

# interpretation

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May & Sept. 1986 Volume 14 Numbers 2 & 3

- 155 Joseph Cropsey The Dramatic End of Plato's Socrates  
177 Charles Griswold, Jr. Philosophy, Education, and Courage in Plato's *Laches*  
195 Thomas J. Lewis Refutative Rhetoric as True Rhetoric in the *Gorgias*  
211 Thomas F. Curley III How to Read the *Consolation of Philosophy*  
265 Joseph Masciulli The Armed Founder versus the Catonic Hero:  
Machiavelli and Rousseau on Popular Leadership  
281 William Mathie Reason and Rhetoric in Hobbes's *Leviathan*  
299 Peter Emberley Rousseau versus the Savoyard Vicar: the Profession  
of Faith Considered  
331 Mackubin Thomas Owens, Jr. Alexander Hamilton on Natural Rights and Prudence  
353 Peter Simpson Autonomous Morality and the Idea of the Noble

## Review Essays

- 371 Ernest L. Fortin Faith and Reason in Contemporary Perspective  
Apropos of a Recent Book  
389 Joseph J. Carpino On Eco's *The Name of the Rose*  
415 Nino Langiulli Affirmative Action, Liberalism, and Teleology: on  
Nicholas Capaldi's *Out of Order*  
431 Robert R. Sullivan The Most Recent Thinking of Jürgen Habermas

## Book Reviews

- 441 Will Morrissey *Jerusalem versus Athens* by Paul Eidelberg  
448 *How Does the Constitution Secure Rights?* edited by  
Robert A. Goldwin & William A. Schambra

## Short Notices

- 455 Will Morrissey *Freedom of Expression* by Francis Canavan  
456 Joan Stambaugh *Philosophical Apprenticeships* by  
Hans-Georg Gadamer

# interpretation

Volume 14 numbers 2 & 3

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# Rousseau versus the Savoyard Vicar: The Profession of Faith Considered

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New philosophic truths and new forms of political power can cast doubt on the existence of the gods to whom a people prays and can erode the traditional restraints by which a community regulates men's passions. Rousseau appeared to believe this problem to be particularly acute in his day because of what he perceived to be the social consequences of modern materialism and the modern natural-right teaching. Men confronted one another now as equals, liberated from earlier obligations to do another's bidding. The diffusion of individualism had made each man the center of a self-contained universe thus jeopardizing the social order by dissolving the self-evidentness of traditional restraints and encouraging a ruthless calculation of interest and advantage. Contrary to the teaching of Hobbes and Locke, Rousseau did not believe that calculative reason and juridical power could moderate the newly liberated appetites. In fact, the new teaching and the materialism upon which it is based, had given rise to a predatory competitiveness and a cheerless dependency on the whims of others, that stood in stark opposition to the most potent facts of the human condition: the solidarity of men and human freedom. Rousseau's teaching involves a sustained polemic against what he perceived to be the public irresponsibility of the materialists and various philosophic and pedagogic innovations to reconstitute moral behaviour in the wake of their disturbances.

Rousseau, more sensitive than his contemporaries to the fact that philosophic discourse was a public act and therefore had political effects, often presented his readers with salutary truths. He employed a powerful rhetoric to prevent the corruption he saw to be the inevitable consequence of the modern natural-right teaching. However, he also wrote for educators and legislators whose future task it would be to construct new social bonds upon the ruins of the political order and within the emerging power matrix that pending revolutions would produce. Thus, in interpreting Rousseau's various pronouncements and judgments, it becomes necessary to speculate that some of them may have dramatic or strategic rather than philosophical significance and that this may be particularly the case where religious and ethical matters are at stake.<sup>1</sup>

Interpreters of Rousseau have often been insensitive to the relation of his

References are to *Œuvres complètes de J.-J. Rousseau* (Paris: Gallimard, Bibliothèque de la Pléiade, 1964), 4 vols., although I have followed the translation of Allan Bloom, *Émile or on Education* (New York: Basic Books, 1979).

1. Cf. Jean Morel, "Recherches sur les sources," *Annales de la Société J.-J. Rousseau*, v (1909), p. 135.

novel doctrines to the Biblical tradition, a tradition that constitutes a large part of the social and intellectual fabric of Rousseau's time.<sup>2</sup> One of the consequences of this is that readers have difficulty in understanding the philosophic dispute with orthodoxy with the same caution and alarm as did the political authorities—not to say ecclesiastics—in Rousseau's time. Ignoring the possibility that his statements might have been a product of prudent caution, or to have a strategic value, commentators of Rousseau have understood him to be unequivocally challenging the materialist monists and their pernicious doctrines with a restatement of traditional dualistic doctrines; pointing forward however to a new moral autonomy. This restatement is said to occur in "The Profession of Faith of the Savoyard Vicar" in Book IV of the *Émile*. With this Rousseau was said to have attempted to charm corrupted hearts, to have made explicit his self-appointed task of raising contemporary man "to the pitch of the souls of the ancients," and to have responded to the doctrines of Helvétius, La Mettrie, and Diderot (III.961). It is asserted that Rousseau did not merely restore but instead identified the structure of a novel and rigorous moral experience. A prominent interpretation, then, is to see the Profession as Rousseau's "proto-Kantian" statement of moral freedom as self-legislating autonomy grounded, however, on natural sentiment.

Many of Rousseau's interpreters claim that in the "Profession of Faith" he presented the only coherent and unified discussion of his metaphysics, epistemology, and ethics.<sup>3</sup> Much of what is revealed by the vicar is indeed compatible with seminal ideas Rousseau expressed explicitly in such works as the *First Discourse*, and *Letter to d'Alembert*, the *Moral Letters*, the *Letter to Voltaire*, and the epistle dedicatories to other major works. Moreover, immediately after the presentation of the profession of faith, Rousseau wrote that he had transcribed it "as an example of the way one can reason with one's pupil in order not to diverge from the method" he had tried to establish (IV.635). In his *Confessions*, Rousseau claimed that he had resolved his own metaphysical and religious doubts along the lines of what he had written in the *Émile*: "the result of my painful re-

2. Rousseau's broad grasp of both classical and Biblical material is attested to by various authors, cf. Marguerite Reichenberg, "La Bibliothèque de J.-J. Rousseau," *Annales*, XXI (1932), pp. 181–250. Rousseau writes in his *Confessions*: "My usual evening reading was the Bible and I read it through five or six times in this way," XI, 1, 580.

3. As examples of this interpretation: R. Grimsley, *Rousseau and the Religious Quest* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1968), and *The Philosophy of Religion* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1973); P. M. Masson, *La Profession de foi du vicaire savoyard* (Fribourg: University of Fribourg Press, 1914); K. F. Roche, *Rousseau, Stoic and Romantic* (London: Methuen, 1974); Ernest Cassirer, *The Question of Jean-Jacques Rousseau* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1954); A. Levine, *The Politics of Autonomy* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1976). The exceptions to the general opinion are A. Bloom, introduction to the *Émile* (N.Y.: Basic Books, 1979). C. Butterworth, interpretive essay to *The Reveries of the Solitary Walker* (N.Y.: New York University Press, 1979), Yvon Belaval, "La Théorie du jugement dans l'Émile," *Jean-Jacques Rousseau et son Œuvre* (Paris: 1964), pp. 149–57, J. Cropsey, "The Human Vision of Rousseau" in *Political Philosophy and the Issues of Politics* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1977), and C. Orwin, "Humanity and Justice: The Problem of Compassion in the Thought of Rousseau," Harvard Ph.D. dissertation, 1976. None of the latter, however, explore the disjunctions in detail.

search was just about what I have since registered in the profession of faith” (I.1018). Apparently what Rousseau conveyed in the vicar’s profession was intended as his final word on religious and ethical matters and few commentators have questioned his openness or sincerity.

A major reason for most readers’ belief that these are Rousseau’s own views is that the profession is unorthodox and was the cause of Rousseau’s troubles with the ecclesiastical authorities. The vicar, who is commonly thought to be Rousseau’s mouthpiece, is regarded as a literary mask through which Rousseau could air his own unorthodox views in a less direct manner. The vicar claims that there is no basis to revelation, to divine intervention in the form of miracles, or to the truth of holy scriptures and prophecies. He also denies that the Church has infallible authority. The vicar’s approach to theology is a type of “natural religion” constituted by man’s natural grasp of the world around him rather than the truths of revelation. Since some of the vicar’s views are explicitly expressed elsewhere by Rousseau, few have doubted that the profession of faith is Rousseau’s own philosophical position.

I shall argue, however, that this conspicuous section of the *Émile* is in fact Rousseau’s most orthodox and traditional treatment of philosophical issues and thus does not contain the enduring core of his teaching. I suggest that the profession clashes only with the externalities of the theological teaching of the Church while leaving its foundations intact. The character of the rest of Rousseau’s teaching is, by contrast, much more subversive of Christian and classical teachings in disputing the ontological structure of that tradition. The radical character of the profession acts indeed as a mask, but to the much more unorthodox character of Rousseau’s fundamental agreement with the materialists. It mediates between his novel general teaching and the traditional or conventional opinions of his contemporaries. The vicar’s views I would suggest, are ultimately more respectable than those of Rousseau himself before the judgment of orthodoxy. Despite its heretical character, the profession embraces a metaphysical dualism and all that this commitment entails. Insofar as Rousseau appears to adopt some of the important doctrines of materialistic monism, as will be shown, there is an essential incompatibility in the physical and moral theories of Rousseau and the vicar.

To submit that the profession does not constitute Rousseau’s own teaching will require a two-fold demonstration: (a) that there are major “dramatic” factors that suggest that the profession is an unacceptable teaching for Emile, and (b) that there are substantial philosophical claims made that are incompatible with Rousseau’s own views stated elsewhere. However, even this proof is not sufficient. Does it not seem extraordinary that an author would offer a text that is not his own philosophical position but one guaranteed to bring about the severest censure? To explore and to present the view that there is a disjunction between Rousseau’s and the vicar’s positions does not explain the purpose of the profession. What aim does it serve if it is not Rousseau’s own considered opinions about

moral matters? Such an explanation is a needed supplement to the inquiry and follows my demonstration of the disjunction in views.

