to you is neither a scholar nor a philosopher, but a simple man, a friend of the truth, without party, without system; a solitary who, living little among men, has less occasion to contract their prejudices and more time to reflect on what strikes him when he has commerce with them” (110). Rousseau reminds his reader of the perspective from which he writes the text in Book II, immediately after presenting history as a moral study and refuting history as “only a collection of facts” (110). If collections are not merely collections, then *Emile* is no more a collection of “reflections and observations” than *Julie* is a collection of letters. Likewise, the *Second Discourse* begins by “setting all the facts aside, for they do not affect the question” (CW 3.19).

If always as a man, Rousseau also writes first, if the title page is to be believed, as a citizen of Geneva. Thus, the man/citizen dichotomy presented in the first book is at least formally addressed in Rousseau’s presentation of himself as author. His authorship as an image supersedes the practical (even the theoretical) problem of this distinction at the heart of political philosophy. Without resolving whether he writes sometimes as a man, sometimes as a citizen, or as a man and a citizen, it is nonetheless remarkable that both figures appear before and frame the portrait that follows. The reader ought not only to ask about Emile’s status or the compatibility of any such statuses but Rousseau’s and the character of the inquiry orpicture itself.

Whether Rousseau is a citizen or a man or both, he adopts much of the same posture as the *Second Discourse,* where he writes as a citizen, and as Julie, where he explicitly (and purposefully) does not.[101] Like the opening of the *Second Discourse*, Rousseau distinguishes his approach from apparently similar but fundamentally different projects. He will "say little of the importance of a good education;" nor "stop to prove that the current one is bad" (33). Like the second Preface, his approach separates him and his book from "the literature and learning of our age," which "tend more to destruction than to edification" (33). Like the man of letters in the second Preface or the poets of Persius's Rome, the authors who dare write on education do so with a sneer—without concern for their pupils, they write to humiliate others to vaunt themselves. Rousseau adopts "another kind of tone—one less agreeable to philosophic haughtiness" to provide something truly useful for the public. "In spite of so many writings having [this] as their end," they forget entirely "the first of all useful things, the art of forming men" (33). The author concerned with public utility ought to write to make men. At least in the framing of *Emile*, there is no apparent contradiction or conflict between making men and making men good for the public.

The much-discussed distinction between amour propre and amour de soi finds some relevance here. One tends to think of Rousseau as conceited or self-regarding, but this is precisely his critique of others and the very thing that prevents their work (on science, on education, on politics) from benefiting anyone. It is Rousseau's love of himself in his love of Man that makes him love men as they are to the degree that he wishes to make them into Man as he is or ought to be. Only by being focused on one's own—but not one's self—can Rousseau arrange things in this way for himself and for his readers. Rousseau's project is moral and metaphysical and therefore political, or political and therefore moral and metaphysical, but it is never merely political in the low legal or constitutional sense and never merely moral and metaphysical in the sense of things belonging to some other world.

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[101] Cf. N. "On the title page of a love story we will read these words: *By J.J. ROUSSEAU, Citizen of Geneva!"* R: "*Citizen of Geneva?* No, not that." (*CW* 6:20).

As if man or citizen were not enough, Rousseau adds a third authorial identification: in Socratic fashion, Rousseau portrays himself as a kind of philosophic midwife [cf. 152a], whose “ideas may be bad,” but nevertheless “cause others to give birth to good ones” (33). Rousseau, like Socrates, is not the father who engenders a new man upon the old, replicating his own nature directly in his offspring. In fact, the product is even more his offspring because this indirect means of production removes or refines what might have persisted through mere re-production. Rousseau, like Socrates, is also not the mother. The comparisons to Plato’s *Theaetetus* extend beyond this image—it is in this dialogue, after all, that Socrates searches for a promising student (who happens to be an orphan) to investigate what knowledge is and what its relationship is to man. Where Socrates acts as a kind of midwife to *Theaetetus* and Plato to his readers, Rousseau’s role as midwife may be doubly depicted as a kind of “real” midwife to the “good mother” and a figurative one in so far as she “knows how to think.” Emile’s life follows this same pattern. Without giving birth to Emile himself, Rousseau nonetheless helps conceive Emile near the beginning of the work and Emile’s son at the end. These “real” figurative births are followed, if we believe Rousseau the tutor succeeds, by doubly figurative births—where each figure “gives birth” to good ideas and knows how to be a man.

As midwife, Rousseau prepares the ‘expectant’ parents by reproving their false confidence: “Childhood is unknown.” The starting point of the investigation is “the false idea one has of it,” as the starting point for the investigation of man’s origins was the false ideas attributable to false science as well as to false faith. Rousseau does not begin with a positive presentation of his idea but prepares for the conception of his readers’ ideas by correcting their existing impressions. Observers and ‘parents’ alike are too ready to advance without first reflecting on their own capacities: “The wisest men concentrate on what it is important for men to know without considering what children are in a condition to learn. They are always seeking the man in the child without thinking of what he is before being a man” (33-34). Conception as metaphor here functions similarly to sight as metaphor elsewhere—Rousseau seamlessly moves from one to the other as he moves from his negative project to his positive one. “Wise” men see like they conceive—the anticipation of conception is overshadowed by some imagined future, which is itself impossible without preparing for and rightly recognizing what it is that is being conceived and how that can be cultivated to become phenomenologically what it is metaphysically. The Spirit overshadowing the Virgin, no less than the sage overshadowing the student, will, if Rousseau’s logic is extended from man to the Son of Man, make for misconception.

Rousseau, on the other hand, dedicates his “study” to “what [man] is before being a man;” it is not the study of childhood per se, although childhood is the natural metaphor (34). Physically, man is a child before he is a man. To discover what man is, metaphysically, before being a man, Rousseau follows the development of his imaginary pupil. Emile never “really” becomes a man—he exists only as a figure in the novel—but his becoming a man is the subject of the portrait, the object of the author, and the object lesson for the audience. In this way, as indicated, Rousseau’s investigation of origins in the *Second Discourse* seeks not the childhood of mankind or the childhood of this or that man, but what man is before he is man.

Even if Rousseau’s “vision of what must be done” is “poor,” he has “seen clearly the subject on which one must work.” Rousseau does not claim to have seen how to implement his education or the method by which one really raises men. His observations “could still be of profit" even though his "entire method were chimerical and false." It is not a question of what is fictional or real in his portrait of Emile, what can be or has been or never will be, but what the whole picture of Emile's education can show us about Man and men that reflect both the moral freedom that characterizes Man and the social condition that characterizes men. The portrait of Emile captures various aspects from the previous portraits and portrays them in a single picture. This is public and useful without ever being merely practical or programmatic.

The beginning of this portrait, like all portraiture, is self-knowledge, here depicted through the metaphor of tutor and pupil: "Begin, then, by studying your pupils better. For most assuredly, you do not know them at all." Knowledge of knowledge requires knowledge of all the constituent parts of the education, of tutor and pupil separately and together. The reader at this moment is in a deficit of knowledge in both respects and understands himself neither as tutor of the pupil nor as pupil of the tutor. The particular appearance of this concept, embodied in the tutor/pupil relationship, is not entirely new. Persius's third *Satire,* referenced in the Preface of the *Second Discourse*, likewise envisions the problem of self-knowledge as a dialogue between "an intolerant young student" and "his tutor" (Braund 72). In both cases, the lesson is not for the benefit of the imaginary pupil but for the reader of the dialogue or audience or viewer of the portrait: "Now if you read this book with this in view, I believe it will not be without utility to you."[102] Thus the first appearance of utility in the Preface concerns the public, the second the reader. The first of all useful things, which initially seemed to pertain to public utility only, is now broadened to include personal utility. Self-knowledge is good particularly and generally, for individuals and for the species, for "themselves and for others" (35). Self-knowledge, like self-love, is precisely the sort which is for each of these and not one or the other only.

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[102] For another treatment of the reader's education, see John T. Scott, *Rousseau's Reader: Strategies of Persuasion and Education* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press: 2020).

If we follow the logic of the metaphor, Rousseau is textually the tutor and thus situated as the defender or apologist of self-knowledge, against both his pupil and the reader. The particular defense of self-knowledge to Emile and the general apology to his readers captures both the man and the citizen and justifies his dual presentation of himself as a man and the citizen of Geneva. The reader who believes "that what is being read is less an educational treatise than a visionary's dreams about education" is perhaps not wrong but is misguided. Looking for a practicable or "real education," condemning a "fictional" or chimerical one, he misses the "basis" of Rousseau's project, which is not externally motivated by "others' ideas" but by the truth (34). Again, a comparison to the *Second Discourse* is instructive: those that think Rousseau's account is a visionary's dream about man's origins rather than a scientific treatise, who condemn it is as fiction, miss the point, even if the other sort of critic is further still from the truth.

Rousseau's persistent use of visual metaphor returns and reinforces his search for self-knowledge: "I do not see as do other men." He is a visionary or is revisionary because he rejects the faulty vision of others and seeks to replace this faculty with true sight, rather than merely substituting one set of observations with another. Rousseau acknowledges the public "reproach" he receives for this but nevertheless persists, in Socratic fashion, "not to believe that I alone am wiser than everybody" and to "distrust" his own sentiments for the sake of self-knowledge. The emphasis is not on himself or on his self but on the faculty of self-knowledge understood as a kind of sight or vision. If he indeed sees better than anyone else, this is not so much a declaration of self-importance as it is of a commitment to self-knowledge.

Rousseau always joins his "sentiments" to his "reasons," so that "they may be weighed and [he] judged" (34). As the Rousseau of the second Preface to *Julie* places his interlocutor in the position to judge the manuscript, he likewise here situates his reader as judge. Rousseau, in his capacity as author, has already judged his work to be good and does not “doubt at all” the truth of what he presents to us. His “obligation to propose” these “maxims” are “not matters of indifference” but “are among those whose truth or falsehood is important to know and which make the happiness or the unhappiness of mankind.” One must then compare to Rousseau’s own the “poisoned maxims,” ceaselessly proclaimed by “authors, men of letters, philosophers,” that in the name of civic duty impel men to their misery (*CW* 6.14): Rousseau does not “propose doing what is done,” (34) to bolster his reputation in the public eye but an “entirely fresh” (33) project that is “acceptable and practicable in itself,” and that “is good” according to its “nature” (34). Rousseau does not seek an abstract conception of the good or what is good apart from man; his metaphysics and morals are embodied and political. At the same time, he rejects those who, putting “civic duty” forward as the proper subject for serious men, only end up with miserable advice for miserable men.

The “proposed education” ought to be “suitable for man and well adapted to the human heart” and must thus answer what man is before it can be accomplished. He does not forgo philosophy and philosophic reasoning because he disagrees with philosophers; on the contrary, Rousseau’s argument is that the philosophers are not philosophic enough. They too readily conform with the fashions of the day or, at best, ally their philosophy with “the existing evil.” Their projects are “much more chimerical” because they do not begin with self-knowledge but self-importance, pretending to know what they have never examined, guided by vanity rather than truth.

The proposed education then is not an education suitable only for a chimerical pupil, which is perhaps obvious enough, but neither is it, in any ordinary sense, an education for children at all: the “particular applications, not being essential to [his] subject, do not enter into [his] plan” (35). It is an education for mankind to manhood, reflections and observations of what man is, and a *memoire* of Man himself: “wherever men are born, what I propose can be done with them; and that, having done what I propose, what is best both for themselves and for others will have been done.” This is not the profession of a cosmopolitan regime for educating the children of the world, but the demand first that men be born again, so to speak, as men, and then that they be conformed to the likeness of man.

Separating the Good from the Bad

The *Emile* does not begin with Emile. It is only after a number of pages that we meet our hero and that the portrait proper begins. The beginning of the book that precedes this introduction acts as a kind of in-text preface, preparing the reader to view and judge the goodness of what follows according to its nature. Unlike the actual preface, this preparation occurs within the text and is thus a part of the whole portrait of Emile, even if it precedes the figure. Before imagining Emile, the reader must reimagine certain categories, and convenient and fashionable thoughts about those categories. Rousseau establishes this new vision with what at first presents itself as a theological, or perhaps political, statement. Rousseau appears to begin the work with an unargued or even axiomatic theodicy: “Everything is good as it leaves the hands of the Author of things; everything degenerates in the hands of man” (37).[103]

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[103] Compare to the opening of the Second Discourse, where Rousseau observes man in his being, without “all the supernatural gifts he could have received and of all the artificial faculties he could only have acquired by long progress,” as what he is without God or nature, time or progress. Rousseau examines him, “so to speak, in the first Embryo of the species,” and considers him, “in a word, as he must have come from the hands of Nature (*CW* 3.25). (Cf. Chapter 3, pg. 13).

The sentiment strikes the reader as neither entirely optimistic nor entirely pessimistic, and the idea may quickly form that Rousseau affirms original goodness alongside the historical and ongoing effects of the Fall, albeit without reference to redemption. Or perhaps the metaphysical or ontological distinction between creature and creator, apart from any narrative of sin, is in view: God is the kind of being who sends good things into the world, and man is the kind of being who makes them worse. Yet such biblical or philosophical anthropology seems to break down on closer review and as Rousseau unfolds his argument. The title of "Author of things" seems to be an appropriate, if not entirely pious, moniker for the Christian God—until Rousseau introduces two competing categories only a few lines later. Not only are there *things* but *nature* and *men* (38). It is not immediately clear whether "the Author of things" is also the Author of nature or the Author of men.

Whatever the status of this creator, it is nonetheless remarkable that Rousseau, in a work of self-knowledge on man and for men, begins by emphasizing and drawing attention to "things" as the subject and not nature or men. Is this an attack on men as men or on the works of the Author (whether things or nature or men)? If man is at the peak of the work of the Author, why is he the decisively degenerative element? As seen elsewhere, man's divine image is supplanted not by a more divine man but by a more manly or indeed by a more humane man. In one sense, Rousseau as author is Author of things, and his critical public is the source of the degeneration of those same things. More optimistically, of course, this apparent theodicy is not just a description of how Rousseau's writings might be ineffectual but how they would succeed. However men now receive the works of Rousseau as the Author of things, his preparation here might make them recover from their tendency toward degeneration, not as the application of divine grace but as the implementation of a more human method. In this sense, the declaration is a statement of fact and an exhortation to the reader and to himself. This simultaneous acknowledgment and encouragement serves as the first step in revealing Emile himself as yet another work of the Author.

At the same time, Man himself occupies the same position textually as, if he is not also simply the complete analogue for, the Author of things. Both act on without being acted upon. Man is subject rather than object; he is the unmoved mover. Both possess a kind of freedom, though man's seems to be bad where the Author's is good. In the preface, Rousseau calls "what is good," that which is in "the nature of thing" (34). If we use this understanding of goodness to read and understand the opening line, then it is clear that "everything is good as it leaves the hands of the Author of things" is less a theodicean presupposition or apology for the Christian God than it is a logical necessity that flows from the definition of these terms. (What's good is what is, or what is by nature.) Yet it is not merely a bare metaphysical or moral truth apart from the political quest for self-knowledge, not least because it is here asserted not to establish forever some abstract truth but because it is the opening salvo in the attempt to reeducate man for freedom.

That which made things what they are had to make them good; things cannot be apart from what they are as they come into being. Once things exist, however, they can change. Rousseau does not say that man works evil but that things "degenerate," or become less like what they were, in his hands. Man mixes soil, crossbreeds trees, "mixes and confuses the climates, the elements, the seasons"— he is a creative force unto himself, and a force over and against the Author of things. The divine author may make things good in some original sense, but it is without any dialectical power of creation and recreation. What man degenerates, he makes good again. The divine act of creation is a series of separation of principles (light from darkness, land from sea, and so forth) and of things according to their kinds. Free human action is a series of admixtures, confusions, and indeed chimeras—the intermingling of things of different natures that then grow up together.

Man “wants nothing as nature made it, not even man.” There is a potentially evil meaning to this, so to speak, but it does not predominate over the good one; in fact, it cannot appear except from within that good meaning. Man’s natural freedom and perfectibility are captured in this compact opening. Man is free to perfect, and he does perfect. Without introducing good and evil, man’s freedom and perfectibility are “good,” ontologically speaking—Man is free, perfectible, and perfecting. Even though man sometimes perfects himself to unfreedom and disfigurement, “were he not to” form himself and all things in turn, “everything would go even worse” (37). Man is not fully formed until he is free to form and is forming. “Our species does not admit of being formed halfway;” Man cannot leave things, not even himself, as what they are because that is not what he is—natural Man is either everywhere or nowhere. Man degenerates except or until he becomes what he is by nature.

Rousseau thus situates the portrait of Emile “in the present state of things” (37). Though the reader follows Emile from his conception to manhood, Rousseau minimizes the temporal aspect and focuses on the present. Each book treats one stage of life, but the work as a whole is not a history. The transitions between stages and Emile's growth occur outside of the text between books. The reflections and observations Rousseau offers are, to the extent possible, removed from a historical narrative structure and presented as a series of vignettes that illustrate—by way of Emile’s portrait—this or that maxim concerning Man and the formation of men.

The care Rousseau takes to construct this image is not at odds with his commitment to finding Man and forming men in His image: “a man abandoned to himself in the midst of other men would be the most disfigured of all. Prejudice, authority, necessity, example, all the social institutions in which we find ourselves submerged would stifle nature in him” (37). Though Man is Man by nature, Nature does not necessarily produce the most “natural” man. Art and artifice are needed to form this figure; portraiture suits both its immediate subject (Emile) and Rousseau’s broader project. Rousseau clarifies this point through the image of a shrub that by chance had been born in the middle of a path. The shrub, left to itself, will “perish” among the passers-by “bending it in every direction” and requires cultivation to grow in that environment. Such cultivation is both the opposite and the fulfillment of the process of degeneration that all things undergo in the hands of man. As the father is replaced by or degenerated into the tutor and the author, the mother is also transformed.

Emile’s First Parents

In the preface, Rousseau credits “a good mother who knows how to think” for beginning this book. In the introduction, Rousseau addresses himself to the “tender and foresighted mother,” capable of “keeping the nascent shrub away from the highway and securing it from the impact of human opinions” (37-38). In his characteristic style, Rousseau breaks the sentence with a note which appears after the word “mother.” In the note, Rousseau carefully distinguishes between the ordinary idea of motherhood and “the sense that [he gives] to the name *mother*” (n38).

Ordinary motherhood needs no explanation; it entails both childbearing and childrearing. The sense that Rousseau himself gives to the name *mother* “must be explained” and “will” be explained (n38). He does not mention *mother* again after this note until he raises the example of the “woman of Sparta” who, though a mother, is not referred to as such until after the death of her children (40). For Rousseau, “the first education” belongs not to mothers as such but to women, as the natural nurses of children and not primarily as those who give birth (n37). Men are likewise excluded from this first education by virtue of being unable to nurse rather than by their lack of a capacity for pregnancy and birth: “If the Author of nature had wanted it to belong to men, He would have given them milk with which to nurse the children” (n37). It is only in speaking of a child’s unnatural disrespect for his mother that Rousseau raises the matter of pregnancy; that condition might create a special duty to respect mothers in a way unavailable to fathers, but it does not bear primarily upon a child’s “first education.”

Momentarily suspending the investigation of the relationship between “mothers,” women, and the first education, we ought to take note that the “Author” here is the “Author of nature” and not the “Author of things,” that appeared in parallel to man. The book begins with the “Author of things” and man; the first appearance of women occurs in a note with the “Author of nature.” The note functions as the introduction of women, and the ordinary opening functions as the introduction of men. Whether the “Author of things” and the “Author of nature” are one figure in different aspects or two distinct figures is still unclear, but what is clear is that Rousseau here pairs women with the Author of nature and man with the Author of things. It is also noteworthy that Rousseau begins with man (singular) and women (plural). Rousseau begins with self-knowledge, or what man is, but women do not receive that same treatment. Women may partake of Man, but it is clear there is no parallel concept, Woman. Whatever women’s association with nature through the ordinary understanding of childbearing and childrearing, there is, almost, no natural woman or no nature of woman.

I previously argued that man is textually situated as the parallel of the Author of things. It initially seems like the introduction of women parallels the introduction of men, and if this were the case, then women would be textually situated as the parallel of the Author of nature—but they are not. The introductions are not parallel, and women do not occupy that same textual status. They cannot compete with their respective Author but benefit from His favor; He gives them, and not men, the first education, and signals this preference through their physical differences. "The internal development of our faculties and our organs is the education of nature" and it is in this sense that the "first" and "most important" education belongs "incontestably" to "women" (37). Whereas man is almost resolved into the figure of the Author of things, women remain distinct from their Author, which, perhaps, is man as well. "For man did not come from woman but woman from man," as Rousseau might have indicated no less than, though with entirely different meaning from, St. Paul.

To fathers, Rousseau ascribes a long list of qualities which seem to derive from their more distant and indeed more political authority over their children. Fathers have a greater capacity to do damage, by their "ambition, avarice, tyranny, and false foresight, their negligence, their harsh insensitivity" (n38). Even in the "natural" and bodily note, moral qualities and ideas (including law and property) belong to men and fathers. Women do not enjoy the same freedom that characterizes natural man; they are "almost at the mercy of their children" and are, by nature, irrevocably tied to social relations.

Rousseau criticizes mothers for a specific kind of blindness that parallels the blindness of men but is unique to *mother*, that is, a "blind tenderness" for their children that at least seeks to make their children "happy, happy now." Mothers are right on this even if misguided; where fathers too often put off the happiness of the child now for a potential future good or happiness, mothers prioritize happiness now and "spoil their children." Fathers, who take on the role of the political, seek public or political happiness for their children, although this tends to be divorced from their individual and present circumstances; mothers face the opposite temptation. Rousseau as author and tutor seeks to prevent or perfect this degeneration through a reorientation of vision, both in its objects and in its fundamental faculties. This presents a gendered aspect to the classic debate over the good man and the good citizen, and yet, once again, this is not Rousseau's foray into the practicalities of gender politics.

The "tender and foresighted mother" to whom Rousseau addresses himself and was the occasion for the note on women and mothers combines happiness "now" with the foresight needed to secure happiness later. She is the occasion for education, no less than the "good mother who knows how to think" was the occasion for *Emile, or on Education.* The moral and metaphysical education, self-knowledge, belongs to Man, and perhaps, to men alone. Men teach us to "use" our natural and physical "development," to direct it toward good moral ends, and man himself acquires, from his "own experience," knowledge "about the objects which affect us" (38). The *Emile* is the thus the attempt to both embrace and master nature, much as man both embraces and masters his wife, as Emile is to love but have authority over Sophie. Once more with echos of Pauline Christianity, as the biblical-creational dynamic of the sexes is transformed, the mystical union between Christ and his bride is brought down to earth and reimagined in human-all-too-human terms.

The "Author of our being" then appears as a foil to the practices of midwives and philosophers, who "fashion" our "heads" on the "outside" and the "inside" respectively. The "Author of our being" is not Himself presented in contrast to another being or concept—like Man or woman—but to actors, characterized by their activity. The midwife who "kneads" the heads of newborns is undoubtedly a woman, but her occupation and method are what is important here. Likewise, the philosopher who shapes minds is presumably a man, but again, it is the fact and manner in which he shapes mind that is under review—not his manhood per se. Both err in similar but opposite ways. Both deny the 'natural goodness' of the Author's design, and interfere with their respective art.

The apparent solution to these errors is to defer to the Author's design and leave things as they are. But Rousseau has already denied the possibility or desirability of this approach with respect to the Author of things and the Author of nature; the Author of our being is no different. The shrub cannot be left in the middle of the pathway. Man cannot be left like a weed. He is not better when left to his own devices. It is not that the midwife or the philosopher is wrong because they see or perceive the need for artifice and artistry but that they do not approach the newborn or men as the kind of beings that they are. The philosophic midwife of the Preface, Socrates to Theaetetus, or Rousseau to Emile, corrects the error by recognizing (that is, re-cognizing) what men are before they are Men and by recognizing what Man is, caring for the whole person who is both body and soul. Children are not automatons any more than man is a disembodied mind; thus the truly philosophic midwife treats men as beings who at once possess perfect freedom and perfectibility and who must grow into it.

The three Authors, or the tripartite Author, mirrors the three, or tripartite, education(s): "Everything we do not have at our birth and which we need when we are grown is given us by education. This education comes to us from nature or from men or from things" (38). The education from nature belongs to, or at least corresponds to, women, the education from things to men, and the education of men to a particular category of men, i.e., Rousseau. The "almost impossible" goal of education is to accomplish nature by art—to make man into the free and perfectible being he is by nature.

This almost impossible goal is not almost impossible because it requires a bygone era or a divine mediator but because it requires self-knowledge. The problem is not historical or theological per se. It is not political in the sense of properly arranging society in such a way as to accommodate the masculine and feminine element. Man needs to know both what he is in himself and what he is as a social being. The idea, Man, both precedes and contains within itself the relation of man to Man and men to Man. “Natural man,” and “civil man” share “man.” Man is a paradox but not a contradiction. Rousseau reconciles natural man, as a “numerical unity” and “absolute whole which is relative only to itself or its kind,” and civil man, who is “only a fractional unity dependent on the denominator” and partakes of the whole only insofar as he is a part of the “social body,” by reviving a Socratic, or Platonic, vision of public education, which seeks self-knowledge in the polis (39-40). Plato “purified the heart of man” through his “institutions”: the *Republic “*is not at all a political work, as think those who judge books only by their titles. It is the most beautiful educational treatise ever written” (40). Rousseau too envisions self-knowledge in the civil state, though he reverses the image. Where Plato writes an apparently political work that in fact educates and molds men, Rousseau writes an apparently educational treatise that in fact cultivates citizens.

Each author works with images that are familiar to his readers. For Rousseau, the “public instruction” of Plato is unhelpful in his context—it “no longer exists and can no longer exist” because “there is no longer fatherland” or “citizens” (40). The portraits of the citizen and the citizenness that Rousseau previews are both Spartan: the “Lacedaemonian Pedaretus” and the “Spartan woman,” who subordinate their political and familial interests respectively to the interest of the state are a familiar yet foreign foil for Plato’s Athenian audience but entirely alien for Rousseau’s. Rousseau is not constrained by what is or would be achievable in Paris or

Geneva—the “particular applications, not being essential to [his] subject, do not enter into [his] plans” (35). Lycurgus's institutions, which were ‘really’ implemented and not merely set down in writing, are “far more chimerical” than Plato’s, and not accidentally so (40). It is not that Sparta is to be preferred to Kallipolis or Lycurgus to Plato or even Socrates’s idea of Sparta to other alternatives—Rousseau does not wish to revive institutions that “denatured” the heart of man but that he attempts to replicate Plato’s project in his own time with similarly familiar yet foreign images that refine our own understandings of ourselves and prepare us for life (and political life) where we are. Emile, and the tutor/pupil relationship, is at once familiar yet foreign image we can hold up against ourselves: “When [the author who distrusts himself from getting lost in visions] deviates from ordinary practice, he has only to make a test of his own practice on his pupil. He will soon sense, or the reader will sense for him, whether he follows the progress of childhood and the movement natural to the human heart” (51). The same vision is accomplished through two different pictures.

Meeting Emile

Rousseau introduces his student, or the idea of his student, before he names and portrays Emile. Mirroring the opening language of the work, where everything “leaves the hands of the Author” good, the student, “on leaving [Rousseau’s] hands,” will “be a man” (42). Rousseau reinforces his role as philosophic midwife immediately before the portrait but not in the portrait—this frames the image without itself being a part of that image. Rousseau is the author of men, correcting the “ill drawn” education of the age and replacing it with the “true study” of “the human condition.”

As in his other work, Rousseau clarifies his project from its “real” likeness. The vision of education Rousseau provides is not an education in the ordinary sense. It is not a curriculum. He does not intend to really educate any children. He recounts the great “honor” that “someone,” known to him only by “rank,” did him in proposing that he “raise his son” (50). Rousseau refuses the proposal and suggests that the man of rank “ought to congratulate himself on [Rousseau’s] discretion.” Rousseau repays the compliment with insults. He does not reveal the man’s title to his reader, denying him his only distinguishing characteristic. He compounds this insult by placing this man, who possesses a socially superior position, in his debt. Rousseau’s judgment is rich where this gentleman’s is poor. Not only is Rousseau a better judge of what kind of education will fulfill the father’s request, he is a better judge of education. The father undoubtedly wants his child educated for his rank, and Rousseau’s education would only have made him “repudiate his title.” The father is a vain and worldly man that does not know how to accomplish what he wants.

It does not matter whether the education would have succeeded or failed. In either case, the “real” education mistakes the appearance of Rousseau’s project for Rousseau’s project. The image of education is not itself education. Rousseau does not really seek to educate a child at all: “I shall put my hand not to the work but to the pen; and instead of doing what is necessary, I shall endeavor to say it” (50). Rousseau had the opportunity to really raise an Emile, but he refused. The portrait of Emile and his education appears in “pen” only—no more for want of a real pupil than the institutions of Plato’s *Republic* appear only in “writing” for want of a city. Rousseau is a preceptor only because he is an author. Rousseau the tutor is colored by Rousseau the “author” (50).

Rousseau the author gives himself “an imaginary pupil,” retaining his authorial status while simultaneously depicting himself in the image as author and tutor. The author is author of the subject and himself subject, appearing in three roles: author, subject as author, and subject simply in the role of tutor. The tripartite author recalls the triune Author. The reader ought to understand the author in himself and with himself to understand his creation and his idea of man and men.

Rousseau gives himself "an imaginary pupil," and the "age, health, kinds of knowledge, and all the talent suitable for working at his education," which qualities perhaps belong as much to the imagined tutor as to the imagined pupil (50). Rousseau is both himself and not himself. If the reader is to believe him when he claims that his "condition," excuses him from actual preceptor's duties, then this Rousseau, which possesses everything necessary, is a chimera of the real and an imaginary Rousseau. Not only is Emile ian orphan, "it makes no difference whether he has his father and mother;" Rousseau is both the mother and father and neither mother nor father—the philosophic midwife that replaces the 'natural' family and oversees the whole conception of Emile, both in the figurative-literal birth and the figurative-figurative second birth: "For conducting him from the moment of his birth up to the one when, become a grown man, he will no longer have need of any guide other than himself" (50). The tutor, Emile, and the tutor-Emile relationship are only possible through the portrait and portraiture.

Emile is, perhaps counterintuitively, the 'real' test of Rousseau's study. Rousseau's "method," of conjuring and comparing the education (and outcome thereof) of his imaginary pupil to ordinary practice is an apparently "useful" tether for "an author who distrusts himself from getting lost in visions" (51). Rousseau simply sets down "the principles whose truth everyone should sense" and applies only to those "rules which might need proofs" the example of "Emile;" that is "the plan that [Rousseau has] proposed to follow. It is up to the reader to judge if [he has] succeeded" (51). Rousseau, then, would not be tethered to the earth by the consideration and study of some actual child; he would be entirely unable to see Man at all. The proper response to the difficulties of abstraction and the siren calls of an ethereal metaphysics is not to deny man's moral and metaphysical character but to embrace an image which serves man's self-image. Intuition is not aided by experience but by the example of Emile, not by sense perception but by writing.

Though Emile is, in one sense, the subject of the portrait, he is not the *subject* of the portrait. Emile is made for the principles, not the principles for Emile. Emile grounds Rousseau's thought in man, preventing abstraction beyond man. It is enough that whatever Rousseau proposes can be imagined in human terms—even if this image is beyond anything we have ever seen or could accomplish. The reader is, characteristically for Rousseau, made judge but called to cultivate his judgment before exercising it. The author works for the sake of his reader, subjecting not his Son but his pupil to take on the form of a lowly babe so that the "he" might live to learn how to die: "Whoever imposes on himself a duty that nature has in no way imposed on him ought to be sure beforehand that he has the means of fulfilling it.... I am not able to teach living to one who thinks of nothing but how to keep himself from dying" (53).

The quasi-Christological redemption of men by the author who makes them restores man's natural knowledge by giving them not his Son but his pupil: "Naturally man knows to suffer with constancy and dies in peace. It is doctors with their prescriptions, philosophers with their precepts, priests with their exhortations, who debase his heart and make him unlearn how to die" (55).[104] Rousseau's presentation of knowledge, as a kind of remembering, recollecting, or *memoire,* echoes Socrates's own view in the *Republic,* reinforcing the comparison between the works and the similarities between Plato's project and his own. It moreover places Rousseau's discussion of death for life in the Socratic, rather than Christian tradition. Emile is not to be the saint of popular piety or the rather more Calvinistic hero of faith; at the same time, though Emile does not become Plato to Rousseau's Socrates, the example of his education will cultivate and restore men's capacity for self-knowledge.

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[104] Cf. Michel de Montaigne's essay, "That to Philosophize is to Learn How to Die."

Emile Imagining Sophie

The introduction of Sophie follows the "Profession of Faith;" the reader, one undoubtedly familiar with the Bible, is primed to exercise his command of that text by Rousseau's specific illusions to the Genesis narrative and introduction of religion in *Emile*. Rousseau is clear that Emile has not read the Bible, and it is a question whether Emile has been introduced to religion at all. The reader is called to be both knowledgeable and ignorant of the Bible. To understand Emile the man, one must put aside scripture but to understand Rousseau, it must be at the forefront—a paradox but not a contradiction.