It is necessary to make some preliminary remarks concerning the justification for engaging in interpretation of Rousseau's intention and the interpretive strategy I shall employ. It is not self-evident which of Rousseau's works are more important and which serve a didactic rather than a philosophic purpose. Rousseau asserted that his books would have to be taken "in a certain order and diligently read" (I.933). He was concerned that he would be misrepresented, that the effects he sought would not be produced, and that he would be read superficially, and so it is incumbent on the reader to trust Rousseau's advice given in the few suggestions he offers.

It is obvious that Rousseau's philosophic principles are not presented in the traditional mode of philosophical discourse. Instead, as exemplified most particularly in the *Émile*, he provides a series of narratives, anecdotes, and conversations. Explaining his demand on readers to decipher the meaning of these fragments,

I have often given myself a good deal of trouble to try to enclose in a sentence, in a line, in a word cast as if by chance, the result of a long series of reflections. Often the greater part of my readers ought to find my speeches badly connected and almost entirely desultory, for having failed to perceive the trunk whose branches alone I have shown them. But it was enough for those who know how to understand, and I have never wanted to speak to the others (III.105–106).

The terseness of many of Rousseau's images encourages reflection on the broader significance of the example: "Reader, spare me words. If you are made for understanding me, you will be quite able to follow my rules in my detailed examples."<sup>4</sup>

It is nonetheless pertinent to query the suggestion that Rousseau writes with caution and indirectly. Especially with Rousseau who so constantly parades his sincerity and who explicitly claimed that he had dedicated his life to the interest of truth and that the subtlety and subterfuge of many authors was a sign of their bad faith (IV.569), a reader might be suspicious of an interpreter's attempt to decipher his statements. Openness, sincerity, and "simple naïveté" are after all, virtues that Rousseau extolls. "Yes, with some pride of soul, I declare and I feel that in that writing I have carried good faith, veracity, and frankness as far, further even . . . than any other man has ever done" (I.1035).

Nonetheless, in response, two factors should be considered. First, Rousseau claimed in a work sixteen years later, *The Reveries of a Solitary Walker*, that he had dedicated his life to the *interest* of truth. In a public document whose reader's opinions and reactions are diverse, it was necessary for the interest of truth to present the inquiry in such a way as to promote salutary teachings to those readers unwilling or unable to pursue the more subtle meaning. Rousseau re-

4. IV, 802.

vealed that his writing had been motivated by the desire to offer useful teachings to mankind: "Love of the public good is the only passion which causes me to speak to the public."<sup>5</sup> He had recognized that some truths were salutary and that others were socially harmful. The materialists had run roughshod over this distinction, but the diffusion of knowledge which they had effected had not produced human order. What would happen to the salutary effects of traditional restraints on the passions—the fear of eternal damnation, or the corruption of the soul, or the notion of the intrinsic nobility of just acts—if science had determined that men have no souls, that all human striving is purposeless, and that the sole guide to human action is self-calculation? Rousseau had recognized that political dangers were being posed by the new science. Interpreting his life's maxim, *vitam impendere vero*, Rousseau wrote: "My professed truthfulness is based more on feelings of integrity and justice than on factual truth" (I.1038). What he implies is that the obligation to reveal the truth publicly is based on a consideration of the public utility of that truth.

The truth is owed but the manner of its delivery can reveal different things to different men. I suggest that Rousseau's intention is two-fold: he provides a document for his time, the nature of which is to inspire in his fellow citizens, at the very least, the simulacrum of virtue; he also offers to his future readers who may well be educators and legislators, a science with which a novel transformation of ethics and politics may be effected. That transformation is obscured by the way in which he uses his terminology, sometimes in the more radical way. It is worthwhile heeding the admonition Rousseau gave to Mme. d'Épinay: "Learn my vocabulary better, my good friend, if you want us to understand each other. Believe me, my terms rarely have their usual meaning."<sup>6</sup>

To turn now to the interpretive strategy I shall employ, it is well-known that there are significant tensions or disjunctions from one of Rousseau's works to another. Yet he had claimed "I have written on various subjects, but always with the same principles; always the same morality, the same belief, the same maxims and, if you like, the same opinions" (IV.928). Is there a set of works that would provide the principles whereby all the differences can be understood? In a letter to M. de Malesherbes Rousseau identified his principal writings in a description of his "sudden inspiration": "All I could retain of these crowds of great truths which, in a quarter of an hour, illuminated me under that tree, has been weakly distributed in my three principal writings, namely that first discourse, the one on inequality, and the treatise on education, which three works are inseparable and form a single whole" (I.1135–36). This suggests that the decisive principles of Rousseau's thought are to be found in the *Discourse on the Arts and Sciences*, the *Discourse on the Origin of Inequality Among Men*, and the *Émile*.

Of these, the *Second Discourse* could be said to have the most significance for

5. J.-J. Rousseau, *Letter to M. d'Alembert on the Theatre*, transl. by Allan Bloom (N.Y.: Free Press, 1968), p. 132.

6. J.-J. Rousseau, *Letter to M. d'Alembert*, p. 28.

an interpretation of Rousseau's teaching because in this writing he elaborates the philosophic principles upon which the novelty of his thought is based. There is considerable evidence to support his claim. That essay, he had indicated, was "a piece of writing in which these principles were most boldly, if not audaciously revealed" (III.783). Years later, writing in his *Confessions* about his texts, he indicated that "everything daring in the *Social Contract* was already said in the *Second Discourse*," and in the *Émile* his references to that discourse imply that it was of crucial philosophical significance for interpreting the educational treatise.<sup>7</sup> In the *Letter to Beaumont*, in which Rousseau defended his treatise against the accusations of the Archbishop, he wrote the following about the *Second Discourse* and his earlier works in relation to the *Émile*.

if the subject of them did not admit of their being so fully explained, they gained in force what they lost in extent and express the author's profession of faith with less reserve than that of the Savoyard vicar.<sup>8</sup>

Finally, in a passage of *Rousseau juge de Jean-Jacques*, Rousseau has his interlocutor suggest that Rousseau's principles could be understood only in an order which "was retrograde to that of their publication," suggesting that the discourses contain the most elaborate expression of his philosophic principles.<sup>9</sup> Thus, it appears that an interpretation of the resilient core of Rousseau's teaching requires an emphasis upon the *Second Discourse* and any such disjunctions as may arise in reading Rousseau's other works need to be interpreted in favor of that discourse. Indeed, the most important theoretical insights offered—the historicization of consciousness and the crucial significance of the human experience of time as duration—supplies the necessary condition for Rousseau's pedagogical innovations. This is an important conclusion because of the contradictions that exist between the *Second Discourse* and the profession of faith.<sup>10</sup>

Although most modern commentators have ignored these contradictions, the discrepancies have not gone completely unnoticed. A suggestion of disjunction appears, perhaps not surprisingly, in an account by the first reviewer of Rousseau's *Émile*, the Archbishop de Beaumont. In his mandate against the *Émile*, of which the significant portion is a discussion of the profession of faith, the Arch-

7. J.-J. Rousseau, *Confessions* (London: Penguin Books, 1975), p. 379; IV. 556, 796.

8. T. Becket and P.-A. de Honot, *The Social Compact and the Mandate of the Archbishop of Paris* (London: 1764), p. 47.

9. I, 932–33; see also, Roger Masters, *The Political Philosophy of Rousseau* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1986), for a similar interpretive strategy.

10. I have not addressed the issue of why in the *Moral Letters* to Mme. d'Houdetot or the *Lettre sur la Providence* Rousseau embraces certain metaphysical assumptions similar to those of the vicar. Although often quoted to support the interpretation of Rousseau as a proto-Kantian and metaphysician, these letters too reveal Rousseau's pedagogical efforts. The particular anxieties of each addressee receive individual attention and one cannot assume simply that the contents of each letter have a general significance; cf. Rousseau's portrait of Mme. d'Houdetot in the *Confessions* (I.409) and his qualifications for the initial letter of Providence to Voltaire. June 17, 1760 (IV.1070–71).

bishop also censures Rousseau for presenting Emile as brought up “to look on himself as a being purely material and subject to the laws of mechanism.”<sup>11</sup> Now this statement could hardly have been made on the basis of the presentation in the profession of faith, which although heretical is sustained by a metaphysical dualism and not what often appears to be Rousseau’s own mechanical monism. The statement therefore attests to, or points to, an apparent disjunction between the profession of faith and the Archbishop’s own interpretation of the rest of the *Émile*.

## I. DRAMATIC FACTORS

Throughout the *Émile*, Rousseau counsels that great stealth and care must be taken in presenting young minds the teaching from which they are to learn how to judge.

A single object well chosen and shown in a suitable light will provide him emotion and reflection for a month. It is not so much what he sees as his looking back on what he has seen that determines the judgments he makes about it; and the durable impression he receives from the object comes to him less from the object itself than from the point of view which one induces him to take in recalling it (IV.516).

Given this advice, it appears judicious to consider the “dramatic” factors of the vicar’s presentation. We will consider four elements of that context: (a) Rousseau’s preceding discussion of imagination and the source of ideas of the divine, (b) his critique of Locke’s educational method, (c) the significance of the accompanying frontispiece, and (d) the character of the profession’s addressee.