The tutor prefaces his presentation of Sophie to Emile by telling Emile that "his heart…needs a companion" (328). In doing so, he reminds the reader that Emile was not raised to be independent or solitary but in society with others (41). Emile then lacks a straightforward capacity for unity: he is not, and was never intended to be, a whole unto himself.[105] The question then is whether Rousseau intends Emile and Sophie to replicate a kind of unity found within

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[105] Cf. Schaeffer 1998; 608: "This is our first indication that simplistic alternatives of 'wholeness'—man and citizen—are to be surpassed with another alternative in *Emile*. Self and other are neither dichotomized nor fused."

Christian marriage: where man and wife become one.[106] The Christian alternative is helpful, by way of contrast, in bringing out the peculiarities of Rousseau's own vision.

The tutor, like God, decides that it is not good for man to be alone.[107] Unlike Emile's desire for Sophie, Adam's need for Eve, even if expressed by the third person narrator, is apparently felt by Adam himself. Only after his experience of nature and the process of naming all of the animals, is it apparent that Adam himself lacks a partner. Surely possessing such knowledge already, apart from experience, God declares this need to himself (almost in plurality) only after Adam has felt it. Adam gets no warning that the woman will be provided; the tutor informs Emile of Sophie's existence and his need for her. Emile's desire for Sophie is not 'natural' but consciously cultivated by the tutor. Emile does not know he needs a woman, nor does he feel the absence of a companion, because he feels he already has one in the tutor. Sophie, or the idea of Sophie, supplants the role of the tutor, substituting a conscious longing for a companion with an unconscious existence of one.

This need for companionship, artificially awakened in Emile, is ultimately what drives him into society (328). For Rousseau, "it is unimportant whether the object [he] depict[s] for him is imaginary…it suffices that [Emile] everywhere find comparisons which make him prefer his chimera to the real objects that strike his eye" (329). The task for Rousseau is not to maintain a kind of natural unity for Emile, if he has one at all, but to give him a regulatory good. Once more in contrast to the Christian example, it is as if God, unsolicited, gave Adam the idea of Eve to prevent the actual evil that would incur from the introduction of Eve. Instead, Adam only discovers what the woman is after she has acted in the world and therefore becomes known as Eve. Emile only needs the company of his tutor, yet his tutor, whether by design or necessity, insists on the introduction of the idea of women to lessen the potential harm of the actual, forthcoming introduction.

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[106] Cf. Arthur Melzer, *The Natural Goodness of Man: On the System of Rousseau's Thought* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990), 3.
[107] Cf. Genesis 2:18

Rousseau therefore sets out to improve upon God's plan of education for man. In describing "true love" to the reader, Rousseau calls it a "chimera, lie, and illusion" (329). The language of "chimera," which appears throughout the remainder of the work, prefigures his use of *Telemachus* and the *Odyssey.* The mythical creature appears in Homer as a feminine composition of disparate creatures. The image of Sophie, much like this creature, is a woman of impossible make: "We love the image we make for ourselves far more than we love the object to which we apply it. If we saw what we love exactly as it is, there would be no more love on earth" (329). Sophie, the girl we are to meet, is less lovable than the composite picture of the tutor's imagination, and yet Sophie, the girl, suffices as an object on which to project this image. The tutor's imagination, not the girl, is what Emile really loves. Emile does not recognize this, even though the tutor has already unmasked himself and his project (318). If he did, he would have "no longer seen [the tutor] in the same way" (329). This condition, however, is precisely what the tutor stipulates at the outset of the project (53). Despite the tutor's reveal, "the magic veil" does not "drop" for Emile, nor does his "love disappear" (329). By "providing the imaginary object" for Emile, the tutor remains "the master of comparisons" even while he replaces himself (329).

Rousseau's open secret, like the tutor's, is delivered in this way not as a lie, noble or ignoble, but as the truth of the matter. His pedagogy is not so reserved as to leave the reader with any excuse. The persistence of Emile's love is not failure but success, but the persistence of ignorance in the reader would be precisely that. Misreading Rousseau is not permissible on account of his “veiled” teaching. One after all does not want to become Emile but to read him well and understand his image.

Because Emile is particularly unable to separate the object from imaginations about the object, to avoid deception, the tutor cannot depict “for him a model of perfection which cannot exist” (329). His Sophie will have “defects” (329). The tutor will not “lie to him by falsely affirming that the object depicted for him exists,” but he is aware of Emile’s shortcomings (329). In fact, Rousseau explicitly states that he anticipates Emile’s mistake: Emile will take “pleasure in the image,” and soon believe “that it has an original” (329). The tutor’s decision to give Emile a prior conception of woman contrasts with the Biblical account, where God presents Adam with Eve without prior conversation or consultation. The problem of the disparity between an image and its original is particular to Rousseau’s method and one of which he is consciously aware. The peculiarity of Rousseau’s problem cannot be overstated. Prior philosophic treatments of this problem, it would seem, have tried to bring images closer to their originals, but Rousseau is explicit that the image is first. Rousseau moreover does not attempt to bring Sophie closer to her image; his goal is not to collapse the space. If anything, Rousseau insists that the space is necessary for maintaining Emile’s naivety and consequent happiness.

It is appropriate then that Rousseau gives Sophie her name, which allows Emile to gloss over the sensational disparity between the object and the image. The tutor clothes “this imaginary object with features he can grasp with his senses and give it a greater air of truth,” but what cements Emile’s certainty is the tutor’s willingness to “go so far as to give her a name” (329). The conferral of his beloved’s name, Sophie, which itself shares its name with philosophy, is an act of God or in this case the godlike tutor. Whereas God names woman and Adam names

Eve, Rousseau names both:[108] "Let us call your future beloved Sophie. The name Sophie augurs well. If the girl whom you choose does not bear it, she will at least be worthy of bearing it. We can do her the honor in advance" (329). Much like Eve's name, which comes to mean mother of all living, Sophie's name is endowed with meaning. But where Eve and Eve's being give meaning to her name, Sophie's subsequent existence is colored by her name. The name, in this case, does not describe the object, even if it is ultimately appropriate.

Even as the name bodes well for Sophie, so too does it augur well for Emile. Emile, Rousseau predicts, "can be exposed to society almost without risk" (329). And yet, Rousseau does not commit to this prophecy. At the very moment he supposedly assures the reader of the outcome of his method, he shifts from the personal "I" to the imperative "you": "If after giving all these details, you neither affirm nor deny her existence but slip out of it by evasions…he can be exposed to society almost without risk" (329). It is the reader and the imagination of the reader that determine the destiny of the pupil.

Rousseau relinquishes his godlike role as tutor and transfers his power to the reader, as though God had made man in turn creator (or perhaps Moses had made his reader one). Rousseau prompts the reader to fill out the sketch of not Sophie but of Emile's-life-with-Sophie, according to his own imagination. Rousseau, in his own voice, questions whether or not "the model" can accomplish this (329). Only if the model is "well made" will it succeed in attaching him "to everything resembling it and will estrange him from everything not resembling it" (329). The "advantage" this model has "for preserving his heart from the dangers to which his person must be exposed; for repressing his senses by his imagination; and especially for tearing him away from those ladies who give an education that is purchased so dearly and who teach a young man good manners only by taking all decency from him" is not confirmed by Rousseau but only suggested to the reader.

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[108] See also 357 and 442.

Imagining Telemachus: *Imago Deae*

Rousseau prefaces the proper introduction of Sophie with a restatement of his purpose and more explicit references to rejected alternatives. He refers to the fifth and final book as "the last act in the drama of youth" (357).[109] What is the end and a conclusion for Rousseau is for God only the beginning. He refers once more to Genesis, though this time he actually quotes God: "It is not good for man to be alone!" The most famous account of man begins with man and woman: Rousseau ends with man and woman. Emile, who had hither been denied the title, is here called "man" (357). Emile's childhood is properly over, and yet, his tutor remains with him. Rousseau must fulfill his covenant or "promise" to Emile before his work is done (357).

Emile has ascended to the status that was Adam's from the beginning. Adam is created as an adult; Emile must grow into one. It is as though it is not in Emile's nature to be a man. He is a man because of his education. Rousseau makes his promise to Emile before Emile is a man, reversing the Biblical order by creating the covenant prior to the fall. Nonetheless, Sophie "has to be given to him;" the 'fall' must come (357). Before she can be given, she must be found; "To find her, it is necessary to know her" (357). Eve is created out of sleeping and unconscious Adam, Sophie is created in thought, in the presence of Emile and later to be found by Emile.

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[109] Bloom is correct to draw attention to the theatrical or dramatic language of the passage, but Rousseau only literally calls it "dernier acte de la jeunesse" (692). If the fifth book is the fifth act, this opens the possibility of a dramatic reading of *Emile*.

Rousseau here distances himself from the creation of Sophie, even though he is as much her creator as he is Emile's. He knows neither "what she is," nor "what places she inhabits" (357). Even after "we have found her," which implies we will come to know her, "everything will still not have been done" (357).

Like Emile, Sophie is made in the image of woman but is not herself the image of woman: "Sophie ought to be a woman as Emile is a man-that is to say, she ought to have everything which suits the constitution of her species and her sex in order to fill her place in the physical and moral order" (357). The woman precedes the name Eve but Sophie both precedes the woman and comes after her. For a lengthy passage (357-392), the name of Sophie all but disappears, and even after an extensive account of the idea of Sophie, we must wait a long time before the actual Sophie is found. Sophie is raised in "the spirit" of the preceding discussion of women; even the true Sophie is a kind of image of an ideal (392). She approximates the picture of woman Rousseau paints in the previous pages.

The picture of Sophie, given to Emile, precedes this general presentation of woman, and in fact, the reader has no reason to believe Emile knows what a woman is. He has an idea or understanding of men, because he has experience with men. The same is true for companionship: Emile has read about Friday (Robinson Crusoe's companion) and has acted as a kind of companion to the tutor. His lack of experience with women is of particular importance for their initial meeting.

Before we turn to the meeting, we ought, according to Rousseau, "now say a word about [Sophie's] person in accordance with the portrait [the tutor] made of her for Emile, on the basis of which he himself imagines the wife who can make him happy" (392). What is perhaps most striking about this portrait is the ending which it depicts. Sophie, without the divine intervention of Rousseau, would experience "sadness without remedy" because of Fenelon's *Telemachus* (404).[110] As her mother comes to see, "Sophie was the rival of Eucharis—" wisdom the road to good grace: "[She] loved Telemachus and loved him with a passion of which nothing could cure her" (404). Sophie is given the image of Telemachus by neither her mother nor her father but comes across it by chance (410). She does not create an image of her beloved (as the tutor does for Emile), nor is she given the image by someone else (as Emile is). She, somewhere between the tutor and Emile, recognizes that the image she loves has no original (or at least no original accessible to her) and it is this knowledge, which the tutor has but Emile lacks, which is the cause of her unhappiness and despair.

Sophie's parents are less cognizant of this problem than she is: "As soon as her father and her mother knew of her mania, they laughed about it and believed they would bring her around by reason" (404). Her parents "were mistaken" and did not "entirely" have reason "on their side" (404). Sophie, it seems, is right to despair. Even if she were Eucharis for Telemachus, as her mother here assumes, and the tutor claims later on, Telemachus would still leave her. In no scenario, real or imagined, can she possess Telemachus. Even if her mother and mentor were mistaken and she was instead the rival of Antiope, the result would be the same. Sophie’s “own reason” is superior to the adults around her:

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[110] François de Salignac de la Mothe-Fénelon's *The Adventures of Telemachus* takes Telemachus's search for his father as its subject. It opens with Telemachus's arrival on Calypso's Island with his companion Mentor, or Minerva disguised. The first six books of the work recount Telemachus's time on the island, where he finds himself under spell and she, to her surprise, finds herself falling in love with him. Mentor rebukes Telemachus and, with her aid, he is able to redirect his love to the nymph Eucharis. Mentor saves Telemachus from the jealous Calypso by removing him from the island against his will. Books 7-13 follow the travels of Telemachus and Mentor, and obviously inspires Rousseau's "On Travel," that will be treated in the following chapter. Telemachus receives a political education and assists Idomeneus in reforming his city, Salente, before descending to the Underworld in book 14 to continue the search for his father. In books 15-17, Telemachus and Mentor return and help Idomeneus defeat his enemies and complete the reformation of his city. In the process, Telemachus falls in love with Idomeneus's daughter, Antilope, and realizes that he does not love, and has never really loved, Eucharis. In the final book, Telemachus returns to Ithaca and reunites with his father Ulysses. For more extended treatments of *Telemachus* in *Emile*, see Schaeffer, *Rousseau on Education, Judgment, and Freedom,* and Scott, *Rousseau's Reader*.

> How many times she reduced them to silence by using their own reasoning against them, by showing them that they had done all the harm themselves: that they had not formed her for a man of her times; that she would necessarily have to adopt her husband's ways of thinking or convert him to her own; that they had made the first means impossible by the way they had raised her, and that the other was precisely what she was seeking. (404)

The name given to Sophie, then, seems to fit this particular portrait of Sophie. Like Eve, Sophie is most miserable when she knows the most. Her wisdom is her downfall. What the tutor explains to the reader and conceals from Emile, in part by effort and in part by upbringing, Sophie knows: "Give me," she said, "a man imbued with my maxims or one whom I can bring around to them, and I shall marry him. But until then, why do you scold me? Pity me. I am unhappy, not mad” (404). Sophie suffers from nothing other than the condition of modern man: she is unhappy. Yet more like Rousseau himself than any bourgeois person, Sophie is unhappy because she is too virtuous and too perceptive. The logic of her monologue follows the very logic the tutor employs in his earlier presentation of her image.

Sophie then recreates for herself the earlier conversation between the tutor and Emile, inhabiting the role of both interlocutors. She knows her love “does not exist,” and yet, she still seeks “someone who resembles him”: “And why cannot this someone exist?...Let us not think that a lovable and virtuous man is only a chimera. He exists; he lives; perhaps he is seeking me” (404). For both Sophie and Emile, the emphasis is on finding the other, going out and physically searching for their beloved and ultimately, hoping (in the former case) or believing (in the latter) that they exist.

To search and to know are once more conflated, but Sophie, unlike Emile, adds sight: “He is none of those I have seen” (405). Her utilization of vision as metaphor for knowledge replaces Rousseau’s own method thorough the work.[111] She doubts she will ever see one of this sort and blames her mother for making her love “virtue” too much: “If I can love nothing but virtue, the fault is less mine than yours" (405). The mother, unlike the tutor, is unable to raise a virtuous and happy child. Rousseau must here exert his godlike authority to redeem the child from eternal suffering. He steps in and rescues the narrative: “Let us render his Sophie to our Emile. Let us resuscitate this lovable girl to give her a less lively imagination and a happier destiny” (406). Rousseau ends this section as he ends the earlier one: not with a hopeful or assured statement about the success of the enterprise but for the sake of the reader: “I proposed to say in this book all that can be done and to leave to the reader the choice-among the good things I may have said-of those that are within his reach” (407).

The meeting is not the natural consequence of the narrative but the end desired by the readers, accustomed as they are to reading romances and not tragedies. Even with this consideration at the forefront of Rousseau’s mind, Rousseau affirms once more his unwillingness to concede to an account of man of which the reader himself is familiar and likely believes—that one found within the Bible. Yet, he comforts the reader by admitting, whether sincerely or not, that he “had thought at the beginning that I would form Emile's companion at the outset and raise them for and with each other," as any reader of this time might expect from an account of this kind (407). "These arrangements," he assures the reader, "were too premature and ill conceived, and that it was absurd to destine two children to be united before being able to know whether this union was in the order of nature and whether they had between them the compatibilities suitable for forming it" (407). His conception of nature is here explicitly deprived of an originalist meaning—as he clearly notes that the standards for suitability among savages are far lower (406). Instead, "nature" determination is revealed through Rousseau: "Emile's true father" and arbiter of "right" (407). Rousseau "made him a man" and therefore is "the master of marrying him to the woman of his choice-that is, of my choice" (407). Rousseau fully embraces his godlike role, even adopting the same motivations: "Only the pleasure of making a happy man can pay for what it costs to put him in a position to become happy" (407). It is an act of divine mercy, and not a replicable or realistic portrait of marriage, which follows. Sophie and Emile, to the extent they appear to work together as a kind of singularity, can never replicate the unity and the dissolution of persons found within the Christian conception of marriage. Nonetheless, Rousseau presents a kind of apparent, although illusory, unity for the reader's sake.

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[111] Cf. John T. Scott, "The Illustrative Education of Rousseau's Emile." The American Political Science Review 108, no. 3 (2014): 533-46 and John T. Scott, "Do You See What I See? The Education of the Reader in Rousseau's "Emile,’" *The Review of Politics* 74, no. 3 (2012): 443-64.