The discussion of Book IV, in which the profession is situated, is devoted primarily to the need to prevent the premature development of *Émile*’s sexual desire. The major dilemma confronted in that book is the tendency of *Émile*’s imagination to arouse his desires through alluring and enticing images. Thus, the tutor seeks by various manipulations to mute and to channel the influence of imagination by eliciting and maintaining desire, instrumentalizing it, and extending control over the body of the nascent moral subject. It is necessary to emphasize that this context offers us an indication of what is at stake in the Profession of Faith. For the moment it is sufficient to say that it is particularly with regard to the problematization of desire that the vicar’s and Rousseau’s views differ. However, that the Profession of Faith is situated in the context of the excitation and instrumentation of desire in Book IV may suggest, beyond a mere

11. T. Becket and P.-A. de Honot, *op. cit. supra*, p. 16. The Archbishop wrote the following about the *Émile* as a whole: “. . . containing abominable doctrines calculated to invalidate the principles of natural justice and to subvert the foundations of the Christian church” (p. 34). He could not have written this on the basis of his reading of the profession alone.

conflict of positions, a strategic tactic on the tutor's part in the constitution of "sexuality", as the locus of a positive investment in life processes, which I shall explore presently.<sup>12</sup>

The section immediately preceding the profession focuses upon the difficulty men have in acquiring ideas of the divine, of substance, and of disembodied spirits. Rousseau reiterates a theme sustained throughout the first three books, that men can only know the world by perception: "we are limited by our faculties to things which can be sensed" (III.551). As he has maintained throughout Book II, corporeal and sensible phenomena are the only ones of which men have concrete and reliable ideas. Rousseau now suggests that men have animated the world with processes and characteristics which are projections of their own being. For want of comprehending natural forces, men created gods that were anthropomorphic versions of their own fears, needs, and hopes. Rousseau relates this "creativity" to a certain primal fear and to the rampant excursions of the imagination. A world that is not understood is animated with intention and will; an omnipotent will is believed to direct the motions of the universe. Men's ideas about substance and spirit are conceived in a similar fashion, generated by ignorance of natural causes. Should one read the vicar's views mindful of this observation?

The second feature of Rousseau's prelude to the profession is his criticism of Locke's suggestion that a child should become acquainted first with spirits and then bodies. Rousseau argues that Locke's method leads to materialism, that his procedure is against the order of nature, and that it proceeds from superstition. Rousseau proposes, as he has throughout *Emile's* education, to begin with a knowledge of bodies.

An examination of the relevant section in Locke's writings on education is revealing because it shows the great divergence between the two thinkers regarding the foundation of virtue. Locke argues that virtue is the first and most necessary endowment for a gentleman and suggests that it is "absolutely requisite to make him valued and beloved by others, acceptable or tolerable to himself."<sup>13</sup> In Locke's teaching, other's esteem appears more important to men than self-esteem. Virtue, appears here as the means to happiness in this world and the next. Locke continues by arguing that the foundation of this virtue is to be "a true Notion of God," imprinted early onto the mind and that He is to be acknowledged as the author and maker of all things, as well as the benefactor of all that is good in men's lives. The esteem of God makes men esteem themselves; the recognition of God's benefaction encourages humility and the love of fellow men. It is in the imitation of Christ that men become Christ-like; it is in being valued by God, that men acquire value in their own eyes. Locke's gentleman is to acquire

12. For this distinction see M. Foucault's critique of the "repressive hypothesis" concerning Victorian mores, in *The History of Sexuality*, vol. I (New York: Vintage Books, 1980).

13. John Locke, *Some Thoughts Concerning Education* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1902); section 135, p. 99.

the idea of an omnipresent and omniscient Deity, whose greatness is to be praised and acknowledged through prayer.

Locke then turns to a discussion of how to accustom children to the dark so that they avoid the fearful imagining of other spirits which, in their fears, they are liable to produce. He advises that children should know that God made the dark for their purpose and that He is ever vigilant, protecting them against any harm that could come to them. Trusting in God, His goodness, and benefaction forestalls primal fear, teaching men to endure patiently whatever His designs may have in store for them. Locke's precise argument for the study of spirits is that it serves "as an enlargement of our minds to which we are led both by Reason and Revelation."<sup>14</sup> The knowledge children ought to have of God and their own soul is to be taken from revelation. The study of spirits is necessary because matter, upon which the senses are constantly engaged, does not itself encourage reflection on immaterial phenomena. Locke stipulates that "none of the great phenomena of nature can be resolved" by recourse to explanations of mere matter and motion; such forces as gravity can only be explained by appealing to "the positive Will of a Superior Being so ordering it."<sup>15</sup>

Now all of this goes very much against the spirit and particulars of the education proposed by Rousseau and casts some question on the purpose of the revelation about to commence, if Rousseau is implying that there is a connection between Locke's and the vicar's pedagogy. *Émile* has been confined throughout his education to understanding the natural phenomena solely by grasping the properties of matter; he has required no recourse to spiritual explanations in his experiences of reality. Moreover, the notion of an external Will with some manifest intention towards man runs counter to the perspective to which *Émile* is committed. In an attempt to maintain the unity within his heart, Rousseau has taught *Émile* to appraise all phenomena around him from the point of view of his own utility and the scientific knowledge with which he has experimented. This solipsistic self-contraction—which is intended however to guarantee some indubitable core of material facts—justifies Starobinski's claim that Rousseau banishes the divine, for "If the self interiorizes the last judge, it also interiorizes the creator: the self is his own origin, or better, he keeps the memory of his own origin and in his recollection he coincides with it."<sup>16</sup> Rousseau has insisted that

14. *Ibid.*, sec. 190, 156.

15. *Ibid.*, sec. 192, 157–58.

16. Jean Starobinski, *Jean-Jacques Rousseau: La Transperence et l'obstacle suivi de sept essais sur Rousseau* (Paris: Gallimard, 1971), p. 329. The self-delusion of this Cartesian project on behalf of operationalizing doubt in experimentation and the indubitability of material facts, and the danger of the mind's enclosure within its own self-made entities, albeit technologically successful, is explored in H. Arendt's *The Human Condition* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1958), pp. 248–89, and in G. Grant's discussion of the meaning of the modern understanding of the truth as the copenetration of knowing and making in "Knowing and Making" *Transactions of the Royal Society of Canada*, 4th Series, 12 (1974); its self-divinizing quality is captured by a remark of Merleau-Ponty that Cartesian consciousness assumes the divine task of creating the world anew each morning.

Émile not perceive any intention beyond himself. No restraint is to appear that emanates from a will; Émile's only constraint is the natural necessity of an impersonal, purposeless universe. Indeed, in Book II, in his discussion of the source of the tyrannical will Rousseau had intimated that this turbulent state was precisely a product of the belief that there is an external will in the universe.

Rousseau's comments on Locke's advice regarding revelation and trust in God's beneficent nature might remind the reader of a corresponding section in Book II where Rousseau had shown that the "fantastic imaginings" arising from fear of the dark could be dispelled by empirically examining the phenomena of the world. The discussion in Book II involved an experience in a church and the consequences of imagining the existence of spirits. That example alludes perhaps to the broader question of religion and its psychological origin and so is relevant to our immediate concerns. Rousseau's project in Books II and IV, on behalf of channelling fear, had been to redirect it *from* an alliance with ignorance of the causes of the phenomena and the resultant superstitious imaging of spirits, *to* a physical study of natural phenomena based on need and the desire for relief from pain. The former obscures natural causes even further; the latter aids in revealing them. As Rousseau will say later, "The idea of a need which is natural and known to the child turns aside that of a mysterious process" (IV.499). Implicitly, Rousseau appears to cast serious doubt upon some of the truths of religious orthodoxy, reducing them to psychological responses, and ignorance, thus planting in his reader's mind some suspicion regarding what is about to transpire.

Rousseau concludes his comments on Locke with the judgment that Locke's method leads to materialism. Reflecting on Émile's education, however, the reader might wonder whether Rousseau's education could lead Émile to have a need of or desire for any notion of spirits. What Locke's method seeks to encourage—the contemplation of spirit—Rousseau's method appears to exclude from the beginning. Émile's inquiries are scientific, useful, for the relief of his estate, and, literally, close at hand. No authoritative doctrine is required to shed light on his doings. Locke's method prepares for administering to future anxieties; Rousseau's method is meant to pre-empt them. Rousseau's young student is educated to question the world around him in light of his needs and to seek natural explanations for the effects he observes.

This makes it all the more strange that when the vicar actually commences, he proceeds not by a reasoned conversation but rather, by claiming: "it is enough for me to reveal it to you" (IV.566). Mindful that Émile's principal question in assessing all knowledge is "what is that good for?", and his utilitarian appropriation of the phenomena that may present themselves to him, one might wonder what in the vicar's revelation will actually benefit Émile. Can articles of faith supplement Émile's functional observations of the natural world? Is Émile ever in a condition such that "the progress of his enlightenment leads his researches in that direction?" (IV.557)

The third dramatic factor to consider is the complex relation between the vicar

and the addressee of the profession. This question appears never to be raised by commentators for it is simply assumed that the profession is directed to Émile. But the youth to whom the profession is actually addressed is described as corrupted by “tyrants”: rage, indignation, and a tempestuous vanity are his responses to fate. Everywhere he sees only the viciousness of men and the ruses men perpetrate under the appearance of virtue. As a consequence of his observations, the young man experiences a hatred and contempt for mankind. Can a therapeutic profession for a youth like this be applicable to Émile?

Émile by contrast has none of this youth’s remorse nor division; he is truly a “pre-Fall” innocent:

His heart, as pure as his body, is no more familiar with disguise than with vice. Neither reproaches nor contempt have made him a coward; never has vile fear taught him to disguise himself. He has all the indiscretion of innocence. He is uncalculatingly naïve (iv.706).

The self-sufficiency and self-dependency of Émile contrasts with the slavishness and dependency of the embittered addressee. It is not obvious then that the profession is meant for Émile as a necessary supplement to his “natural education.” Rousseau has repeatedly cautioned that the pedagogical techniques used to advance the teaching of virtue must be appropriate to the character of the soul of the student; here the difference between the two is too glaring to permit the immediate conclusion that the profession can benefit Émile. As we shall examine more carefully shortly, the pedagogies of Rousseau and the vicar differ substantially. The addressee of the profession is such that the vicar’s words appear to be specially tailored to his corrupted character.

The vicar, too, is a special case. He, while sworn to celibacy, submits to carnal involvement with married women. The youth is witness to the vicar’s weakness, temptations, “of which he was not too well corrected.” The vicar’s recurring theme of anxiety is the guilt and torment regarding the disunity of his soul, and what he problematizes is the “Flesh,” as the site of moral prohibitions on his desire. To alleviate this he embraces moral principles upon which “he founded the uniformity of so singular a life.” The moral and metaphysical theories the vicar proposes appear necessitated by the conditions he himself and his addressee are in. The creed thus appears to provide a palliative for their weaknesses and guilt and, it might be said, is a healing response to the dualism they feel within themselves. By contrast, Émile is free from the worries and the rage the vicar’s beliefs are designed to ease.

Moreover, the relation of tutor to student is also significantly different. Throughout the *Émile*, Rousseau counsels that the tutor must be the model of propriety and sobriety. Any indication of weakness, division, or dissimilarity to Émile’s own condition will serve to undermine and ultimately to collapse the careful foundation he has constructed. Could the vicar ever provide the sort of model of education which Émile requires?

The fourth and final feature to which the reader's attention is drawn is Rousseau's choice of the frontispiece that accompanies the profession of faith. It depicts Orpheus teaching men the worship of the gods, transforming them and the beasts by the wonderful power he was said to have by virtue of his singing and lyre-playing. They, in apparent fright, prostrate themselves before the terror of the divinity above. Looking up they are given the hope of divine benefaction. The frontispiece seems particularly well-suited to the revelation about to occur, both as a hallmark of that profession and as a signal to the disjunction between the vicar's and Emile's concerns. For what is singular about the religion Orpheus inspired, of note for our immediate sense of disjunction, was its attitude towards death. The body was seen as a prison wherein the soul paid for the sin committed by the Titans. Through death the soul escaped and was granted the privilege of beatitude in the afterlife. Death was thus a benefaction for it led to real life, a life where men became like the gods. Beatitude was a reward for the sacramental acts men were obliged to perform so as to atone for the human inheritance of the sins of the Titans. The need for an expiation of original sin and the notion of life as a preparation for the real life beyond, demanded an ascetic life as a means of delivering the soul from the bodily prison. Man's nature was seen as dualistic and sex was problematized by seeing the flesh as the site of various prohibiting techniques of power. Chastity, as an *imitatio Dei* and as the *déjà-là* of death, was a supreme expression of the longing for purity. It is a theology in its celestial and eschatological elements of striking similarity to that underlying the vicar's presentation. It is highly questionable, however, what use Émile could have of such opinions, given his earthly engagement and attachments, his shameless naïveté, the absence of sacramental ritual in his life, and the lack of division in his soul.

But the Orpheus myth also has a *supplement*, the character of which exposes the ambiguity of Rousseau's intention and so takes us beyond our immediate sense of a disjunction.<sup>17</sup> The myth brings forth in addition to its Apollonian elements a host of chthonian and tellurian images of the fecundity of the earth and the mystery of generation expressed in the religious initiate's abandonment of himself to the experience of the full fertilizing power of the Earth Mother. Orpheus as a god-man of androgynous character was understood to attend to the redemptive, rhythmic regeneration of the rites of agriculture. While he was appropriated later by Christianity as the prototype of Christ, and thus an expression of natural man's innocence and yet ultimate hope of union with a transcendent god, the "orobouric" symbol of androgyny within the theme of the generative power of the earth, is in fact the enduring core of the religion of Orpheus. Thus while Orpheus could be depicted as a Christ who mediates heaven and earth, who through divine insight into the meaning of natural events harmoniously orders

17. The term "supplement" is Derrida's and connotes both the linguistic attempt to reappropriate presence and the infringing substitute, that is an intervention or insinuation, adding only to replace, cf. Jacques Derrida, *Of Grammatology* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1976), pp. 145-63.

them from within and bestows heavenly and eschatological significance upon them, he is more properly the fecundating power of the Earth Mother.<sup>18</sup>

While the Vicar affirms the Apollonian element which in the Pythagorean table of opposites places all meaning, truth, and plenitude on the side of light and the celestial, and all absence on the side of what is dark, heavy, cold, earthy, and female, Rousseau's own teaching admits the re-emergence of the suppressed absence, conferring plenitude of meaning now on the sanctity of life and the mystery of birth and abundance. This contrast of the sacrality of the sky and the fecundity of the earth, I suggest, betrays a subtle suggestion that the Profession of Faith lacks a univocal meaning, permitting instead a disclosure of the last Dionysian trace of Orpheus.

As we shall see, Rousseau's social world is radically distinct from that of the vicar's: it is one in which the *Émiles* and *Sophies* are submerged within the rhythmic cycles of birth, growth, fullness, and decay of the life process. Even love's illusions do not break those cycles, making them instead only more endurable. As quanta of "biopower" the *Émiles* and *Sophies* participate in a recurrent and endless metabolism with nature, a cyclic becoming and biocosmic unity.<sup>19</sup> Here the sacrality of mortality is replaced by the social ideal of health and fertility, an object of calculation with no sense of transcendence. Philosophy is no longer learning how to die, because death does not continue to be ontologically significant. Instead, philosophy is transposed into technical modes of intervention that invest the life process with significance. In Rousseau's Enlightenment appropriation of the chthonian Orpheus, death is no longer a destiny or fate but a scandal and transgression, to be corrected by technical means. I shall turn to an extended examination of these issues in the following sections.

Having considered these four elements of Rousseau's presentation, the reader may experience some hesitation in simply equating the vicar's and Rousseau's views. The substantial philosophic position to which I have already alluded and to whose fuller treatment I now turn, is, however, even more indicative of a severe disjunction with Rousseau's other avowed principles.

## II. PHILOSOPHIC CLAIMS

There are two sections to the vicar's profession, one that elaborates a philosophic system and the other constituted by a polemic on the historical effects of orthodox Christianity. The first section of the vicar's profession outlines his epistemology, his metaphysics, and his account of the soul and its proper moral tun-

18. For a discussion of the significance of these chthonian themes see Mircea Eliade, *Rites and Symbols of Initiation* (New York: Harper and Row, 1958) and *Patterns in Comparative Religion* (London: Sheed and Ward, 1958).

19. For an argument that the submergence into a "metabolism with nature" leads to loss of care for "the world", of meaning, and of reality, see Hannah Arendt, *op cit. supra*, pp. 79-135.

ing and is the one with which we are primarily concerned in order to discern whether it is compatible with Rousseau's philosophic principles.

The vicar commences his epistemological views by proposing to speak with "the clarity of the original understanding in (his) mind" (IV.560). From this he draws the major philosophical principles upon which his views are supported. In the *Second Discourse* Rousseau tells us that man is not by nature rational and that understanding is a derivative capacity. In the *Émile*, too, the young man does not appear endowed with a capacity for understanding or with innate ideas or principles beyond those which he gradually grasps through trial and error, repetition, and habituation. The vicar appears to grant human nature a greater natural endowment and natural direction than does Rousseau. As long as the vicar's position is qualified by the recognition that his is an historically contingent introspection, no serious disparity need exist here, but it must be noted that without a further philosophy of history no ontological claim could be advanced by the vicar which Rousseau would accept. The vicar now appeals to a guide in his deliberations, an "inner light" (IV.569). The reader is not told whether this is part of the "original understanding" or if it is his "conscience", but however that may be, *Émile* is allowed no such appeal in any of his deliberations. His judgments are based on his "natural researches" of those things that are of utility to him. From Rousseau's account of the manner in which *Émile*'s consciousness is shaped, there appears to be neither a natural understanding apart from the prudence acquired by experience nor any inherent intellectual or moral sense.

The vicar's questions are addressed to what he experiences as a "frame of mind of uncertainty and doubt," a condition that he finds a "disturbing and painful state": "Doubt about the things it is important for us to know is too violent a state for the human mind" (IV.568). He suggests that his inquiry is intended to overcome this state. The vicar's revelation is thus a settling of doubt; his account is a satisfaction of the requirements of the situation of perplexity and doubt that initiated the inquiry. One might be led to feel that his profession is potentially a merely subjective account of truth for it is truth that is personally satisfying in quieting doubt. Such an inquiry limits truth to the effect of the inquiry and the nature of the inquirer himself rather than relating it to those facts by virtue of which the propositions are true or false. The vicar is more skeptical in some ways about knowledge than Rousseau:

We do not have the measurements of this immense machine, we cannot calculate its relations: we know neither its first laws nor its final cause. We do not know ourselves; we know neither our nature nor our active principle. . . . Impenetrable mysteries surround us on all sides; they are above the region accessible to the senses (IV.568).

*Émile*'s education has been by contrast more narrowly empirical, and ultimately offers a more restricted but "operational" theory of knowledge, for he has attempted to gain certainty of his knowledge by virtue of verifying, testing, and cross-referencing his various sensations. Certain fundamental facts, albeit con-

finned to corporeal utility, are at the source of his certainty about the material world.<sup>20</sup>

Rousseau himself we know shares the vicar's skepticism about man's grasp of the final end, of essences, or of substances. However, throughout the *Émile* he argues much more assertively than the vicar that the first laws of nature can be known, that general laws of science are derivable from empirical observations, that man's nature is governed by knowable psychological laws, and that the "active principle" is controllable and its working ascertainable. Indeed, on this last point, Rousseau clearly has given the impression that the active principle is neither a spiritual nor a mysterious principle but rather, nothing more than the physiopsychological motion of the body. The sentiments it produces appear moreover to be explicable by a thermomechanistic account.<sup>21</sup> The science of the passions used by the tutor with precision throughout the *Émile* is based upon a coherent understanding of human behaviour as subject to predictable modes of modification. In Book III *Émile* is taught the rudimentary principles of hydrostatics, astronomy, biology, and chemistry, implying that man's proper posture to nature is not one of passivity and resignation, but of control and willful imposition of form upon matter in motion. Whatever doubt Rousseau may have had about the mind's ability to grasp certain ethereal truths, he is far more confident than the vicar about immediate, palpable certainty.