Emile Meeting Sophie

The moment has come within the narrative for the meeting of Emile and Sophie. But before this meeting can occur, Emile and Rousseau must seek her. As early as the introduction of the idea of Sophie, the tutor insists that Emile must first travel before he can see her: "Let us go seek her who suits you" (328). In grappling with and contemplating the image of Sophie in his pursuit of her, Emile slowly takes on the characteristics of Telemachus for Sophie. Sophie, at this point less elevated than her 'earlier' self, must settle for the likeness of a likeness.

Emile, like Telemachus, is driven out of his house and to the road for the sake of his family. Yet, Telemachus travels for the sake of his father and his father's household while Emile travels for his own sake and his own household. This difference is particularly important. Once the meeting actually transpires, it is not Emile's love for Sophie but Emile's empathy and compassion for a desolate, married man and his wife that moves Sophie.

Rousseau, aware of the reader, makes a point of contrasting the departure of Emile and his tutor with "true knights-errant" (407). Not wanting the reader to mistake his work for a formulaic romance, he emphasizes that they flee adventure. Their motivation, even if apparently similar (knights-errant do, after all, "seek" and save damsels in distress), is importantly different from those stories with which the reader is familiar: their activity is an "imitation" of the activity of the knight-errant by the tutor's design but an imitation which is superior to the original model which it imitates. The fusion of different influences—including romances, travel journals, *Telemachus*, and the *Odyssey*—prevents Rousseau's portrait from operating like any particular one.

Emile does not know they are going to seek Sophie; Emile is wandering because he has been told to do so. The tutor, leading him to Sophie, does not reveal his designs to Emile, but consciously breaks the narrative to discuss his method with the reader: "By dint of following my practice, one will have finally grasped its spirit, and I cannot imagine a reader still so prejudiced by custom as to suppose us both asleep in a good, well-closed post-chaise, progressing without seeing or observing anything, making worthless for ourselves the interval between departure and arrival, and by the speed of our progress wasting time in order to save it" (410). For Emile, the journey is of absolute necessity. Without it, Rousseau implies that Emile would not be ready for Sophie, even if they met (407). The journey is a final extension of Emile's education, and one that will carry him through the remainder of this book. Sophie, or the next stage of life, is waiting for him, yet the tutor insists that their travels are important for preparing Emile for this next stage of life.

On the eve that they meet Sophie, they are driven to her by the hospitality and the humility of a peasant. This peasant bears a striking likeness to the hospitable Eumaeus. The peasant receives Odysseus, disguised as a beggar, into his humble home: "If the good Lord had led you to the other side of the hill, you would have been better received ... you would have found a house of peace . . . such charitable people . . . such good people . . . They are not better-hearted than I am, but they are richer, although it is said that they were previously much more so ... they are not suffering, thank God, and the whole countryside feels the effects of what remains to them" (413). Although many heroes and kings welcome Odysseus and others into their halls, Eumaeus is the only peasant to do so. But unlike Nestor and his sons, Menelaus and Helen, or the king and queen of Phaeacia, Eumaeus is alone, without either family or spouse or servants. This peasant, unlike Eumaeus, is able to bring his visitors to a more opulent house. There are no suitors which necessitate that the guests stay in the peasant’s humbler accommodations.

When they arrive at the house, they are first greeted by Sophie’s parents. It is not until dinner that Sophie appears. At Sophie’s entrance, Emile, “busy with his hunger or his answers, greets her and continues to speak and eat”—he hardly acknowledges his beloved (413). He is neither enamored nor in love at their first encounter (413). Rousseau is clear on this point: “The principle object of his trip is as distant from his thoughts as he believes himself to be still distant from its goal” (413). Emile does not recognize Sophie as the object of his love.

Sophie’s father, perceiving both Emile’s character and status, remarks he “appear to me to be a likable and wise young man, and that makes me think that you and your governor have arrived here tired and wet like Telemachus and Mentor on Calypso's island" (413). The comment is perfectly banal, and the reason for it is obvious enough. What is striking about it is the response it evokes from Emile. The remark is lost on Emile, for Emile has never read Telemachus. Emile answers "that [they] find here the hospitality of Calpyso" (413). The comment, formulated with respect to the *Odyssey*, reveals Emile’s utter lack of understanding of the scene on the island. First, there are many instances, as previously noted, where Odysseus is welcomed into hospitable and rich households. It does not strike Emile as odd that, given these alternatives, the master chooses an example which does not map on to the current situation. Second, neither Telemachus nor Athena ever appears on the island.

More important still, Calypso’s island is, for Odysseus, a dangerous example of the beguiling nature of women. Calypso seduces Odysseus and attempts to prevent him from reentering society and resuming his political position. Emile’s response demonstrates his utter lack of understanding of either concept: he understands neither the allure of women nor the dangers of isolated, and apolitical, relations between the sexes. The tutor steps in as “his Mentor,” to save the conversation, adding "And the charms of Eucharis” (413). The comment is not for Emile but for Sophie and Sophie’s family: it informs them of their enterprise while keeping Emile in the dark. Sophie “blush[es] up to her eyes,” while her mother “gives a sign to her father, and he changes the subject” (413).

Her father indeed changes the subject to “the story of the events” that lead him to his “solitude” and “his misfortunes” (413). In listening to this speech, particularly “the part where the most decent of men enlarges with great pleasure on the attachment of the worthiest of women, the young traveler is beside himself” (413). Upon seeing this, Sophie “believes she sees Telemachus affected by Philoctetes' misfortunes” (413). Sophie is aware that this is her beloved before Emile has even acknowledged her. Only when her mother rebukes her for joining Emile’s dramatic display does Emile realize who she is. It is not the person who alerts him but the name:

> At the name Sophie, you would have seen Emile shiver. Struck by so dear a name, he is wakened with a start and casts an avid glance at the girl who dares to bear it. "Sophie, O Sophie! Is it you whom my heart seeks? Is it you whom my heart loves?" He observes her and contemplates her with a sort of fear and distrust. He does not see exactly the face that he had depicted to himself. He does not know whether the one he sees is better or worse. He studies each feature; he spies on each movement, each gesture. In all he finds countless confused interpretations. His disorder does not escape Sophie's penetrating eyes. Moreover, his eyes teach her that she is the cause of his disorder. She sees that this apprehensiveness is not yet love. But what difference does it make? He is involved with her, and that is enough. She will be most unlucky if he becomes involved with her with impunity. Mothers have eyes just as their daughters do, and they have experience to boot. Sophie's mother smiles at the success of Our projects. She reads the hearts of the two young people. She sees that it is time to captivate the heart of the new Telemachus.

In comparing the person he has before him to the image by the same name, Emile is intrigued, but perhaps unconvinced, that she is his Sophie. She is certainly a different person, and one who is potentially worse; he is not in love with her, as Sophie herself realizes, but he is attached. This attachment is sufficient for her: Sophie does not need to be loved in the way that Emile needs his beloved. His likeness to Telemachus will suffice. Neither loves the other, only the idea of the other. So long as each can maintain the chimera without making it obvious it is so, they can be happy. Rousseau throughout these sections seems to question the possibility of such an outcome; his abandoned sequel, although not definitive on this point, at least suggests that his hesitations here ought to be taken seriously.

What Rousseau demonstrates is the compatibility and completeness of the images but, in doing so, also emphasizes the dividedness of the union: both spouses remain two and two-fold. Emile is both Emile and Telemachus, Sophie both Sophie and Sophie. Both must maintain their dual appearance if they are to be good for both themselves and for the other and are thus radically disunified. The union between these two characters demonstrates the complicated picture of unity Rousseau holds up to the reader, calling the reader to question and judge this multifaced and complex portrait.

Rousseau follows Mentor in testing Emile's "love" of Sophie and forces him to leave her. Emile has no grander narrative, no father, fatherland, or familial home to which he must return, but he will nevertheless follow Telemachus's travels with his own Mentor to study and judge governments and receive a political education. Emile, as much as Telemachus, dreads leaving his Sophie (447). He, however, listens to his tutor's reason: "He waits for me finally to explain myself. Then I return to my discourse" (447). Rousseau explains to Emile that "when [he] become[s] the head of a family, [he is] going to become a member of the state" (448). When Emile enters into family life, he enters into political life. The private pastoral life he has led with his tutor has not prepared him for "what it is to be a member of the state." Before he can take his "place in the civil order," he must "learn to know it and to know what rank in it suits" him.

Sophie's role in Emile's life then is less as a true helper and companion, the tutor, after all, can and has fulfilled this role, but as event—the figure embodies and replaces both the quasi-historical transition from the state of nature to society and the departure from the final stage of childhood into manhood. Whatever Emile becomes, whether free republican or enslaved Frenchman, it will be reflected in his wife and his life with her. Sophie is the imperfect, chimerical mirror to Emile in the way that *Telemachus* is a mirror for princes. She is the mirror to Man.

Chapter 5: Pictures of the Social Contract

Abstract: Rousseau depicts the social contract in “On Travel” in the fifth and final book of his *Emile*. This chapter compares the portrayal of the social contract within the novel to Rousseau’s *Social Contract.* In the previous chapter, I presented Rousseau’s portraits of Sophie and Emile as feminine and masculine metaphors for self-knowledge. To complete his education and solidify his formation, Rousseau sends Emile away from Sophie to travel and observe governments. The combined context of “On Travel” and the short introduction to the *Social Contract* suggest an intertextuality between the two works which allows us to view the *Social Contract,* otherwise devoid of observational language and figurative imagery, in the framework of portraiture. The opening of “On Travel” operates as a kind of proxy-preface for the social contracts. Emile’s travel allegorizes reading well: he observes foreigners, from ancient civilizations and faraway lands, through books. Before Emile leaves for his journey, Rousseau imagines a short dialogue between tutor and pupil that emphasizes the importance of Rousseau’s methodology in his duplicated presentation of the social contract. The social contract of the *Emile* and the *Social Contract,* both indispensable, portray the same principles of political right to different audiences: the former, to Men in search of self-knowledge, and the latter, to men as they are. I then apply the logic of portraiture to the legislator and general will to show how Rousseau reconciles men and citizens, and philosophy and politics in his system.

Partiality and Impartiality in the Social Contract

Whatever its reputation, the *Social Contract* is, if Rousseau is to be believed, only the “least unworthy” remnant of an incomplete and abandoned project *(CW* 4.131). At the same time, the *Emile* appears to repeat that remnant as the final culmination of Emile’s education and his transition to maturity through travel. If the reader takes this suggestion and this repetition seriously, the *Social Contract* may be read (or not) in a few competing ways. In light of this problem of incompleteness, (1) one may search for the remnants of that project and attempt a reconstruction or indeed a completion of it, as in the modern historical approach. (2) One might also promote the status of this “least unworthy” part to that of the whole, e.g., the modern social scientist or political scientist who denies that the *Social Contract* is part of Rousseau’s larger system and reads the *Social Contract* as whole unto itself. (3) One might instead take Rousseau’s suggestion that the *Emile* is Rousseau's "greatest and best book" (Dialogues 23) and so dispose of the *Social Contract* entirely or subordinate it to Rousseau's better and more complete works, à la the modern social theory or literary approach. (4) Finally, one would have to consider—perhaps only if already persuaded—that Rousseau's system is really systematic and his works really parts of one whole project and thus that there is a relationship of the *Social Contract* to other writings that illuminates the *Social Contract* itself and for its own sake.

If the abortive attempt at the political project of which the *Social Contract* was evidently a part could be recovered through archival sleuthing and historical analysis, this might indeed prove interesting. The more Rousseau, all things being equal, the better. If contemporary scholars possessed Plato's drafts and notebooks, this would indeed be interesting but could not constitute in themselves the secret keys to understanding the *Republic*, not least because such newly discovered material would only present an entirely new and parallel hermeneutical problem. What, after all, was the genesis of the embryo? The conditions of conception and the nature of a thing must remain distinct, and one would be forced to apply Rousseau's own approach to the study of man to the study of the text and take it as it is today.[112] With or without the work of the historian, this general approach could also take on the task of a more theoretical project of reconstruction, in which case the text we do possess would be relegated to the status of being a pale reflection of the real book we would have gotten if Rousseau, as we understand him or imagine him, had finished the project himself. Such a reconstruction might be motivated by the desire to acquire a more obviously political Rousseau to supplant the one we have.

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[112] Cf. Second Discourse: "I shall suppose him to have been formed from all time as I see him today" (*CW* 3.20).

To this quasi-historical solution, two others might be offered, one grounded in the concerns of social or political science and the other in social theory and literary studies. On the principle of judgment that belongs to these disciplines, one or the other text is elevated and thus the double presentation made not only redundant but entirely unnecessary. The political interpreter of Rousseau is inclined to believe that the *Social Contract* is the “least unworthy” part of the system precisely because it seems to pertain to the sort of political vision which he or she favors; the rest of Rousseau, and certainly those things that are covered in the *Social Contract* anyway, may be removed or ignored. The good and true emphasis on the political character of Rousseau’s system is supplanted by an exclusive focus on what is wrongly taken to be political in an adumbrated sense. Constitutional or legal matters become the whole of politics, and at the very same moment the perspective of the citizen is excluded from that whole. Rousseau citizen of Geneva is ignored for the sake of those things which cannot be understood apart from him, and empiricism replaces self-knowledge.

In the same way, a preference for the greater literary merit of the *Emile* would threaten to overshadow Rousseau’s system as a system of thought. The *Social Contract* lacks grace and style, perhaps, among other features generally expected of a literary text, and so it is replaceable. The double account of the social contract is reduced to a unity that seems much more pleasant. A grander version of this approach may also be conceived: if each writing contains incipiently the whole system, then there is a temptation to consider all but the “greatest and best book” as developmentally interesting and even historically necessary but really and truly irrelevant to a full presentation of Rousseau. If the historical method leads ultimately to Rousseau’s system without Rousseau’s writings, this approach leads to system without system. Reading the *Social*

Contract as metaphor is good and necessary; reading it *only* as metaphor introduces a strange displacement of what is essentially this-worldly, practical, and indeed political in Rousseau.

I have argued that portraiture is the proper way of avoiding these various pitfalls while maintaining the (paradoxically) admirable intentions of each of these alternative approaches. I have not tried to explain Rousseau's system historically or biographically, or by extracting the political elements scattered throughout his corpus, or by subordinating the breadth of his system to what he best expresses in some particular place. Rousseau's portraits and his method of writing as a whole anticipate and reshape various modes of reading that arise in the course of the serious study of man. The second Preface to *Julie* most obviously introduces portraiture as an alternative mode of reading and writing to other modern modes of study. The Second Discourse and *Emile* present Rousseau's visions of Man against historical, scientific, or theological visions of men.

A paired reading of the social contract from the end of *Emile* and the social contract of the *Social Contract* provides the same kind of duplication seen in Rousseau's portraits of Man and men among republican political bodies. For the individual figure of the portrait, Rousseau instead shows the composite and corporate figure of politics. The person is replaced by the people as the subject of the image. If the *Republic* uses the city in speech to better understand individual souls, the *Emile* moves from the individual portraits of Emile and Sophie to the social contract, depicting the relationship between Rousseau's portraits and his political theory. This reflection is especially useful at the end of my own argument to reiterate and reflect on the political character of portraiture.

In this chapter, I begin by establishing the connection between the two social contracts of *Emile* and the *Social Contract* through both the extra-textual connections and, most especially and most importantly for my argument, the intra-textual and intertextual evidence for this reading. I then turn to the beginning of "On Travel," the short discourse in which the social contract of the *Emile* appears. "On Travel" prepares the reader of both social contracts to observe, according to Rousseau's true vision, man's relationship in and to political life, which informs not only our understanding of Man but of politics. Before approaching and comparing the two social contracts, I examine the imagined dialogue between the tutor and Emile that precedes and prepares for Emile's departure and most obviously frames the succeeding social contract as a figure-less portrait.

Finally, I directly compare the two social contracts, noting especially the effect that the different modes of presentation have on the substance of these treatises. I conclude by considering the role of the legislator in the *Social Contract* and his absence from the *Emile*, arguing that the legislator is necessary for men as they are but not for men formed in the image of Man. If Emile's education is successful, *he* (but not necessarily every reader of Rousseau) will need the legislator no more than the Platos and Xenocrateses that populate the imaginary Lyceum of the Second Discourse, the elevated and imagined lords of Geneva in the dedicatory letter, or Persius in Rome. The legislator is a pragmatic concession to the difficulty, and perhaps impossibility, of public enlightenment and universal self-knowledge for all individuals and frees men from themselves for themselves through the general will and participation in the free and perfectible political 'person.' The figure of the legislator is therefore not dispensable in Rousseau's system, even if he is a duplication of the free man in a free republic. Rousseau writes his *Social Contract* as an individuated but representative member of the legislative sovereign will, articulating the principles of political right that he leaves free men to discover in the social contract of *Emile.* In this sense, the general will itself becomes not so much a free-floating

Rousseauan political teaching, but rather something fully integrated in Rousseau's philosophical methodology.