The vicar continues his inquiry by recognizing that he is a sensing creature and from this resolves that he is endowed with an active force—a sense of his existence—that acquiesces to sensations. For the vicar, men have a natural notion of their own existence; sensation implies the presence of an "I" that is sensing (IV.570). Rousseau however does not believe that men naturally have a sense of their own existence (IV.279–80). For Rousseau, as a reading of Books I and II reveals, the "I" is created relatively in the consciousness of, and resistance to, other objects and selves but the self is never immediately sensed. Rousseau's training of *Émile* suggests that "I" develops from a relation between a sensed phenomenon and a sensing "self." The awareness of modification by an external source and the realization reinforced over time that the modification can be re-experienced provides the human machine with an identity. There is no substantial self prior to this experience that can reflect on its own states and that realizes the continuity of its own existence independent of experience. It was for this reason that *Émile* had to learn experientially to coordinate the effects he felt from his various senses, unable to rely on an inherent sense coordination or an innate sense of a residing "I" that experiences all the sensations as a unity. The sentiment of existence is acquired rather than sensed, the unity of consciousness achieved through the equilibrium of power and desire (IV.301).

20. See note 16.

21. Following La Mettrie and Diderot, Rousseau appears to identify heat as a stimulus that gives rise to sensibility, the passions, and thought, and to give physiological explanations of the effects hitherto believed to be produced by a spiritual substance. See IV.342, 502, 519, 547, and Bloom, n. 2, 488. Cf. J. Cropsey, *op. cit. supra* for an account of this thermomechanism.

What this suggests is a radical feature of Rousseau's teaching, alien to his contemporaries. Rousseau appears to have dispersed the subject understood as a unified totality, depicting instead a subject constituted as a conjuncture of multiple trajectories traversing the body, thus dissolving, too, the primacy the vicar accords to consciousness and identity. This dissemination of the subject makes possible the success of technical reconstitution. Constituted as a body, the individual can be represented as a "machine", possessing capabilities which must be optimized: flaws must be corrected and forces must be administered at the capillary level, beneath consciousness and identity. That Rousseau is engaged in such a task is suggested by his understanding of experience. For Rousseau the sensations prior to touch do not convey what would be necessary for the self even to distinguish itself from its sensations, let alone realize that it has a distinct and enduring identity. The vicar infers from certain effects that he must have a substantial soul. Rousseau shows that these effects could be more simply understood by explaining the gradual construction of experience much in the spirit of Condillac's demonstration of the understanding of his statue-man. From Rousseau's point of view, the vicar's claims are unscientific for the vicar believes that spiritual and metaphysical principles underlie the workings of his mind.

The vicar then depicts his "active force" as one that is capable of judging. He distinguishes perceptions from judgment and hence suggests that he has a distinctive faculty, one that is a sign of an "active and intelligent human being" (IV.571). He denies that a merely sensitive being is capable of this sort of judgment; comparison involves superadding a mental construction to received sensations. Man's intelligent force is active rather than passive. The vicar's position implies that man has an autonomous reason to which the perceiving and experiencing individual appeals to adjudicate the appearances present in the sensible world.

For Rousseau, this mode of judgment is not so obviously active, nor does he accept the idea that man has an autonomous reasoning capacity. He presents, at one point, the example of the appearance of a broken or bent stick in water. *Émile* learns the true character of the stick by employing various senses and receiving different types of sensations. His deliberation consists in a succession of sensations rather than appeal to an intelligible principle. His judgment is considerably more passive than that which the vicar describes. Rousseau suggests that *Émile* would perceive the stick to be bent the first time he saw it, but through the experience of comparing various sensations he would soon learn to rectify his original assumption. This resolution does not require a distinct power or capacity for judgment; the copresence of various sensations informs his reason as to the proper relation.

For example, whereas the vicar is puzzled as to how the mind could coordinate its five senses as if it were in fact passive and denies that without an active and autonomous judgment the mind could be capable of providing communication between the senses, Rousseau suggests an alternative. Reference to the

Molyneux problem and the Cheseldon experiment in the *Moral Letters* suggest that Rousseau was well aware of his contemporaries' scientific denial of an *a priori* coordination. He thus suggests that the copresence of different sensations constitutes comparison; judging is a modified form of sensing, strengthened by exercise and coordinated to the sensations of touch.

In sum, the vicar denies that experience can be the sole cause of all ideas and sentiments, yet Rousseau states quite unambiguously that "everything which enters into human understanding comes there through the senses" and that experience is the only means of acquiring knowledge. For Rousseau there are no innate ideas or principles prior to experience. Faculties and sentiments are acquired by the repetition of sensations, perceptions of pain and pleasure, and through habit. Rousseau denies the autonomy of reason, for it "alone is not active" (iv,645). The fundamental activity of the mind resides not in itself but in psychological forces: "it is only passions which make us act" (iv.453). The senses correct themselves and simple ideas, by which the illusions of perception are dispelled, are only compared sensations. There is no mysterious, nonempirical principle to Rousseau's epistemology. The rationalists, Rousseau claims, among which one must include the vicar, had not realized the extent to which the mind relies on the body rather than on the promptings of a spiritual substance.

The vicar turns subsequently to metaphysical issues. He distinguishes the two types of motion—communicated and spontaneous—and suggests that the natural state of phenomena is to be at rest. On the first point he claims that the motion of animate beings is spontaneous and denies the idea of "unorganized matter moving itself or producing some action" (iv.575). Rousseau, however, claiming that animals are only "ingenious machines" in the *Second Discourse*, suggests that their matter is organized in such a manner that they are capable of motion, sensitivity, and even some thought, thus extending far greater power to matter. The vicar doubts that intelligent life could possibly have emerged from "passive and dead matter" and "blind fatality," or from nonintelligent life and chance.

"I need only know that matter is extended and divisible in order to be sure that it cannot think. And for all that any philosopher who comes to tell me that trees sense and rocks think, may entangle me in his subtle arguments, I can see in him only a sophist speaking in bad faith who prefers to attribute sentiment to rocks than to grant a soul to man . . . It seems to me that far from saying that rocks think, modern philosophy has discovered, on the contrary, that men do not think. It no longer recognizes anything but sensitive beings in nature" (iv.580).

Yet Rousseau reveals his solidarity with his contemporaries on precisely this point: reason or thought is not natural to man and deliberation is a product of experience, sensation, and habit. Moreover, in addition to Rousseau saying that animals are only machines and yet capable of thought, he also sees nothing inherently peculiar about attributing vitality to matter. He suggests that only the lack of "progressive movement" makes it unnecessary that plants should have sense and thought (iv.584).

On the second point of natural rest, the vicar, in observing the visible universe around him, perceives a motion he says is “regular, uniform, and subjected to constant laws” and draws from this observation his first article of faith: a will moves the universe and animates nature (iv.576). For him, there is an external cause to the regular motions of the universe. From a perception of design and order, the vicar derives the notion of a prime mover: moved matter according to certain laws is evidence of an intelligent will. The vicar illustrates this phenomenon of order and harmony with a Newtonian image: the universe is like a watch and it is God’s design that keeps all the parts working for a “common end” (iv.578). The sensible order “proclaims a supreme intelligence” (iv.579). The “goodness of God is the love of order . . . for it is by order that He maintains what exists and links each part of the whole” (iv.593).

Rousseau, by contrast, posits a notion of the universe that is more ambiguous. Although the perceived nature of reality—as flux and indeterminate motion—is often a product of man’s turbulent social life, there is also a caprice to nature that issues in disorder, chaos, and sudden upheaval: “everything on earth is only transitory” (iv.816). Rousseau intimates his acceptance of a Lucretian account of the universe, a reality as a result of the accidental collisions of random particles of matter, denying thereby that there is any overall design, final end, or divine and personified force that sustains and directs the world beyond the appearance of disorder. He makes repeated reference to the “body in continuous motion,” to the affections of the bodies in “continual flux,” and suggests that it is precisely because the world *is* in constant motion that men come to acquire knowledge (iv.284, 303, 363). A perception of destructiveness and susceptibility to painful and violent alteration characterizes man’s proper relation to nature, and like Lucretius, Rousseau appears concerned to liberate the mind from the terrors of religion by demystifying death. Rousseau depicts the lot of man to be one of hardship and pain, but one which does not issue in an excessive desire for transcendence if his pedagogy is followed. There is no reason for habituation to a particular posture of the intellect, nor for security in love of glory, because all is flux and transition, “As a mortal and perishable being, should I go and form eternal ties on this earth where everything changes, where everything passes away, and from which I shall disappear tomorrow?” (iv.820) Although men may come to understand the first laws of observable motion sufficient for their earthly purposes, these do not suggest an ultimate unified order beyond.

The vicar continues the theme of order and regularity by turning to the doctrine of evolution as proposed by the modern materialists. He suggests that it is impossible to conceive that “nature finally prescribed laws to itself to which it was not subjected at the outset” (iv.579). He flatly refuses to accept the notion of chance combination as responsible for the present configuration of the universe and that complex configurations could emerge from the conjunction of simple elements. He denies too the notion that all life could have emerged from a common prototype:

The insurmountable barrier that nature sets between the various species, so that they would not be confounded, shows its intentions with the utmost clarity. It was not satisfied with establishing order. It took certain measures so that nothing could disturb that order (iv.580).

Rousseau's *Second Discourse* explicitly denies both of the vicar's claims. Appealing to natural science rather than to *a priori* reasoning or "the writings of Moses," and deferring more precisely to Buffon, the naturalist, Rousseau argues that the history of natural phenomena has been a product of "fortuitous causes," "countless accidents" and the "chance combination of events which might never have arisen" (III.162). Describing the passage of time from earliest man and his original ignorance, Rousseau writes: ". . . the generations multiplied uselessly and everyone always starting from the same point, centuries passed in all the crudeness of the first ages" (III.160). There was no benevolent guide to man's present state of organization, and thus Rousseau disavows the teleological and metaphysical assumptions required to sustain the vicar's position. There is nothing contradictory to Rousseau in the view that the development of the organs and the corporeal organization generally was haphazard and often by error. Like the atomists, Rousseau disavows any language concerning formal or final causation, stating for example that it is an error to believe that the senses and organs are naturally functional for the utility of life. There are no gods who prescribe design or end to the universe. His discussions in Note "J" strongly suggest that he believes all natural life to have emerged from a common prototype, but that such emergence was in no way designed. Indeed, one may go further and suggest that what makes the *Second Discourse* particularly interesting is that in his analysis of each historical stage, he situates the emergence of a new practical consciousness, language, and script, within a synchronic rather than diachronic structuration, thus disrupting the notion of continuity, identity, and development in the history of the human species. Thus, in the *Second Discourse*, Rousseau appears to sustain an argument for the materiality of discourse ordering human consciousness.

The third and final section of the vicar's philosophical position is his account of the soul. He senses a "violent condition" within himself and as a consequence invokes a notion of metaphysical dualism. He admits that he cannot understand the interaction of his two substances but accepts that the idea of dualism "contains nothing repugnant to reason or to observation" (iv.576–7). He suggests that he has two distinct principles:

one of which raised him to the study of eternal truths, to the love of justice and moral beauty, and to the regions of the intellectual world whose contemplation is the wise man's delight; while the other took him basely into himself, subjected him to the empire of the senses and to the passions which are their ministers and by means of these hindered all that the sentiment of the former inspired in him (iv.583).

The vicar experiences the conflict of these two principles and is torn by remorse and guilt for his coarser inclinations. He depicts his shame as a "tyrannical senti-

ment” that brings him torment. Like Adam after the fall, the vicar is ashamed and his fears of eternal torment lead to his attempt to hide from himself. He does so with the self-righteous moralism of hating the wicked (IV.596). The vicar’s shame and feelings of torment and his intense and bitter hatred for the wicked reside together with an intense and passionate “love for the beautiful,” which is the source of “these transports of admiration for heroic actions, these raptures of love for great souls . . . this enthusiasm for virtue.” Divided between his desires and the moral principles evoked by his active reason, the vicar seeks the original unity of natural man.

By contrast, *Émile* who has never been given cause to choose between desire and duty because his desires have never been rampant, is described, as we have seen, as undecieving and naïve (IV.642). While subject to the alienation caused by human temporality underlying also the vicar’s self-division, he nonetheless has retained much of the self-identity and immediacy to nature of natural man. Much artifice has been deployed to achieve this, but an artifice wholly unlike that of the vicar’s current animadversions. The vicar’s violent vacillations of love and hatred are far from the moderate sentiments that *Émile* experiences. By confining his existence within himself, he has not been led to judge others nor to be transported by raptures that would injure the stability of his mind.

What permits the vicar to sustain his project of restoration to self-unity is a “divine essence” within himself that issues in an “innate principle of justice and virtue”:

Conscience, conscience! Divine instinct, immortal and celestial voice, certain guide of a being that is ignorant and limited but intelligent and free; infallible guide of good and bad which makes man like unto God (IV.600–1).

He also speaks of man’s capacity for contemplation and links to it a natural perception of “order, beauty, and virtue.”<sup>22</sup> We discover that the vicar’s project for overcoming his self-division is to be achieved by a moral freedom which grounds social man’s active reason and will in the natural sentiment of conscience, thereby reconciling what he sees as his freely-determined actions to nature, and so restoring the original unity of his being. Rousseau never appeals in the *Émile* or in the *Second Discourse* to these faculties or this resolution nor does he mention any inherent sense of order, beauty, or virtue. Instead, *Émile*’s sense of order is restricted to the predictable consequences of his experimental science, his sense of beauty is fabricated and nurtured by the judicious manipulation of his imagination, and his virtue develops in the regulation of his heart by ideals that the tutor instills. The vicar ascribes to the natural character of the soul, a metaphysical structure that Rousseau both reveals to be a false hypostatization of structurally and historically emplaced behaviours, and ignores in his own pedagogical techniques.

22. IV.582.

The vicar claims that these sentiments of love of the good and hatred of the bad are as natural as the love of self and suggests that it is these relative sentiments that make men sociable by nature. By dint of moral sentiment, men are able to reflect upon and make actual a just regime. The vicar expresses the view that the “inner voice” acts as a natural law governing men’s affairs:

All the duties of the natural law which were almost erased from my heart by the injustice of men are recalled to it in the name of the eternal justice which imposes them on me and sees me to fulfill them (iv.603).

Where the vicar expresses his admiration for man’s natural sociability, Rousseau on the other hand writes “from the little care taken by nature to bring men together through mutual need and to facilitate their use of speech, one at least sees how little it prepared their sociability and how little it contributed to everything men have done to establish social bonds” (iii.151).

Rousseau’s argument that man’s nature is a product of history, and that man is not by nature a being endowed with certain predetermined capabilities and experiences, in fact undermines the possibility of the vicar’s natural law in the strict sense. If we take the doctrine of natural law to mean (a) that man is by nature a rational being who is inclined toward acting according to reason and hence acting virtuously and (b) that the principles of natural law are universally valid and eternal because they accord with an unchanging human nature, then Rousseau’s position in the *Second Discourse* renders him incapable of consistently maintaining a natural law doctrine. By claiming that man is by nature asocial and nonrational, and by finding man’s distinctiveness in his malleability, Rousseau denies that human nature points to or informs man as to certain moral principles whereby he is completed or perfected. Man makes himself because there is no natural order to which he must adapt. For Rousseau, as Book V appears to suggest, morality is an artifice of imagination, ideals and human will.

The consequence of the vicar’s belief that his is a privileged position in nature is crucial for understanding the difference between Rousseau and the vicar. For Rousseau, nature has assigned no ranks; man does not represent the apex of the natural world. The vicar, by contrast, claims, “I find myself by my species uncontestedly in the first rank” (iv.552–3). Rousseau’s analysis of the passion *amour propre* appears to shed light on the vicar’s condition, his self-interpretation, and his need for the palliative of his faith. The vicar himself makes mention of the distraught state of this passion. He claims that raising questions of metaphysics has “agitated (his) *amour propre*.” Many of his sentiments, indeed, appear to be both products and also causes of the increasing turbulence of his *amour propre*. The vicar is imperious in his self-congratulatory pride. “Can I see myself thus distinguished without congratulating myself on filling this honourable post and without blessing the hand which placed me in it”, he asks himself (iv.583). On the other side of this imperiousness can be found an obsequious servitude:

Being of beings, I am because You are; it is to lift myself up to my source, to meditate on you ceaselessly. The worthiest use of my reason is for it to annihilate itself before you . . . it is the charm of my weakness to feel myself overwhelmed by your Greatness (IV.594).

This diverges remarkably from the status Emile is to envisage for himself. Pride, vanity, and servility are seen by Rousseau as distortions of the soul for they are based on corrupt comparisons. Comparisons with others lead to envy and resentment especially when others are perceived as being superior. *Amour propre*, which is enflamed by comparisons of those superior, produces in turn all the “hateful and irascible passions.” It is *amour propre* that “always wants to carry man above his sphere,” and this “looking up” produces a slavishness that is the source of misery and dependency upon others. For Rousseau, the constraints of a transcendent morality make men more turbulent, more prone to deception, and ultimately more unjust. It is the lack of ability or desire to cull from *within* those resources to comprehend and use nature, that leads a frustrated *amour propre* to animate the universe with will and intention. It is precisely *amour propre*’s link with imagination that produces the very idea of a sphere that transcends human life.

It is for this reason that a significant portion of *Émile*’s education has been an attempt to arrest the emergence of *amour propre*, the source of these attempts to aspire to supreme heights and beyond the human condition. The tutor has carefully contrived situations so that the seeds of imperious passions may never be sown. Efforts to surpass the human condition by acts of supreme and Godlike virtue, lead to unhappiness, unrequitable hope, and unruly vanity. The passions that cause men to emulate others, to become dependent on other’s recognition, and to become resentful if that recognition is not forthcoming are not however natural to man; careful nurture can prevent their emergence. A proper education must ensure that the child not perceive a domineering will insisting that its precepts be followed nor believe that an external will can be beseeched to respond to its demands. *Émile*’s tutor has been concerned to manipulate the environment in such a way that the young man may not develop the character which would require the myths of eternal salvation and hope of divine intervention. Rousseau’s analysis of the source of the tyrannical will reveals that the cause of such a temperament is a faulty perception of reality. The passions that the profession succors are thus a symptom of defective education.

*Émile* is one who lives for himself; the corrupted soul lives in the eyes of others or another. The vicar finds his source of happiness in “contemplation of the Supreme Being and the eternal truths of which He is the source . . . the beauty of the order will strike all the powers of our soul” (IV.591). The transcendence to contemplation of the eternal order is, for the vicar, the height of perfection for human beings. For Rousseau, this transcendence simply betrays a demand for recognition of others. The vicar does indeed seek recognition from others, betraying his slavishness to their opinions: “I wanted supernatural understanding in

order that I myself would be privileged among my fellows” (IV.608). His virtue, moreover, is calculating and hypocritical: “If I do a good deed without a witness, I know that it is seen and I make a record for the other life of my conduct in this one” (IV.308).

Rousseau transforms the virtue of humility to that of humanity, and the supreme virtue of glory and honor to that of domestic fidelity, in seeking to redirect man’s attention to the earthly things. Belief in a transcendent realm and a Deity who is the author of commands regarding human virtue, or attempts to surpass the human condition in heroic feats, produces misery and “vain-glory.” In the Letter to Beaumont, Rousseau revealed precisely that

continual meditations on the Deity or the enthusiasm for virtue may have disturbed, in the sublime imaginations, the mean and regular order of . . . common ideas. A too great elevation of mind sometimes turns the brain and things are no longer seen in their ordinary light<sup>23</sup>

The teaching Rousseau wishes to convey is that by focusing upon the divine, men have lost the capacity to achieve justice and happiness in this world. As well, this heroic striving has corrupted the regularity of their souls. Men must therefore restrict their allegiance and energies to the human estate; an imaginary elevation of man’s existence makes him imprudent and neglectful of his weakness and true duties.