Two Texts, Two Contexts

The *Emile* culminates in Emile's maturation to manhood, brought on by his travel to foreign nations. This expedition is not narratively depicted; it is simultaneous with, and the background and framework for, Rousseau's ostensibly condensed version of his social contract. The *Social Contract* and the *Emile* were published in April and May of 1762. The works are inter- and intratextually linked. In a letter to his publisher, Rousseau argued that the *Social Contract* ought to "be considered as a sort of appendix" to *Emile* and that "together" the two works "make a complete whole."[113]

The relationship between the two works recalls the relationship between Rousseau's *Conversation about Novels* (the "Second Preface" to *Julie)* and *Julie.* The *Social Contract* is published first, though textually second. The *Conversation about Novels* is published second, though textually first. The *Conversation about Novels* stands both alone and with *Julie,* in the same way (though to a greater extent) than the *Social Contract* and the *Emile* are separate but irrevocably related works. The *Emile* literally contains within it the idea of the *Social Contract* and the *Social Contract,* in its brief foreword, suggests its need for contextualization in a larger and more complete work. It is in precisely this admission that one begins to see the stylistic link between this work and Rousseau's portraits.

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[113] Rousseau to Nicholas-Bonaventure Duchesne, 23 May 1762, *CC,* 10:281. For an extended treatment of the link between these two works, see Scott, *Rousseau's Reader,* 250-254.

Before Emile can "consider himself in his civil relations with his fellow citizens," he had to first consider "himself in his physical relations with other beings and in his moral relations with other men" (455). The *Social Contract,* on its own, lacks these considerations. "On Travel" is, quite literally, a "short treatise" from "a more extensive work," and provides a clear place within *Emile* to situate the *Social Contract*. The foreword of the *Social Contract* tells us that the "more extensive work" was "abandoned" on account of Rousseau's strength; at the end of "On Travel," Rousseau admits that his "pen is weary," that he is "too weak for works requiring so much endurance," and that he would have abandoned *Emile "*if it were less advanced" (475). In the introduction of Book I in the *Social Contract,* Rousseau states that he shall "try always to reconcile in this research what right permits with what interest prescribes, so that justice and utility are not at variance" (*CW* 4.131). At the beginning of the social contract portion of "On Travel," Rousseau assures the reader of his certainty "that in researches of this kind great talents are less necessary than a sincere love of justice and a true respect for the truth" (458) and, in the end, that he has "permitted [himself] only those agreeable details which [he] believed were of some utility" (475).

The textual apparatus surrounding the social contract portion of "On Travel" mirrors the little introductory material we have for the *Social Contract.* Since Rousseau signals, both in and outside of the text, the connection between these two works more broadly but especially the connection between this part of *Emile* and his *Social Contract,* we may consider the beginning of "On Travel," not only as a preface to the social contract portion within it but as a kind of proxy preface to the *Social Contract* itself. The proxy preface, like Rousseau's prefaces elsewhere, prepares the reader by situating him in a particular perspective to the figure or image under view and clarifies the intended vision from alternative viewpoints.

“On Travel” replicates the structure and substance we have seen in Rousseau’s other works, particularly the Second Discourse. From the frontispiece of the discourse, Rousseau engages with and responds to travelers, historians, and scientists. Before we approach the “science” of political right, as it is called in the beginning of the social contract portion of the text, and engage with the “scientists” of political right—Grotius, Hobbes, and Montesquieu—Rousseau prepares both Emile’s and his readers’ expedition by reviewing observation through “real” figurative travel and the doubly figurative travel of reading. Of course, Emile’s travel is itself read by the reader, and the reading portion that underlies said travel doubles its already doubled aspect.

The beginning of the *Social Contract* lacks the characteristic framework of these other works; Rousseau hardly prepares his readers for the text, and the language of portraiture—sight, figure, portrait, image, etc.— is altogether missing.[114] The introduction or proem to Book I instead focuses on the “rule of administration in the civil order,” or “Politics,” and takes as its immediate audience and competitors or would-be claimants not the “scientists” of political right but the “prince[s]” and “legislator[s]” that administer political rule (131). The two audiences together mirror the two audiences of the Second Discourse, where Rousseau writes, on the one hand, to the Academy and his contemporary travelers, historians, and scientists and, on the other hand, to his imagined and chosen audience in the Lyceum of Athens, which consists of Xenocrates, Plato, and other men of that stature. In the *Social Contract,* Rousseau dogmatically presents his research; whereas in “On Travel,” Rousseau leaves to the reader the task of “perceiving” where “this proposed research is going to lead us” (458).

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[114] Cf. de Man: “As a text, the Social Contract is unusual among Rousseau's works because of its impersonal, machinelike systematicity: it takes a few key terms, programs a relationship between them, and lets mere syntax take its course.” Paul de Man, *Allegories of Reading: Figural Language in Rousseau, Nietzsche, Rilke, and Proust*. (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1979), 268.

Rousseau himself is the inquirer in the *Social Contract*: “I want to inquire;” “I shall try always to reconcile in this research...;” “I start in without proving the importance of my subject;” “I write about Politics;” “If I were a prince or a legislator, I would not...I would...;” “Born a citizen of a free State... there is enough to impose on me...no matter how feeble the influence of my voice may be;” “And I am happy, every time I meditate about Governments, always to find in my research...;” “I believe I can answer this question”; etc. (131). In the *Emile*, Emile is the immediate inquirer, but he is, in some ways, a stand-in for “whoever wants to make healthy judgments about existing governments” (458). Emile has been put “in a position to answer” and judge “for himself,” and thus so too has the reader if he follows the figure.

Rousseau calls Emile to manhood and accomplishes his maturation through “On Travel.” Without knowing whether the reader will likewise overcome his age and achieve ‘immortal’ manhood à la Xenocrates, Plato, and Rousseau, Rousseau has at the very least given him the education (or book) to do so. The same cannot be said for readers of the *Social Contract*: “Taking men as they are and laws as they can be” (131), Rousseau leaves his reader in his adolescence and “force[s]” him to “be free” instead of raising him to freedom (141).

Readers of the *Social Contract* alone may find themselves in the position of the Romans that Rousseau describes in his dedicatory letter that precedes the Second Discourse: the “Roman people—model for all free peoples—was not capable of governing itself upon being released from the oppression of the Tarquins” (43). Lacking the education for moral and metaphysical freedom, they can only be bodily or physically positioned for freedom within their regimes. But following Rousseau, readers may make themselves free in whatever state they find themselves.

Ultimately, Rousseau hopes to unite both kinds of freedom, external and internal, physical and moral and metaphysical, for all men and citizens, as he tries to do (and perhaps does) for Emile, who is at the very least positioned to accomplish both.

Neither the preface portion of “On Travel” nor “On Travel” itself are strictly necessary for reading the *Social Contract* as such, but both are necessary for a complete picture of Rousseau’s whole project and understanding the relationship between the *Social Contract* and his other works. The *Social Contract* may be a work for men and for the formation of men as much as it is for citizens, but not by itself, cut off from the system. By looking to Rousseau’s other writings, the reader is prepared to imagine Man in society, perhaps through figures like Emile, but most clearly in Rousseau himself. Rousseau takes seriously the problem of self-knowledge in himself, in Man, and among men all while living in society and as a citizen. He gives his reader both the idea or image of his vision and the process of portraiture through which he produces and presents said vision. The reader who sees the image does well, but the one who sees the whole picture, what I have called portraiture, does better.

Bookish Travel and Travel in Books

“On Travel” appears near the end of *Emile,* in the last book after Emile has met Sophie but before he marries her and leaves his tutor’s instruction. The social contract appears during Emile’s absence from his beloved and after a brief discourse on the goodness of travel. Rousseau’s discourse on travel has an obvious narrative purpose, as Rousseau’s justification for the tutor’s choice to force Emile, with reluctant consent, to temporarily leave Sophie to travel the world, to observe governments and learn about society.[115] The discourse has a less obvious connection to the substance of his social contract theory. Like the Second Discourse, "On Travel" prepares the observer to see Rousseau's political thought by detailing his method and situating the picture of politics to come. There is substantial, substantive overlap between the Second Discourse and the first part of "On Travel" that underscores the importance of portraiture and visual metaphor in Rousseau's writings and the unity of his system. This of course is duplicated across Rousseau's works. Rousseau's apparent repetitiveness anticipates the difficulty his reader will have in seeing as he sees and in approaching the images of Man and men without prejudice and for himself.

Rousseau begins "On Travel" with the dispute on the goodness of travel for young people, noting that no such dispute exists for men, that is, men of maturity.[116] The difference between children and men is the persistent and distinctive theme in *Emile*. Throughout the novel, Rousseau studies the difference between the two groups, careful to distinguish children from men in miniature. Yet here, he elides their differences and uses the assumed inappropriateness of travel for one group to suggest the inappropriateness for the other. He raises the contradiction of these popular positions: 1) children are little men, 2) travel may be bad for children, 3) travel is definitely good for men. The discourse that ensues is not so much about the goodness or badness of travel as it is about the contradictory character of contemporary European opinions on men and for the formation of men. Thus the social contract also is not merely an abstract presentation of Rousseau's position on constitutionalism and law but rooted in this attempt at educating Emile and the reader in light of men as they now are.

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[115] For a feminist reading of Rousseau on travel, see Yaël Schlick, *Feminism and the Politics of Travel after the Enlightenment* (Plymouth: Bucknell University Press, 2012).

[116] For a metaphorical treatment of Rousseau's account of travel that situates him in the French tradition on the topic, see Georges Van Den Abbeele, *Travel as metaphor: from Montaigne to Rousseau*. (Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press, 1992).

Emile completes his education by traveling. The tutor makes Emile travel, despite Emile's initial resistance to leaving Sophie. The tutor must convince Emile of the goodness of the idea. This would seem to decisively answer the question of whether travel is good for young people and whether it is good for the formation of men. This is especially reinforced by Rousseau's immediate criticism of "the abuse of books," which not only kills "science" but removes the need for actual travel (450). Rousseau's preference for "real" travel must be contextualized and viewed within the broader narrative structure. Not only is Emile an imaginary pupil sent on an imaginary journey to an imaginary place in a book, but he has so far only traveled by reading fictional travel accounts from books, e.g., *Robinson Crusoe* and the *Odyssey*. Moreover, Rousseau himself problematizes travel for men and intentionally extends skepticism toward the pedagogical or even moral potential in travel at the outset of this discourse.

Before Rousseau provides a positive account of travel, he criticizes travel among European men. His criticism of contemporary attitudes on travel is primarily or ultimately a criticism of reading and writing. The vast majority of Europeans travel through travel journals and books, like those discussed in the Second Discourse. The reader might anticipate that Rousseau will recommend 'real' travel rather than its literary counterpart in educating young men, but perhaps only if the same reader has not already learned that the solution to the bad science of contemporary European naturalists is not more serious collection of data and more thorough experimentation. "Believing that we know what we have read, [we] believe that we can dispense with learning it" (450). It is not "books" but the "abuse of books" that "kills science" (450). Rousseau's discourse *On Travel* is not principally or primarily on travel but on reading and reading well, and the impact that our orientation towards reading and books has on our education and development—whether we are children or men.

The problem is twofold: European authors do not know how to write, and European readers do not know how to read. “Among all the countries of Europe there is none in which so many histories and accounts of voyages are printed as in France, and none in which so little is known about the genius and the morals of other nations” (451). The sheer multitude of books “makes us neglect the book of the world,” and, if it is read at all, “each sticks to his own page” (451). While believing themselves to be more learned and worldly than all other men, Frenchmen cannot make sense of foreigners in their own cities, though they have read and written more.

These twin problems are likewise not resolved by encouraging Frenchmen to be less parochial in their choices for their tours or their tour guides. The solution is not to replace these “histories” with others of greater scientific accuracy, just as Rousseau’s pursuit of man’s origins did not prompt more minute investigations into primordial beings that walked on all fours or embryonic precursors to modern European man. Drawing from Montesquieu’s *Persian Letters,* Rousseau allies himself with the Persian character, Rica, and his French author, Montesquieu. Rousseau rejects in this more complex way the manner of generically French men like the one overheard in Montesquieu asking “Can one be Persian?” after he learns that Rica is a Persian man in French clothing (451; Montesquieu 30).

Montesquieu’s letter reverses French expectations, which Rousseau uses to reinforce his own view. Rica arrives in Paris and recounts his travel experience to Ibben at Smyrna. The French are accustomed to viewing themselves as the travelers and to viewing foreigners like these Persians as fantastical men found only in faraway places. Instead, Rica, the Persian, travels to France to observe Frenchmen. The French, “old and young, men, women, and children, were all agog to see” him and “stared” at Rica as “if [he] had dropped from the sky” (Montesquieu 30). Rica’s characterization of the French as both easily amazed and, perhaps more pointedly, dull is not all that different from the way the French ordinarily characterize “savages” from “savage nations.” It is unsurprising then that the French mistake so-called ‘savage men’ as their more ‘primitive’ or ‘original’ relatives if they cannot recognize themselves in other ‘civilized’ and social men from neighboring states.

Rica is surprised by the reception he receives. The French do not treat him like a man but as something else entirely: “So much distinction could not fail to be burdensome. I do not consider myself such a rare and wonderful specimen of humanity” (Montesquieu 30). The French pair this inability to identify or recognize him as what he is with an absolute certainty of knowing him: “I smiled frequently when I heard people who had never traveled beyond their own door, saying to each other, ‘He certainly looks very like a Persian’” (Montesquieu 30). The French hold many “national prejudices” but know little of men. They lack self-knowledge: “A Parisian believes he knows men, and he knows only the French” (451). That is, he knows French things like dress and physiognomy and Frenchmen as a kind of French thing, without every really knowing himself.

Rousseau very nearly paraphrases the sentiment expressed by Rica, criticizing the French as both a foreigner among them and as an author instructing them. It is not a deep appreciation of Man as an extraordinary phenomenon or foreign spectacle that causes the French to react to travelers with such wonder but a “presumptuous” ignorance and “clever” stupidity of man simply (450-1). Reading “perhaps ten times the description of a country,” the French are nonetheless awestruck by “one of its inhabitants” (451). The French do not know how to read about foreign places or people and, what is worse, French authors do not know how to observe and record them. Prevented by mere curiosity or novelty from experiencing the truly human sense of wonder that leads to philosophy, the French suffer from the problem that their desire to appear as men of letters is the very thing that inhibits their reading and indeed their vision.

Books kill science because the authors of books, whether travelers, historians, men of letters, authors, or scientists, do not know man. All purported experts on men, they nonetheless lack self-knowledge or any kind of understanding of what man is. Each book contains and is tainted by both "the authors' prejudices and our own" (451). The "truth" is disguised because readers and authors alike do not know how to see or judge what is worth seeing. The French in the *Persian Letters* are fooled by dress: Rica is definitively Persian or indistinguishable from the French by garments alone. Rica finds his "portraits everywhere—in all the shops, on every mantelpiece" because of both the French fixation on artifice and a real shared nature and likeness perceivable in every man. For these as well as Rousseau's portraits, the French men of letters confound nature and artifice in the subject because of their own incapacity to identify the real or relevant details and fixating and enlarging the insignificant or accidental features of the figures. Rather than discovering Man in Rica's or Rousseau's portraits, the French only replicate their blindness toward men.

No two accounts of travel have ever given "the same idea of the same people," so thoroughly are they bound up with their author. For Rousseau, however, it is not enough to "read," one must "see" (451). Whether travelers are "sincere" or, as is more often the case, "bad faith" liars, one has to learn to see for oneself. To say that universal enlightenment is probably not possible and that the *Social Contract* is for one audience and the *Emile* for another is not to say that Rousseau has arbitrarily introduced a noble lie that is external or alien to the fundamental pedagogical problem he identifies. In the apparent sense of the term, Rousseau is no more an ‘esoteric’ reader than writer. Truth is not something to be concealed from the reader or extracted from lies, but it is discernable only for those who know how to observe. It is not enough to view the portrait of Man or learn, in a merely dogmatic way, what Man is. Such practices “are good for learning to babble about what one does not know. They are good for training fifteen-year-old Platos to philosophize in polite society” (451). One has to comprehend and understand, which requires self-knowledge. Thus the *Social Contract i*s not discarded in favor of *Emile*, but both speak ultimately to men who seek that self-knowledge.