I have only one precept to give you and it comprehends all the others. Be a man. Restrain your heart within the limits of your condition. Study and know the limits. However narrow they may be, a man is not unhappy as long as he closes himself up within them. He is unhappy only when he wants to go out beyond them. . . . He is unhappy when he forgets his human estate in order to forge for himself imaginary estates from which he always falls back into his own. The only goods it is costly to be deprived of are those one believes one has a right to . . . A man wants to be God when he believes he is no longer a man . . . The illusions of pride are the source of our greatest ills. But the contemplation of human misery makes the wise man always moderate . . . As a mortal and perishable being should I go and form eternal ties on this earth where everything changes, where everything passes away, and from which I shall disappear tomorrow? (IV.820)

This disparity between the vicar’s and Rousseau’s views underscores too the divergent pedagogies they employ. The vicar attempts to instill a love of virtue by depicting the beauty of virtue in such a way as to make it alluring. He does so by portraying others: “he reanimated a generous ardour in his heart by the account of others’ noble deeds . . . in making the boy admire those who had performed them, the priest gave him the desire to perform like deeds” (IV.653).

For reasons we have already examined, this would not be appropriate for Émile because it would exacerbate his *amour propre*. He has been taught to question the motives and intentions of those who attempt to surpass ordinary hu-

23. T. Becket and P.-A. de Honot, *op. cit. supra*, p. 37.

man bounds and to strive for immortality. Imitation, and especially imitation of the heroic or the divine, is the source of the corruption of an honest love of virtue. In Rousseau's understanding the discourse of the classical pedagogy that made appeal to "imaginary estates", supreme virtue, duties in opposition to nature, and the need for patient endurance in hope of future salvation necessary, had taken men outside of the "natural" order and caused disruption in their souls. Rousseau's choice of preceptors indicates the worldly concerns he intends to impart. Rather than choosing a teacher of virtue who was said to partake of the divine—Socrates, Christ, or the heroes—he offers Chiron as the most popular model.<sup>24</sup> *Émile's* concerns are completely this-worldly: "I shall not seek a distant happiness for him at the expense of the present" (iv.654).

In sum, one may discern from the god to whom a man prays how a man is constituted. The vicar's regard is for a god who exercises divine judgment; the vicar is corrupt, rebellious, and torn between desire and guilt. The vicar sees the body as a prison and sees life as a period of atonement: ". . . I aspire to the moment when, after being delivered from the shackles of my body, I shall be me without contradiction or division and shall need only myself in order to be happy" (iv.604). He bases his hopes on the immortality of the soul and the belief that the afterlife justifies the pains endured for justice and virtue: "I believe that the soul survives the body long enough for the maintenance of order" (iv.590). Torn between inclination and duty, the vicar is tormented by the "violent condition" of the union of his body and soul. The vicar's hopes and sufferings thus require a belief in eternal salvation.

Do all of these opinions and beliefs sound like the sort of teaching *Émile* requires? *Émile* is completely free from the worries, calculations, and recriminations the vicar's beliefs are intended to ease. The vicar's "virtue", like Locke's which we examined earlier, depends on a transcendent, punitive God ("without faith no true virtue exists"); virtue depends on suppressing nature and transcending mortal life (iv.632). *Émile's* virtue, by contrast, is constituted by a self-regulatory prudence. It is based on knowing how to judge and circumscribe his ambitions. Hopes for eternal salvation are folly in Rousseau's eyes for they cause men to forget "the art of living":

In the uncertainty of human life, let us avoid above all the false prudence of sacrificing the present for the future; this is often to sacrifice what is for what will not be (iv.781).

Despite the vicar's expectations man occupies an insignificant, if guaranteed, place in the whole. Compared to the heavenly bodies or divine intelligence, man is at an outer periphery:

The good man orders himself in relation to the whole, the wicked one orders the whole in relation to himself. The latter makes himself the center of all things; the former mea-

24. While Chiron was the teacher of heroes, he partook of the dual nature of beast and man and it is this that Rousseau emphasizes, reasons for which I explored in "Rousseau and the Domestication of Virtue," *Canadian Journal of Political Science*, xvii:4 (December 1984), pp. 731–53.

sure his radius and keeps to the circumference. Then he is ordered in relation to the common center, and in relation to all the concentric circles, which are the creatures (IV.292).

For the vicar, man is the measure of the cosmos; he reflects its order and harmony and remains within a pre-established relation. By looking at the order within himself, man can understand the order in nature because he is a microcosm of the universe. The vicar simply remains committed to a classical cosmology and ethic as a response to the materialists' claims.

For Rousseau, however, man is the master and measure of the chaotic universe; he creates the order and his understanding is based on his own constructions. All intelligibility or meaning has its root in human needs and artifice. The difference of accounts is most poignantly revealed in Rousseau's description of man's relation to the world around him:

Let us measure the radius of our sphere and stay in the center like the insect in the middle of his web; we shall always be sufficient unto ourselves and we shall not have to complain of our weakness, for we shall never feel it (IV.305).

Rousseau's choice of the spider as the dominant metaphor is insightful, for the metaphor has a pedigree, the best known being the use made of it in Swift's bitingly satiric contrast of the ancients and moderns. He had in his "The Battle between the Ancient and Modern Books" described ancient philosophy as a bee whose wings produce music and flight and who thus "visits all the blossoms of the field and garden . . . and in collecting from them enriches himself without the least injury to their beauty, their smell, or their taste."<sup>25</sup> The ancient bee is contrasted to the modern house-building spider which feels that it can produce its own world from within itself and perceives itself as self-sufficient.

Whatever the ambiguity of Rousseau's agreement with Swift's critique of the moderns, he nonetheless adopts this modern perspective. Rousseau rejects the vicar's teleological conception of the universe, and its transcendent morality, and the account of power that sustains that classical project. Rousseau's criticism of previous philosophers, who have mistaken a particular historical configuration of nature and of the soul as nature herself, applies as much to the vicar's position. Rousseau's acceptance of mechanism and modern psychology and his historicization of consciousness requires leaving ancient ideas behind. The profession of faith is, therefore, the most conservative part of Rousseau's work and should be taken as distinct from the radical teaching he propounds as the enduring basis of his philosophy. However, we must now account for the reason Rousseau might have had in writing the text and situating it within Book IV of the *Émile*, an explanation to which I promised to return.<sup>26</sup>

25. Jonathan Swift, "The Battle Between the Ancient and Modern Books," in *A Tale of a Tub and other Satires* (London: Dent, 1975), p. 151.

26. An objection could be made to this reading by pointing out that in his own name Rousseau embraces some of the vicar's doctrines, particularly of conscience and of dual substances. However,

## III. DRAMATIC AND STRATEGIC SIGNIFICANCE

If the profession of faith is not compatible with the theoretical core of Rousseau's teaching, what purpose does it serve? I offer the following possibilities.

First, the education which is offered to *Émile* is not only an impractical political proposal because of the rare and privileged attention the tutor gives to his pupil, but also because Rousseau himself was not persuaded of its efficacy. To engineer a human soul is a wager, not because Rousseau appears to believe that the student will suffer intimations of deprivation of natural, experiential truths from which he has been excluded, but because of the essential fragility of human artifice and because of the multiple trajectories traversing the body in a given social reality, threatening the univocal script with which it has been outfitted. Like the Styx-dipped Achilles, *Émile's* pedagogy is not invulnerable. After all, the sequel to the *Émile* is a tragic aftermath, where Rousseau reveals that the couple's daughter dies in infancy, that they move to Paris, where following Sophie's seduction and impregnation by another man, *Émile* abandons her for a misanthropic existence as a solitary. One might hypothesize that the juristic constitution of sovereign association in the *Social Contract* is as vulnerable, and in both cases the civil profession of faith serves as a palliative to the degeneration ensuing from the rupture of the unity of the moral experience. The Profession, while injurious to those whose self-unity is uncontaminated, might be the only solution where the technical penetration has failed or been overwhelmed by other forces.

This leads me to the second suggestion. In a corrupt, bourgeois society the vicar's profession of faith can inspire virtue by portraying a simulacrum of virtue, dazzling in its charm and beauty and capable of alluring men away from vice. For his contemporaries, Rousseau provides a "natural religion," less demanding and less inclined to promote hypocrisy than revealed religion, that assures some moral response to the commercial society and its misery. In this way, the vicar's profession conveys a salutary teaching, one that is intended as a tract for the times. Indeed, Rousseau intimates that the profession has primarily a political task. At the beginning of the profession he announces that he is about to speak to his "dear fellow citizen." The reader should recall that in the general preface to the *Émile* Rousseau addresses his work to those educators who seek an education "suitable for man and well adapted to the human heart." This universal

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since this occurs conspicuously around the profession, these declarations seem to have the role of softening what would otherwise be too severe a disjunction in views. Although one could muster sufficient evidence for this thesis—for example, by contrasting earlier editions with the published work—I will adduce only one argument. After the profession where one might expect that love of order, of God, or of the inherent virtue and justice might regulate *Émile's* heart, Rousseau resumes his biotechnology: "One has a hold on the possessions only by means of the passions. It is by their empire that their tyranny must be combatted; and it is always from nature itself that the proper instruments to regulate nature must be drawn" (iv.654).

address to mankind is in contrast to the particular addresses of other more rhetorical works, where he speaks as a citizen of Geneva to other citizens. In those works where he speaks as a citizen, Rousseau is less open and more didactic, seeking to impart salutary truths and concerning himself with civic virtue and justice. In the *Émile*, generally, no such political fervor is expressed. Only in the introduction to the profession of faith does Rousseau express any similar patriotic or partisan sentiment, and so one might assume that it serves the same end as Rousseau's other rhetorical works. In the *Letter to Beaumont*, Rousseau had indicated that his sole concern had been to devise a religion "useful to mankind": "Let us take this utility therefore as our guide; and proceed to establish those doctrines which are most conducive to it."<sup>27</sup> The truth of revelation is subordinated wholly to the utility of presenting certain views to his contemporaries.