For Rousseau, it does not make a difference whether he himself observes firsthand or only through books. He knows how to see, how to read, how to write; in short, Rousseau knows how to be a man and recognize men. Portraiture, in Rousseau’s hands, provides an instructive moral picture which not only depicts moral subjects but teaches audiences how to read morally. Whether or how that lesson is received is beyond Rousseau’s ability and concern—it is enough that he has attempted to give sight to the blind. His own illumination, as depicted at once in the “illumination of Vincennes,” as described in the Introduction to this dissertation, but portrayed everywhere in his writings, rivals and rejects Paul’s literal and spiritual vision on the road to Damascus and Diderot’s anti-inspiration pamphlet on sight and blindness. Rousseau’s call to conversion is certainly unchristian but not that of the *philosophe* who rejects entirely the classical solution to the problem of philosophy and self-knowledge. The new materialism of Voltaire or Diderot trades one kind of blindness for another.

Travel like a Man, for Men

Just as Rousseau rejects and replaces the question proposed by the Academy in the Second Discourse, Rousseau changes the opening question and begins again with a new (and better) perspective on the suitability of travel for young people: “Does it suffice for a well-educated man to know only his compatriots, or is it important for him to know men in general?” (451). The answer is obvious and so, it seems, is the goodness of travel. Rousseau, on the contrary, rejects the idea that “it is necessary to roam the entire earth” to “study men,” following the logic to its ridiculous conclusion: “Is it necessary to know all the individuals to know the species? No.” (451). Recalling Abelard’s radical account of the universals, discussed in the second Preface to *Julie*, this question implicates one of the great problems of political philosophy. Returning also to the Second Discourse, the dichotomous image of individual and species is repeated here, as well as Rousseau’s rhetorical strategy. In the Discourse, Rousseau facetiously asks “whether those who command are necessarily better than those who obey” to distinguish his own question from a similar but stupid one (61). It is in this same spirit that he entertains these questions.

Scientific empiricism would seem to require comprehensive knowledge of every individual and, even from this, seems incapable of deriving an account of the whole, of what is universal in Man or in anything else. Rousseau doubtless needs to know some individuals to know the species, but knowing which individuals to study requires judgment: “There are men who have such a strong resemblance to one another that it is not worth the effort to study them separately.” How do we know when a repeated image is productive or redundant? Rica is a Persian who resembles the French but is, for Rousseau and Montesquieu, worthy of study. Resemblance or difference is not itself decisive. “To become informed, it is not sufficient to roam through various countries,” or study foreigners at home. “It is necessary to know how to travel," which is nothing other than an alternative appearance of the same faculty that Rousseau has been investigating all along, from the second Preface through the Second Discourse and now in *Emile*; that is, knowing how "to observe," whereby "it is necessary to have eyes and to turn them toward the object one wants to know" (452).

Travel is a helpful depiction of this ability to observe and observe well because it is unmediated by an author; it deprives the viewer of the protection or mediation of another's judgment. Reading well and traveling well require the same "art of thinking," but the latter more obviously exposes ignorance: "When they read, their minds are at least guided by the author; and because when they travel, they do not know how to see anything on their own" (452). No one intervenes or redirects the attention of the traveler—the aim of the traveler is plain; one only has to follow their gaze. That is why Peter Kolben, the Dutch traveler, observed and judged in the Second Discourse, cannot see the humanity in the so-called "savages": "it is very much an accident if one sees with exactitude what one does not care to look at" (452). What the traveler purports to see is less instructive of the object in view than the subject viewing. The heart of the subject becomes the object and is the true subject of the report. The image of the object in view is so thoroughly colored by the perspective of the subject or the author of the report that it is difficult to extract a true idea unless one is a very good reader—it is, perhaps paradoxically, easier to see and judge for yourself. The unstated opposite, however, is also true: a good-hearted author with good judgment facilitates true ideas and cultivates true perception.

The ancients are favorably contrasted with the moderns as the kind of peoples that are able to see for themselves, or, at the very least, not ruin the vision of others: "the ancients traveled little, read little, and wrote few books, and yet one sees in those of their books which remain to us that they observed one another better than we observe our contemporaries" (452).

Though the ancients may have been better than the moderns on the whole, it is not the peoples themselves but exemplary authors among them that Rousseau recognizes. What is true of ancient peoples as a type or a particular people as a species, is really only true of those individuals who transcend themselves and their kind by representing, as it were, the general will of their ancient polis. The Greeks and Romans possess the faculty of vision, not in the sense that every individual man among them can see and read well, but because the great men are capturing sovereignly what it means to be a Greek or Roman.

Herodotus, praised in the Second Discourse for his depiction of Otanes, is once again set apart and commended for his ability to depict "manners and morals in his history—even though he does so more in his narratives than in his reflections—and of having depicted them better than all our historians, who burden their books with portraits and characteristics" (453). Rousseau's use of Herodotus underscores the connection between the prefatory part of "On Travel," and the Second Discourse, as well as the analogy between books and travel, or reading, writing and traveling.

In the preface to *Emile*, Rousseau describes the work as a "collection of reflections and observations," utilizing the same language to describe his work and Herodotus'. Rousseau praises Herodotus for his ability to "depict" and to know what things are worth depicting. His criticism of portraits and characteristics must be understood both in its immediate context and the broader project. It is not that portraits and characteristics are bad in themselves, but that portraits and characters understood outside of the context of portraiture—without intentional artistry, authorial intervention, and above all, self-knowledge—mistake the purpose and possibility of history. If Herodotus traded his sound historiography, full of apparent portraits and characters, for a mere collection or ‘history’ of the same figures, he would be as blind as the modern Europeans in their travel logs and memoirs.

The discussion of the portrait or tableau from the second Preface and in the first chapter of this dissertation is relevant here. Modern portraits by modern men are bound by a false understanding of reality: “the historian enslaves himself” to another’s imagination (238). Rousseau is positive about portraits if “the portraits are well rendered according to nature,” but critical if it subjects the reader or viewer to the “historian’s imagination,” placing the reader under the yoke of the already-yoked historian and extending the chain of bondage:

> Our historians, mindful only of being brilliant, dream of nothing but producing highly colored portraits which often represent nothing. Generally the ancients make fewer portraits and put less wit and more sense in their judgments. Even with them one must be very selective, and not the most judicious but the simplest must be chosen first.... One has to learn to see in human actions the primary features of man's heart before wanting to sound its depths. One has to know how to read facts well before reading maxims. Philosophy in maxims is suitable only to those who have experience. Youth ought to generalize in nothing. Its whole instruction should be in particular rules. (239)

Portraits are unsuitable for children and the portraits of the *Emile* are not, as I argued last chapter, for educating youths. Portraits are good for philosophy, but only men can philosophize. Historians, ancient and modern alike, that try to use portraits without self-knowledge not only fail but fail with dire consequences. Portraits are the highest medium and ought to be reserved for the best artists. God makes Man in his own image and so does Rousseau.

Rousseau is that author for his reader, as Homer is for Emile. Here at least, Rousseau will "not go back to the writings of Homer," though he prompts the reader to recall his earlier use of that author in the education and preparation of Emile for what follows in "On Travel" (453). Rousseau depicts contemporary peoples for his reader, to show his reader how to see his fellows rightly as well as to save his reader the effort of studying peoples that, perhaps, are not worth studying: "While a Frenchman runs to the artists of a country, an Englishman has a sketch made of some antique, and a German carries his notebook around to all the learned men" (452). Like the Frenchman discussed in the second Preface, the individual portraits are not particular people but general tableaus of peoples—they capture something true about these cultural subgroups within the species while pointing to a larger, shared inability to travel or observe well.

Rousseau is able to produce these true but chimerical portraits; he knows how to travel, how to read, and how to observe well. Rousseau intentionally uses the language of portraiture as part of his portrait of these men: the French are not artists but drawn to artists; the English likewise do not bother to sketch anything for themselves but outsource the sketch, not of men or nature but of things, to another; the Germans do not fill their own notebooks because they are learned but carry empty notebooks to the so-called "learned men." The "people of our day," as a collection, does not know "its neighbors." Rousseau's contemporaries are unable to "observe" themselves, but Rousseau presents, to the reader, what is supposed to be a true picture of both his contemporaries, the people of his day, and himself. His criticism of these contemporaries and these people is itself the thing that eludes them.

The long prefatory part of "On Travel," which replicates aspects of the Second Discourse, is necessary because "the instruction that one extracts from travel is related to the aim that causes travel to be undertaken" (454). Before Emile can approach the social contract, or

Rousseau's reader, the *Social Contract,* each must decide what his "aim" is. Both are bad judges of what makes a good aim on their own, and both need, in their own way, the guidance of the tutor and the education of Rousseau.

Some contend that there are "learned men who travel to inform themselves. This is an error. The learned travel for profit like the others. The Platos and the Pythagorases are no longer to be found" (454). Echoes of the Second Discourse abound: Rousseau raises the "self-sufficient" so-called "savage," infamous among Europeans for cannibalism, only to call Europeans the real cannibals, "who can no longer get along without devouring men;"[117] Plato and Pythagoras, like Plato and Xenocrates, are impossibly foreign; the true study, or what ought to be the true study, of travel is to "study men." Though unlike their own contemporaries in a sense, but really their sovereign selves, these ancient philosophers are truly foreign to the modern Europeans who are only a mass of men capable only of piling up observations without discretion.

Rousseau recalls the beginning of *Emile* by reintroducing the distinction between men and things: "The child observes things while waiting to be able to observe men... the man ought to begin by observing his kind and then observe things if he has the time" (454-55). This would turn scientific empiricism on its head, or rather, would turn the investigation of Man the right way up; this is Herodotus's procedure with regard to the Egyptians, who pursue the wrong kind of scientific knowledge in an upside down world. The *Emile* begins with things because Emile is a child and the reader, not yet a man. But this moment is the moment of maturation and the test of Rousseau's education and indeed the efficacy of Rousseau's whole project. The man "who wants to philosophize" must know, or want to know, himself—in Man and reflected in other men: “I would want to give the young man a palpable interest in informing himself, and if this interest were well chosen, it would then determine the nature of the instruction. This is only a continuation of the method I have tried to put into practice all along” (455). The prefatory portion of “On Travel” contains no new instruction but summarizes and situates Rousseau’s instruction of Emile and his reader.

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[117] Rousseau earlier compares modern Europeans to the Scythians in Herodotus's *Histories.* It is worth nothing here that the Scythia has the "man-eaters."

Even if Rousseau can instill “the utility of travel,” or, without metaphor, convince his contemporaries of the importance of self-knowledge, few will be able to do it—even with the assistance of Rousseau and his writings: “Does it follow that it is suitable for everyone? Far from it. On the contrary, it is suitable for only very few people” (455). Good travel and good books aim at self-knowledge but only complete “the job of making him good or bad.... More men come back wicked than good, because more leave inclined to evil than to good” (455). Rousseau does what he can; in Emile’s case, Rousseau is able to form Emile so that he travels in this way. For his readers, “all those who are happily born, whose good nature has been well cultivated, and who travel with the true intention of informing themselves, return better and wiser than they left” (455). Once again, Rousseau does not hide his meaning or reserve his instruction for a few, as though introducing an arbitrary distinction between the vulgar many and the few elite; self-knowledge is difficult in itself.

To the extent he can, Rousseau prepares his reader to see himself and others truly, to know Man and recognize men, and to enter into society as free men. Few will or can follow him, but they will, Rousseau promises, be more useful and happier for it. Rousseau thus situates his project between cosmopolitan, universal enlightenment and sophistic, secret teaching. He educates generally but not particularly, forming men in the image of Man indiscriminately and for the utility and happiness of the whole species without forming each man for his own utility and happiness. Christ comes and saves the world, but there are still men in hell. Likewise, Rousseau redeems Man without saving all men.

Discourse and *Discours:* Rousseau to his Reader and his Emile

The difference between the discourse, "On Travel," and the discourse between the tutor and Emile is the difference between the preparation or education of Emile and of the reader of *Emile,* which together prepare the reader of Rousseau's system for a third perspective: the reader of the *Social Contract.* Rousseau's authorial perspective is superior to the perspective of both his textual audience and his subject but takes on a different appearance according to his textual audience and subject. While Rousseau's vision is morally and metaphysically the same, its appearance depends on the contextual circumstances of the particular framework of the portrait under view. These general principles are the ones I have applied throughout my argument and manifest themselves clearly in the preparation for the two appearances of the social contract.

As tutor, Rousseau has given Emile the appearance of freedom without freedom. Emile's life has been arranged by his tutor so that he is led to choose what is good without really having a choice at all. If Emile is free, he is free because he was unfree. Rousseau, in dialogue with Emile, reveals finally to his pupil the position he has been in to prepare him for the position he is approaching. Emile's maturation is completed by his travels. Where the tutor seems to drop the veil and reveal the complex artistry that has comprised Emile's education, Rousseau speaks hypothetically, showing the reader what he "might say to him," without committing the tutor to this speech:

> Up to now you have lived under my direction. You were not in a condition to govern yourself. But now you are approaching the age when the laws put your property at your disposition and thus make you the master of your own person.

Together, nature and law position Emile to become master of himself. Nature "ages" him, and the law decides what age corresponds to self-mastery. This self-mastery is not the same as self-knowledge. The legal right to dispose of and direct property is not the same as the moral and metaphysical freedom of self-direction, but the latter is envisioned with and through the former. The garden scene, discussed in the last chapter, imagines the metaphysical and moral knowledge of good and evil through property and property rights. Acting as helper, the tutor there shields Emile from this knowledge. Now, the tutor, if not yet replaced by Sophie, is in the process of passing his position to another, making Sophie Emile's helper and hastening the confrontation to complete "the job of making him good or bad" (455).

At the opening of *Emile,* Rousseau argues that "a man abandoned to himself in the midst of other men from birth would be the most disfigured of all;" (37) Emile is now "going to find [himself] alone in society, dependent on everything" (456). He, unlike Adam, has the benefit of his education to prepare him for Sophie and society. Whereas the tutor wants to complete Emile's education and make him a man, Emile's "plan to settle down" is motivated entirely by Sophie. Rousseau commends this plan— "this plan is laudable" — in so far as "it is one of man's duties," but he is careful to clarify that "one ought not to make such a care his principal business."

The substance of the speech is summarized, and the tutor does not directly speak to Emile: "Then I shall describe to him…" (456). Rousseau glosses the substance of the speech for the reader, giving the reader the structure of the speech and an idea of the content, while leaving it to the reader's judgment to decide what Emile ought to choose. The reader, like Emile, finds himself preparing for freedom through a kind of unfreedom, led by Rousseau's artistry and educated through the author's figural positioning and calculated veiling and unveiling. The tutor reveals to Emile and the reader of *Emile* that "every one" of the possible options will "put him in a precarious and dependent state, and force him to adjust his morals, his sentiments, and his conduct to the example and the prejudices of others." Just as Robert the gardener instructs Emile that "all the lands you see have been occupied for a very long time", (99) the tutor here tells Emile that there is no option that leads to an independent state. Man is not alone in the garden, and Emile will return to his Sophie. Just as Jean-Jacques established a consensual agreement in Robert's garden whereby Emile was permitted to work the land and plant his beans, so here Emile must do the same for himself. He enters into the social contract of the state and secures for himself a "corner of the earth" (457).

"A woman and a field" are enough "for the wise man's happiness;" Emile has found Sophie and now must find his "field" (457). The tutor details the difficulty of this enterprise for Emile. Even if Emile were to find unclaimed and workable land, that land would border claimed land. Emile could not have escaped Robert by planting his beans in the neighboring plot.[118] The only solution is a political one:

> I have more experience than you, dear Emile. I see the difficulty of your project better. Nevertheless it is a fine and decent one which would really make you happy. Let us make an effort to execute it. I have a proposition to make to you.

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[118] Cf. Geneviève Rousselière, "Rousseau on Freedom in Commercial Society." *American Journal of Political Science* 60, no. 2 (2016): 353. Rousselière argues that Rousseau deals with the "harmful dependence" of commercial society through "natural education," which mitigates the "psychological effects" through "a dual mechanism of distance and adaption."

> Let us consecrate the two years until your return to choosing an abode in Europe where you can live happily with your family, sheltered from all the dangers of which I have just spoken to you. If we succeed, you will have found the true happiness vainly sought by so many others, and you will not regret the time you have spent. If we do not succeed, you will be cured of a chimera. You will console yourself for an inevitable unhappiness, and you will submit yourself to the law of necessity.

Rousseau does not send Emile to study Hottentots, or so-called “savage nations” as the Europeans do and as a scientific reader of the Second Discourse might expect. Emile with not live on Cape Hope or in the New World but will choose an abode in Europe. Rousseau does not depict the places Emile travels. Emile will study abstractly “the nature of government in general, the diverse forms of government,” and “the particular government under which he was born” (455). His study of governments reflects the reader’s study of Man, in that the focus is at once singular and threefold. Where the reader who studies man with Rousseau is given particular and diverse portraits to arrive at what Man is in general, Emile begins with what government is before examining others and his own. Emile is less concerned with self-knowledge than his tutor, and Rousseau’s sight is “better” than Emile’s. Their projects are neither the same nor competing— Rousseau's is more comprehensive, and Emile’s is nested within it.

Like Sophie herself, Emile’s field is a true chimera. The idea of the field is truer than the field itself but the two are not so different that Emile realizes the disparity and succumbs to “an inevitable unhappiness.” Like Rousseau’s own Geneva, it is enough that the ‘real’ object can sustain the true image. Emile, like Rousseau, must “voluntarily subject” himself “to the laws” by “staying” after “attaining the age of reason” or “renounce” his “place of birth” by “leaving the country" at "his own risk" (455-56). Rousseau both renounces the laws of Geneva and "voluntarily subjects" himself to them as he moves in and out of citizenship of his country and throughout his portraits. Emile is one image of citizenship within a broader picture, and the two social contracts reflect the different perspectives of their own context: each has its own Rousseau (or Rousseaus), audience (or audiences), and figural subjects.

Rousseau writes the *Social Contract* as a citizen: "Born a citizen of a free State, and a member of the sovereign, the right to vote there is enough to impose on me the duty of learning about public affairs" (*CW* 4:131). Emile travels as a foreigner. He has not reached the age of citizenship; he lacks the ability to vote and participation in the sovereignty of his state. Emile is not impelled by duty but by self-interest. He travels to secure a field for his future happiness. Though Emile is not obligated by duty, he "must nonetheless think" about government "once" to determine whether he will consent or renounce his birthright—not as a prince but as a citizen. Where Emile must think about it once and takes one trip, Rousseau "meditates" about "Governments" continually: "every time I meditate about Governments..." (*CW* 4:131). Emile thinks to settle so that he may become happy; his happiness is not in thinking but in living on his land with his wife. Rousseau is "happy, every time [he] meditate[s] about Governments," to "find in [his researches] new reasons to love that of [his] country." He is happy through his meditations and research; he returns to these activities to love his country.

Since Emile lacks the duty that compels Rousseau, Rousseau faces three unique difficulties in educating someone in Emile's position: the first and "greatest" difficulty is making the individual interested in discussing political and positive right; the second arises from preexisting prejudices held by the individual; the third is more "more specious than solid," and is neither "resolve[d]" nor "pose[d]" in the text (458). The three difficulties correspond to the three educations: the first to the education from nature, the second to the education from men, and the third to the education from things. To interest Emile in discussing political and positive right, Rousseau appeals to his *amour de soi*. To overcome potential prejudices from childhood, received maxims, and partial authors, Rousseau rears Emile himself and shields him from worldly maxims and authors.

The third and only unstated difficulty corresponds structurally to the education from things, and it is only in pairing the education from things to this difficulty that we can conceive what this difficulty might involve. The education from things consists in "what we acquire from our own experience about the objects which affect us" (38). Emile lacks experience of the object in question (government) and has not been affected by the state directly. To the extent he has been affected by government at all, it has been indirectly—filtered through his tutor. As we will see in both social contracts, the family is the first and "only natural" society (*CW* 4.132). While Emile lacks a family, his 'adopted' father—the tutor—replicates this natural society through artifice, socializing Emile without corrupting him. The Author of things, the figure with which the books opens, may well pose a difficulty for Rousseau's judgment of what ought to be vs. what is. Doubtless, the Pauline God of the Bible, the Calvinist God of Geneva, even the Catholic God of France judges and sees very differently from this author and tutor. Without direct confrontation, Rousseau avoids this difficulty by preventing Emile from direct experience with either God or country up to this point.

In *Emile*, Rousseau "makes some rules" for observations: "our principles of political right" are made (*faire*) as a "standard" to which the "political laws of each country" will be measured (458). While these principles are made rather than derived or discovered, the *Social Contract* does not even contain rules, made or otherwise, for observing. Thus the latter text is not instructive but prescriptive. The emphasis in the *Emile* is on observation, formation, and judgment while the *Social Contract* focuses on the subject as Rousseau sees it. The methodological statement in *Emile*—that the elements of the inquiry ought to be 1) "clear" 2) "simple" and 3) "taken immediately from the nature of thing"—is missing from the *Social Contract.* The *Social Contract* is a collection of conclusions, a summary of Rousseau's vision of government but not itself that vision. The "immediate subject" is not the whole picture and to treat the vision apart from the viewing only arises from the connection to Rousseau's system.

The viewing or active aspect of vision is missing in the *Social Contract*. The *Emile* poses, as we will see in the next section, questions that are converted into statements in the *Social Contract.* The *Emile* is dialogical or dialectical where the *Social Contract* is not: the elements "will be formed from questions discussed between us, and we shall convert them into principles only when they are sufficiently resolved" (459). If the *Emile* is Platonic, then the *Social Contract* is Lycurgean. In the *Emile,* Rousseau, like Plato, purifies "the heart of man" by making him what he is—a morally free being capable of self-knowledge; in the *Social Contract,* Rousseau lowers his sights, taking "men as they are and laws as they can be," "denaturing" the heart, like Lycurgus, by subjugating men to freedom. It is worth noting here, though it will be covered in more depth below, that Lycurgus is the most famous example given in the *Social Contract* of the lawgiver—famously absent from the social contract of *Emile.* The lawgiver is a figure for children, or men who have not yet, and perhaps never will, become men but not a part of the truly free republic. Men, who like adolescent Emile, must be forced to be free. Socrates uses the City in Speech in the *Republic* to study the soul; Rousseau, in a parallel project, achieves freedom through self-knowledge by looking beyond the individual to the general will of the body politic.

Comparing Perspectives

The social contract portion of "On Travel" in *Emile* introduces the whole section as an "example" of Rousseau's method of observation (459). Rousseau "first [goes] back to the state of nature" only to illustrate his "rules," and the subsequent "questions discussed between" Rousseau and his reader are offered less to be "resolved" than to show how one would go about "observing" (458-59). It is for this reason that Rousseau poses as a question what he dares to state as a principle in the *Social Contract:* he asks here "whether men are born enslaved or free," and there famously states that "man was/is born free, and everywhere he is in chains" (459; 131). He asks "whether they join together voluntarily or by force" on the one hand, and "consider[s] only force and the effect it produces" on the other (459; 131). The *Emile* questions and the *Social Contract* resolves. Rousseau observes in the former and share principles in the latter.

The two social contracts differ in three key ways: 1) in presentation, 2) order, and 3) content.[119] The first difference is the most pervasive and persists throughout the comparison. That *Emile* is dialogical and methodological and the *Social Contract* principial and substantive is apparent in careful comparison of the two contracts. The second difference arises from the first and illustrates the consequences of each approach. Rousseau, for example, treats family and force in different order in the different works. The third difference manifests in omissions or additions to one or the other account: perhaps most notably, in the fact that the legislator is missing from *Emile's* social contract. Together, these differences can be explained and accounted for by careful attention to their disparate frameworks, showing the consistency of Rousseau's thought between the two while highlighting the effect and purpose of each.

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[119] Mara sees a contradiction in the presentation of political obligation between *Emile* and the *Social Contract* that he resolves through a "more general obligation theory" that accounts for "historical and personal circumstances." Gerald Mara, "Rousseau's Two Models of Political Obligation." *The Western Political Quarterly* 33, no. 4 (1980): 537.

In the *Emile,* Rousseau examines "whether one cannot say that every illness comes from God, and whether it follows from this that it is a crime to call the doctor" (459). In the *Social Contract,* Rousseau does not ask what one can or cannot say but says that "all illness" comes "from God" (134). He facetiously asks if it thus "forbidden to call the doctor," collapsing the distinction between appearance and reality maintained in the *Emile* account. Though Rousseau is consistent across works, he nonetheless draws attention to the distinction between the idea and the presentation of the idea in the *Emile.* It is true, as he asserts in the *Social Contract,* that all illness comes from God, but whether one can or cannot say this is the question—and the point—in the *Emile.* The distinction between the two works is not merely the bare one between an esoteric and exoteric doctrine of the divine responsibility for evil, at least if that difference is a matter of avoiding censorship or censoriousness. Rather, the *Social Contract* is legislative while the *Emile* is dialectical. Again, this difference is not that between Rousseau's "real" and "false" (or true and defective or partial) teaching but between the purpose of the two works as jointly constitutive of his whole system.[120]

In each account, Rousseau reinforces the effect of presentation with two similar but different illustrations. In *Emile,* a bandit demands his purse on a highway. In the *Social Contract,* a brigand surprises him at the edge of the wood. The instrument, a pistol, and the object, the purse, are the same in both. The figure and setting differ—the bandit is replaced by a brigand and the highway for a wood. Both illustrations end with this sentence: “after all, the pistol he holds is also a power” (459; 134). While the concluding lesson of each illustration is the same, the illustration is altered for its context and audience. The highway (*chemin*) is not natural but man-made. The nascent shrub depicted in the opening of the *Emile* is born in “the middle of a path (*chemin*)” and perishes. Emile, likewise, is a ‘natural’ young man, uncorrupted by society. The *Social Contract* is for “men as they are,” social and corrupted; it intends to “denature” their hearts as Lycurgus denatured the Spartans. It thus depicts the natural setting as dangerous—imagining the state of nature as the state of war. The differences between images support the apparent division in Rousseau’s writings between nature and society and natural and civil man. The two pictures, however, depict the same truth in different aspects. The divergence is not essential to the paths, the ‘types’ of men involved either as subject or audience, but it is pedagogical. For men, wherever they are, the illegitimacy of force and the sanctity of right is the same because it is connected to what Man is and is a part of self-knowledge. It is not historically, situationally, or in any way accidentally contingent on the particular ‘types’ of men in view or the state that men happen to find themselves in.

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[120] Cf. Arthur Melzer, "Rousseau's Moral Realism: Replacing Natural Law with the General Will." *The American Political Science Review* 77 (1983): 633–51. Melzer views the *Social Contract* as a replacement for other alternatives in Rousseau's thought.

Finally, Rousseau demonstrates the integrity of his presentation by portraying the effect that reordering has on the meaning of these passages. In *Emile,* Rousseau turns to paternal authority only after assuming “that one” has “reject[ed] this right of force and accepts the right of nature” as the “principle of societies.” In the *Social Contract,* Rousseau asserts the “sacred right” of the “social order” and then “establish[es]” his assertion by turning to “the most ancient of all societies, and the only natural one... that of the family” (132). In *Emile,* Rousseau emphasizes the “right of nature” as the basis for paternal authority, arguing through principle. In the *Social Contract,* Rousseau calls the family “natural” because it is “ancient,” recalling the quasi-history of origins image used in the Second Discourse without investigating it here. Rousseau treats "On the Right of the Strongest" after his chapter "On the First Societies," or the family, not only reversing the order of presentation but, through his reordering, changing the principal relationship between force and the family.

In *Emile,* force and family provide two competing foundations for politics—one conventional and the other natural. Only after rejecting 'right' by force do the interlocutors look to the legitimacy of paternal right. They assume "the right of nature, or paternal authority, as the principle of societies" (459). The contest between these two alternatives is less pronounced in the *Social Contract,* and indeed, comprise two "conventions" from which politics arise. The family is "the first model of political societies," but only insofar as the children are children. When the children mature, they remain under their father's authority by consent alone: "no man has any natural authority over his fellow man" (134). While both accounts ultimately direct their readers to another foundation for political right, the *Social Contract* more obviously denies the 'naturalness' of the family, in keeping with the Second Discourse.

Paternal right itself seems to be conventional, as "children remain bound to the father only as long as they need him to preserve themselves;" the children have a kind of compact with their father, not unlike the social contract itself. The social contract arises when "men have reached the point where obstacles to their self-preservation in the state of nature prevail by their resistance over the forces each individual can use to maintain himself in that state" (138). In both cases, the convention is established because of the subject's inability to preserve himself. It is not that paternal right is 'natural,' but that the convention between father and child arises from the child's natural state. The *Emile* presents paternal authority as the right of nature, whereas the *Social Contract* treats it as another convention—albeit one much closer to nature than those established by force between men. Perhaps paradoxically, the conventional account is presented without obvious artifice or artistry, without portraits or pictorial language. The intertextual relationship between nature and convention, right and force, freedom and rule in each account aligns with the use (or lack thereof) of portraiture in each.

Writing the Law on our Hearts

The *Social Contract* lacks its own portrait. The "citizen" is never figurally depicted. We do not get Rousseau's vision of him; he cannot be seen anywhere. The "true meaning of the word *citizen"* has been lost among the French bourgeois, but no more so than "natural man," as seen in the Second Discourse. Citizens, Rousseau posits, are individual "participants in the sovereign authority" (139). The portrait of a citizen is, in some ways, a paradox. A portrait is a portrait of an individual but a citizen, though an individual, is what he is because he is a part of a larger whole. It is his participation in the larger body that makes him what he is. A portrait necessarily takes its individual as a subject, and yet the citizen is not his own.

We do, however, receive portraits of the citizen and the citizenness (*citoyenne*) in the first book of *Emile* (40). Rousseau highlights extraordinary citizens elsewhere in his writings, not least of all in his own person. Rousseau authors the Second Discourse, the *Emile,* and the *Social Contract* as a citizen of Geneva, whether it is 'really' true or not. If we recall the second Preface, he does not add this title lightly and only puts it "on writings [he] believe[s] will do it honor" (*CW* 6.20). It is not simply that portraits and citizens are incompatible, though there is obvious tension between the artistic medium and the subject.

If Rousseau only portrays natural subjects, the reader might expect a portrait to appear in the chapter “On the First Societies” in the *Social Contract*, since it describes the “only natural” society. Rousseau does not paint the natural society, but he does invoke a recurring figure—Grotius. Grotius is not a portrait but a real man that Rousseau returns to across his writings as a foil to his own image. Where the tutor is the father-figure to Emile, Grotius “is only a child and, what is worse, a child of bad faith” (458). He “denies that all human power is established for the benefit of those who are governed” and “cites slavery as an example” (132). His method “is always to establish right by fact,” using “the history of ancient abuses” to justify “tyrants” (132). If Rousseau is a man and a citizen, or an author of men and citizens, Grotius is neither. He is, textually if not actually, an author of servile children.

The men of letters of the Second Preface and the scientists, historians, and travelers of the Second Discourse follow Grotius in their method. Like Grotius, they “establish right by fact,” fixating on what is ‘real’ and mistaking the appearance for reality. Though Grotius is not ordinarily considered a moral and metaphysical thinker, Rousseau extends the logic of his argument to draw out its moral and metaphysical implications: “a herdsman’s nature is superior to that of his herd, so the shepherds of men, who are their leaders, are also superior in nature to their peoples” (132). The epigraph of the Second Discourse is explicitly referenced here: “Aristotle too had said that men are not naturally equal, but that some are born for slavery and others for domination. Aristotle was right, but he mistook the effect for the cause” (133). The moral, metaphysical, and political character of Rousseau’s system of thought is implicit in his *Social Contract,* even if “the philosophic meaning” of the implicated concepts are not his “subject here” (142).

Political right is conventional but not arbitrary. Rousseau does not establish right by force or on the basis of appearances. When he takes “men as they are,” he sees “laws as they can be;” that is, men may now be bourgeois, slavish, and childish, but the general will—the source of all legitimate law—can ever acquiesce to the particular appearance of the particular men involved but must always legislate on the basis of Man, as what he is *really*. Fact obscures reality. *Romantic* men of letters, materialist scientists, fact-bound historians, and poor-sighted travelers all think they know Man because they have seen men; they are misled by the discrepancy between the particular aspect and the universal image. It is reasoning thus, says Rousseau, that Caligula concluded that “the kings were Gods or that people were beasts” (132). Indeed, a legitimate legislator would have to be of a:

> superior intelligence, who saw all men’s passions yet experienced none of them; who had no relationship at all to our nature yet knew it thoroughly, whose happiness was independent of us, yet who was nevertheless willing to attend to ours, finally one who, preparing for himself a future glory with the passage of time, could work in one century and enjoy the reward in another. Gods would be needed to give laws to men. (154)

The legislator, in short, would have to possess political “self-knowledge;”[121] he must know both the body politic conceptually and the principles of political right behind and beneath any particular iteration or image of politics, as well as what specific institutions would needed for this people. If self-knowledge is knowledge of self through knowledge of Man, the legislator's knowledge is knowledge of this political body through knowledge of political bodies. Whereas the legislator sees clearly, the people is characterized as a "blind multitude" (*CW* 4.154). The collective body, the people, is no less, and no more, blind than the individuals that constitute it. A society of men would not need a legislator to see if they could see for themselves.

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[121] For an alternative reading of Rousseau’s legislator, see Ryan Hanley, “Enlightened Nation Building: The ‘Science of the Legislator’ in Adam Smith and Rousseau.” *American Journal of Political Science* 52 (2008): 219–34; Christopher Kelly, “‘To Persuade without Convincing’: The Language of Rousseau’s Legislator.” *American Journal of Political Science* 31 (1987): 321–35; and Denise Schaeffer, “Attending to Time and Place in Rousseau’s Legislative Art.” *The Review of Politics* 74 (2012): 421–41.

The legislator is necessary only for "private individuals" who "see the good they reject" and "the public" that "wants the good it does not see" (*CW* 4.154). The legislator is a portrait but not a portrait of a man—he is the portrait of the general will, envisioned in a single individual. The idea of the legislator replaces God as the general will replaces divine will: "If we knew how to receive [justice] from on high, we would need neither government nor laws. There is without doubt a universal justice emanating from reason alone" (152). The legislator is dispensable in any given application of the social contract for any particular man: Emile, evidently, does not need the legislator in his regime. The idea of the legislator, however, is indispensable for understanding self-knowledge not only for Man or a particular man but for Men as and in political bodies. The body politic has a form like Man but variety like men.

The perspectival appearances of the People that characterize the general will and that are necessary for law have a shared or parallel methodology to portraiture. Rousseau's portraits depict interactions between the author, audience, or subject of the portrait, which are all at once constitutive of the whole portrait and representative of a particular perspective of that image. I have argued that this approach is essential for portraying self-knowledge in Rousseau's thought. Likewise, the nature of justice is such that it "must be reciprocal" (152). To capture justice, then, Rousseau must recreate the same dynamic seen in portraiture for Man in politics for People: "When the entire people enacts something concerning the entire people, it considers only itself, and if a relationship is formed then, it is between the whole object viewed in one way and the whole object viewed in another, without any division of the whole. Then the subject matter of the enactment is general like the will that enacts. It is this act that I call a law" (153). As in portraiture, the entire people, as author, legislates on behalf on the entire people, as subject, witnessed and experienced by the entire people as audience.

The pattern of multiplication in portraiture, seen most especially with Rousseau across his works, is repeated here. The duplication or multiplication of whole objects is intentional and is not a division. Rousseau does not divide himself among various Rousseaus, no more than the people is divided into parts. The question of unity that arises in Rousseau's writings is not solved by minimizing, stripping Man of his facilities in nature or denaturing him in society, but by multiplying. It is not a question of this or that part of Man or this or that part of politics, but the relationship between wholes, seen in different aspects. Law is to the body politic what portraiture is to Man.

Without abandoning this abstract methodology, the idea of the legislator provides a helpful portrait which captures this idea but shares a more obvious likeness with the other portraits across Rousseau's writings. Calvin is among the examples Rousseau uses. He is a particular man but the capacity in which he is known is much closer to this semi-divine figure, who is able to bring God's justice to Geneva.[122] "The memory of that great man" overshadows the man himself, humanizing his "wise Edicts" and perpetuating a "love of fatherland and liberty" among the Genevans (155). It is not that Rousseau would agree wholly, or even in large part, with Calvin the man, but that Calvin the legislator of Geneva gives Edicts which may be truer—or made to be truer—than the man Calvin had known. Rousseau, citizen of Geneva, is sovereign as citizen and is the ultimate authority on these edicts. It is not that Rousseau is advancing a straightforward civil religion, but that he is submitting to the laws of his fatherland.

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[122] Cf. John T. Scott, "Politics as the Imitation of the Divine in Rousseau's 'Social Contract.'" *Polity* 26 (1994): 473–501.

Emile is not tied to Geneva and does not receive Rousseau's teaching on civil religion because he is not bound to "men as they are" and has not received a religious education. The debate is not whether some level of civil religion is necessary or not but that it may be necessary as part of man's education for Europeans. Man's education is not abstract but dependent; man is not Man. He can only be educated into being Man. What may be incidentally or accidentally necessary to educate men is not necessary for man as Man. Nevertheless, this distinction cannot be dispensed with because it itself is a part of the image. The interplay between particulars and universals is continuous within the portraiture of self-knowledge.

Reunion and Return Portrayed

The comparison between the social contracts proper ends before the fourth book of the *Social Contract* and after laying down "the true principles of the right of war" in *Emile.* The account in *Emile* ends with Rousseau's anticipation of his audience's critique:

> I would not be surprised if my young man, who has good sense, were to interrupt me in the middle of all our reasoning and say, "Someone might say that we are building our edifice with wood and not with men, so exactly do we align each piece with the ruler!" "It is true, my friend, but keep in mind that right is not bent by men's passions, and that our first concern was to establish the true principles of political right. Now that our foundations are laid, come and examine what men

> have built on them; and you will see some fine things!" Then I make him read *Telemachus* while proceeding on his journey.... But let us leave the readers to imagine our travels—or to make them in our stead with *Telemachus* in hand; and let us not suggest to them invidious comparisons that the author himself dismisses or makes in spite of himself. Besides, since Emile is not a king and I am not a god, we do not fret about not being able to imitate Telemachus and Mentor in the good that they did for men. No one knows better than we do how to keep in our place, and no one has less desire to leave it. We know that the same task is given to all, and that whoever loves the good with all his heart and does it with all his power has fulfilled his task. We know that Telemachus and Mentor are chimeras.

The return to the hypothetical character of the whole discourse is brought to the reader's attention at its conclusion. Rousseau's young man's interruption is delayed until the end for the benefit of the reader, even though it happens (if it were to happen at all) somewhere in the middle. The middle of the discourse is on the definition of law and the interaction between and the duality of the sovereign and the people. The young man of good sense interjects where the people is tasked with legislation, absent the legislator, and sovereign authority. He complains, at least hypothetically, that the men do not seem to appear as they are but as they might be if men were made straight like wood and aligned with rulers. He laments, in the fashion of the writer of Ecclesiastes, that "what is crooked cannot be made straight" (Ecclesiastes 1:15).

Rousseau admits that "it is true," but that their "first concern was to establish the true principles of political right," unbent by "men's passions." The social contract of the *Emile* does not bend to men as they are. The social contract provides, in as clear and straightforward a way as possible, the unadorned principles of political right for Man, that can then be used to judge men and political bodies. Rousseau establishes a metaphysical and moral standard by which to judge political regime and does not derive political principles from experience. ‘Really’ traveling with *Telemachus* in hand, Rousseau’s young man travel is simultaneously doubled: he travels, and he travels in his book. The reader, following this young man, does not ‘really’ travel with him but is called to double his own travel by reading this book with *Telemachus,* if he is incapable of ‘traveling’ well undirected. Rousseau concludes by assuring his reader that they “know Telemachus and Mentor are chimeras,” inviting the reader to judge whether he and his pupil are as well.

Rousseau’s project in some sense ends where it begins: turning the reader away from arguments grounded in what is ‘real’ or ‘fictional’ and towards true chimeras that teach men to “love the good” with all their “heart” and do it with all their “power,” a new commandment in the place of the ancient ones. The investigation of self-knowledge, and the parallel project of constructing political institutions compatible with and conducive to what Man is, is a continuous and self-referential activity, depicted in the self-referential and relational context of portraiture.

Conclusion

Rousseau investigates Man through portraits of men. Portraiture characterizes his major philosophical works, even when, as in the case of the *Social Contract,* no figure is portrayed. I began by defining *portraiture* through the second Preface to *Julie*, before turning to the framing and portrait of natural man, of Emile and Sophie, and finally in the social contracts of *Emile* and the *Social Contract.* By reading Rousseau's thought within its proper context, of system and style, we can more clearly see the importance of his moral and metaphysical commitments and better understand the paradoxes he maintains between men and citizens.

I have tried to argue for this method in reading the *Discourse*, *Emile*, and the *Social Contract,* though there are perhaps more obvious appearances of portraiture in his other works. Though I discussed the second Preface in the opening of this dissertation, *Julie* itself was left untouched and would provide a natural next step in continuing this research. *Julie* contains an extended depiction of religious feeling and would provide, especially in conjunction with the "Profession of Faith of the Savoyard Vicar," a deeper of understanding of Rousseau's theology (or lack thereof or aversion thereto).

Perhaps more obvious still, Rousseau writes three autobiographical works where he paints his own self-portrait. In conclusion, then, I would like to review the purpose of portraiture from the portraitist's perspective. In the two prefaces of the *Confessions,* Rousseau sketches his portrait in contrast to the portraits depicted by his enemies and seen by the world. Rousseau thus concerns himself with a faithful representation of his subject that will compete successfully against these other portraits—not as a mere spectator himself or as the subject of the portrait himself, but as the artist. We must understand what Rousseau, as artist, intends in the subject to be viewed and how he anticipates its reception. The self-portraits are not primarily the work of a megalomaniac.

Rousseau believes that his portrait "is the only portrait of a man, painted exactly according to nature and in all its truth, that exists and will probably ever exist" (C 3). This is the declaration of the portrait painter and not of the subject himself. The subject as such is unable to reflect on itself as subject, since even his self-reflections are a part of himself as subject. Natural man, who does not reflect on himself because he does not have a self, is particularly unable in this way. While Rousseau by his own account is corrupted to some degree, he is by his own account also closer to nature than any existing man. The man that he depicts "exactly according to nature and in all its truth" is not, in some sense, Rousseau himself as quasi-natural man. The man or subject of the portrait approximates Rousseau the person, who approximates natural man. Rousseau the portraitist is even further removed, as the author of the man in the portrait.

In the preface to the Neuchâtel edition of the *Confessions*, Rousseau is more explicit about the limitations of portraiture, which ought to dispel any argument that he falls to such limitations unwittingly. His criticism of his predecessors in the genre, however, might still be mistaken for a claim that he has been able to overcome such limitations. The fundamental problem remains: "No one can write a man's life except himself. His inner mode of being, his true life, is known only to himself; and yet in writing it he disguises it" (C 642). The only one capable of writing such a life at all must necessarily disguise it in writing. Because Rousseau goes on to say that his attempt is "unique and useful," it is tempting for readers to think that Rousseau conceives of his work as a perfect portrait that does not fall prey to this problem. Montaigne and Cardano, who purposely distort their physiognomy, provide only a portrait in profile; Rousseau's portrait is superior because it displays at least an entire face, not because it overcomes the intrinsic limitations of portraiture as such. Rousseau's conscientious effort to paint “exactly according to nature and in all its truth” is still a distortion: a portrait painted exactly according to nature and truth is itself neither natural nor true. Such distortion “will not be the fault of the subject, it will be that of the author” (C 645). This “fault,” however, is not to be taken as a dissatisfaction with what portraiture is able to accomplish and what Rousseau seeks to accomplish through it.

Rousseau’s true motivation for writing this work—correcting the false portrait produced by his enemies—is consistent with Rousseau’s project but inconsistent with Rousseau as such. This inconsistency, however, is intentional. Rousseau’s intention matches his means: “If my enterprise is a singular one, the position that makes me undertake it is no less so” (C 645). Yet this singular account in the *Confessions* remains an account of Rousseau the artist, not of Rousseau the subject. Rousseau’s plea to his readers in the original preface is “not to destroy a unique and useful work, which may serve as a first point of comparison in the study of man that certainly is yet to be begun” (C 3). The emphasis here is placed on what the portrait can contribute to Rousseau’s philosophic project and not, as Mariner (1992) and MacCannell (1974) argue, what it can do to either order or authenticate Rousseau’s being. Rousseau wishes “to reveal” the secret causes of the unmasking of modernity, which requires Rousseau “to write the story of [his] life” (C 645).

Rousseau’s intention can never to be to reveal perfectly his actual true being, nor to access his true being through portraiture. The portrait is necessarily for others, which includes the man Rousseau himself, who is always distinct from any representation or attempt at unification of his being. Even as portraitist, who makes choices “as to style as well as substance,” Rousseau cannot produce a unified image: “I will be painting a double portrait of my state of mind, at the moment when the event happened and at the moment when I described it”

(C 648). For the half-portraits of Montaigne and Cardano, then, Rousseau supplies a two-faced double portrait, one, we might say, four times as revealing but which does not produce a unified or perfect representation. The portrait is a representation of the artist-as-subject and the subject proper, mediated through the choices of the artist-as-subject and the artist proper, "for it is always a stroke added to his portrait to know how such a man dared speak of himself" (D 255). The more Rousseau seemingly orders himself and stabilizes his being, the more he is actually abandoning himself to a "motley of various hues" (C 648). This is "the spirit" in which Rousseau intends for his portrait(s) to be seen.

The *Confessions,* as the prefaces suggest, trace how the artist came to be an artist (the subject proper) as well as tracing the artist as an artist (artist-as-subject). The former appears in the past tense; it is presented as a retelling of Rousseau's state and state of mind. Though the latter is undoubtedly mixed with the former, as the artist-as-subject mediates the narrative of the subject proper, it most noticeably emerges when Rousseau breaks into this narrative, commenting on the past from the present and supplying information unknowable to the subject. This is not an infrequent occurrence; such commentary occurs throughout the work. For the purposes of this conclusion, it will suffice to limit the present investigation to a few notable examples.

At the end of the first book, Rousseau reflects on the critical moment when he decides to leave Geneva. Before "abandoning" himself (the subject) to his "fateful destiny," Rousseau grants himself (the artist) to paint another portrait. This alternative portrait depicts "the lot that would naturally" have fallen to Rousseau, if only Rousseau had had a better master. In this counterfactual (though in some sense true) portrait, young Rousseau is not so much young Rousseau as he is Rousseau the artist, imagining himself in another life as actual young

Rousseau imagines himself in still other lives. The artist imagines himself as a "good artisan, especially one belonging to as respected a class as the engravers of Geneva" (C 42). Such a situation, Rousseau thinks, would promote his goodness while suppressing his ambition. Most of the characteristics of the artisan's life are simple but perhaps unsurprising. Rousseau, knowing what he knows now, would choose a life in which he could follow the principles of his system without ever formally discovering the system, thus preventing his misfortunes.

The picture is mostly idyllic but possesses one glaring oddity: the artisan would possess "an imagination rich enough to transport [himself] at will, as it were, from one [condition in life] to the other" (C 42). Within Rousseau's portrait of himself, therefore, Rousseau paints still another alternative portrait of himself in which he lives as an artisan who will not live contentedly as an artisan; instead, the artisan will imagine, as Rousseau is currently in the act of doing, himself in other lives. In this portrait of the discontented artisan, Rousseau maintains the status of the artist but removes the medium. The artisan will not write, as Rousseau does, but will live as if he is writing—bouncing between living his life, judging his life, and reimagining his life. The three (sometimes nested, always interacting) activities of the artisan are the same activities as the portraitist: living as subject, judging as audience, and reimagining as artist. What distinguishes the artisan from the artist is writing.

Rousseau, author of the *Confessions*, who writes of the writer-Rousseau who imagines the artisan-Rousseau, considers also a second critical moment, when the first discourse was written: "The whole of the rest of my life and all my misfortunes were the inevitable effect of this moment of aberration" (C 342). Both moments, leaving Geneva and writing the first discourse, are determinative for Rousseau's life. The second critical moment, however, does not—as the first does— paint a new portrait.

That moment instead signals the convergence of the two portraits—subject proper and artist as subject— in the *Confessions.* Rousseau, as he is retelling the moment when his subject became an artist, inserts himself into the subject matter: “The moment I read these words I saw another universe and I became another man. Although my memory of the impression they made on me is still vivid, its details have escaped me” (C 342). The first sentence is in the past tense, referring only to the subject proper. Within the sentence, the subject is becoming “another man”—that is, the artist. The subject of the portrait begins to create portraiture, scribbling down his feelings and ideas, directing his passions toward truth, liberty, and virtue (C 342). Though it is not the same portrait that he is currently a part of, since his present portrait includes within it consideration of that portrait, the subject has stumbled upon the very same motivations as the artist of his portrait: “the impression they made on me is *still* vivid.”

This complexity in Rousseau corresponds to a complexity in Rousseau’s readership: it is both whole and twofold. On the one hand, there are readers, “whoever [they] may be,” and those who might be “one of those implacable enemies” that have plagued Rousseau but who nonetheless might pick up the book (C 3). The enemies may be readers, but readers need not be enemies. What is more, however, the work necessarily remains for the reader to unify the portrait Rousseau has depicted, though not in service of Rousseau’s own existential unification. This is precisely because the work of the audience is a part of the constitution of the “being” of the work. Rousseau contends: “It is for the reader to assemble all these elements and to determine the being that they constitute; the result must be his own work” (C 170). Rousseau only alludes briefly to his audience in the *Confessions,* since his audience is not primarily the subject of his portrait there. It is only in the *Dialogues* that the audience itself becomes a part of Rousseau’s subject. The political importance of Rousseau's autobiographical works has been underappreciated. These writings are uniquely able to comment on collect all of Rousseau's portrait into the single image of their author, who is himself their likeness and inspiration, a fellow participant in Man.

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