As well, in Book XI of the *Confessions*, Rousseau in fact indicates that his aim in writing had been to display the beauty of virtue so that he might move the hearts of the Parisians. Although he believed that they were corrupt and had ceased to know virtue and morality, they had a "delicate sensitivity" that Rousseau felt he could entrance with his accounts. Rousseau never systematically reveals the objections he might have made to the profession of faith and its proposed model of virtue. An explicit statement to the effect that the vicar's position only provided the simulacrum of virtue would have undermined its intended effect. Hence, his rhetoric is beautiful and noble and he presents his views unambiguously and his solutions as unproblematic. Only implicitly does Rousseau speak with less reserve. There is a reason for Rousseau's reticence connected with the difficulty of presenting his teaching. He did not believe it possible in his age simply to praise temperance and exhort men to moderation. To the man who has abandoned all traditional restraints, whose action is governed by the principle of pleasure and calculative reasoning alone, Rousseau's teaching would appear anachronistic and tyrannical. His teaching in the *Émile* reveals the need to accept some degree of suffering as the prerequisite to a moral outlook; the evils to be endured are emphasized more than the goods to be happily enjoyed. There is a complexity to the relationship between happiness and virtue not immediately apparent to the man who calculates the most efficient means of administering to his desires, who has been exposed to modern materialism and the natural-right teaching and whose prejudices would render Rousseau's concerns comical. For this reason, Rousseau often presents the simulacrum of virtue, that can serve as an alluring image for men already corrupted by the modern teachings. They are charmed by his text and are sent away with a surface view better than their old prejudices. In "corrupted hearts" which by dint of persuasion might again become disposed to a love of virtue, the simulacrum of virtue must be compounded with what is not precisely virtuous: "the sacrifices made to duty and virtue always have a secret charm even for corrupted hearts." Although this may not be sufficient for the more comprehensive theory of virtue, the image of "ex-

27. T. Becket and P.A. de Honot, *op. cit. supra*, p. 37.

alted virtue” plays a crucial pedagogical role. Beautiful images charm even as they help win agreement to the more substantial arguments.

However, neither of these suggestions does justice to the question of why the Profession of Faith is where it is in the *Émile*. For this another interpretive strategy must be advanced and I suggest that in looking at the connection between Rousseau’s pedagogical techniques and a distinctive element of his political teaching a provocative possibility comes to light. It is unorthodox but I believe crucial to make the case that the *Discourse on Political Economy* establishes an agenda for Rousseau’s thoughts on the political technology of desire and explains the mode of power deployed in constituting the *Émiles* as moral subjects.<sup>28</sup>

As the *Discourse* and the *Émile* make evident, men are not simply guided by reason and morality; they are constituted as particular moral subjects, by the way power traverses their bodies within a political culture, or a political economy. What makes Rousseau interesting is his problem: how to constitute an economy of desire, power, and truth. That desire, power, and knowledge are posed as sites of problematization already early in his writings emerges, for example, in his article for Diderot’s *Encyclopédie* which offers us his agenda:

If it is good to know how to use men as they are, it is better still to make them what one needs them to be. The most absolute authority is that which penetrates to the inner man and is exerted no less on his will than on his actions. It is certain that people are in the long run what the government makes them      Train men, therefore, if you want to command men.

Rousseau is alluding here to a very specific historical and political reality and organization of an economy of bodies, which Foucault has suggested was constituted within a specific art of political rule, namely “governmentality.” This art has as its datum the “population” as a unique field of intervention. What this means is that new tactics and techniques as well as formations of knowledge proper to governing men in their multiple relations—in the conjuncture of population, territory, and wealth—emerge as the concern of state, and make possible the “penetration of inner man,” the desiring man who wills and acts, enabling him to be governed efficiently. Thus, in the *Discourse on Political Economy*, Rousseau relates that to govern a state is to set up an economy involving the entire state that is to exercise toward its citizens—that is, toward the wealth and behaviour of each—a form of surveillance, or dressage involving questions of sexuality, mortality, health and hygiene, wealth, fertility, birthrates, and the safety of urban and domestic spaces. Such a project conveys the dream of a perfectly transparent and efficient society. Foucault writes, “The eighteenth century invented, so to speak, a synoptic regime of power, a regime of its exercise within

28. I am here pursuing and enlarging upon an argument made by Michel Foucault in “Governmentality,” *Ideology and Consciousness*, vi (Autumn 1979), pp. 5–21, and his histories on sexuality, *op. cit. supra*.

the social body, rather than from above it.” Unlike Hobbes’s sovereign who exercises juridical power—a distillation of power into a single will—the art of government deploys a power that circulates in a dispersed network of apparatuses without a single, organizing system, center, or focus. Individuals simultaneously exercise and undergo power, they are vehicles of power and not its point of application. Moreover, the individual with his desires, knowledges, and expectations is the prime effect of power. Rousseau is precisely novel in this regard because he examines how the relations of power constitute bodies as effects of power, that is, how they are constituted in the deployment of power, especially at the level of desire. Here power is polyvalent; power has a productive character since it produces the effects of truth within the many governmental discourses of population management. Commentators have hinted at this political technology and its accompanying exercise of power by referring to the refashioning conducted by the soulcraft of the legislator and by suggesting that the reproduction of the structure of the natural equilibrium of power and desire is a technical question. But the constitution of the new subject goes beyond this. The government of men and their constitution as quanta of labour power or biopower in a population, suggests that this is not “Man” as an ontological given who is being made to be free. Commentators acknowledge that it is the external conditions of freedom that allow this “making” or “denaturing” to be possible, but here they appeal to a juridical conception of power, exercised by a superior wisdom. I have suggested that Rousseau’s position is more refined: this is a power dispersed and diffuse; there are no central nodal points of power, only the trajectories of a multiplicity of social forces. Indeed, a substantial portion of the *Social Contract*, the *Discourse on Political Economy* and most of the *Émile*, are given over to a discussion of this moral discipline. One is right to identify the genre of the moral freedom constituted to be “self-mastery” but in Rousseau this code is at one, and indeed dependent upon, the politics of surveillance, of the confessional, and of the ritual of examination, and thus must be differentiated from the divergent political technologies of self-mastery of the citizen in the Greek polis, of the Stoic in the cosmopolis, of the courtesan in feudal Europe, or of the *condottieri* in the Italian city-republic because the measure is drawn from a new scientific object, “the population.”

Let me elaborate this further: one might see that Rousseau’s politics of truth is inextricable from the dynamics of a confessional discursive regime. That is, the subject is incited to produce a discourse of truth about his desires, his sexuality, to examine his thoughts, memories, images, and dreams, so as to decipher them for the first stirrings of desire which animate the flesh. Desire is construed as that which is hidden. It must be extracted, and the subject, until he has done so, does not know his own truth. Pedagogical discipline incites a confessing subject who renders his truth in the verbalization of his desires. The hermeneutic relation in which the moral subject is engaged to achieve self-mastery, in which power/knowledge elicits and maintains desire, instrumentalizing it and extending con-

trol over the body of the subject, is actualized in a society devoted to a new political optics—an omniscient gaze—and an economy of orderly, contented bodies. It is not a morality of repression and self-abnegation but rather one of desire as a pervasive visibility in an economy of excitation, proliferation, and instrumentation.

Sex, for example, we find out in the *Émile* now becomes a political, economic, and technical problem; it is no longer “the flesh” as the site of various prohibitive techniques of power (the Church teaching or the sovereign’s power of death), but instead it assumes a new form as “sexuality”: sex has become a locus constituted on the basis of new techniques of power; not on the negative exercise of the sovereign’s vengeance, or the denial of access to the world hereafter, but upon a positive investment in practices which direct life processes. Constituted as a body, the individual can be represented as a “machine”, as a quantum of “biopower” possessing capabilities which must be optimized; flaws must be corrected, and forces must be administered at the capillary level in this “metabolism with nature.” *Émile*’s education is not a pedagogy of precept, of knowledge as juridical authority. Instead, the tutor engages the technique of constant surveillance, a gaze coupled with the incitement of desire. The innovation is that what occurs is not the repression of free desire but its incorporation, its government, through disciplinary power. Throughout the *Émile*, Rousseau deploys tactics of force, ruse, habit, suppression and incitement. The teaching of moral, juridical rights, and duties are continually deprecated by Rousseau as ineffective and inappropriate for producing the new “natural man” who is to be integrated into society’s grid of surveillance. The same mechanic in the constitution of this unique subject is found too in *La Nouvelle Héloïse* where Julie claims,

If a mother is in the least watchful, she has the passions of her children under her complete control. She has means of arousing and sustaining the desire to learn or any other desire; and, so far as they are compatible with the complete freedom of the child and do not sow the seeds of vice, I readily employ them.

This scrutiny is however only a prelude to the interiorization of surveillance and the administration of desire it makes possible. In the *Émile*, the next tactic in this administration is illustrated by the Profession of Faith whereby the tutor ensures that “the inner sentiment” obliges *Émile* “to keep an attentive watch over himself before listening to his nascent desires.” At this point where the tutor has contrived the situation so that *Émile* cannot immediately consummate his desire for Sophie, his temporary self-division is monitored by the policing of an internalized gaze. The procedure finally culminates in again shifting the surveillance, in fixing desire to a particular object: the imaginary woman, who will eventually become the tangible Sophie. Rousseau has here resorted to the disciplinary solution of intensified surveillance from without, a woman who governs, judges, observes, and exercises the powers of desire over him. What this implicitly shows is distrust for the effective “inner sentiment” as the final, conclusive moral regu-

lator and the dependence on a new tutelary relation, guaranteed by a prudent management of desire.

The Profession then has served as a momentary bridge in Rousseau's overall program of a perfectly transparent society which guarantees itself the complete control of the drawstrings of moral behavior. The transparent society will require no gods and no sovereign. Power dispersed and diffused to the capillaries of this society will ensure an efficient circulation of moral effects. The Profession is but a tool drawn from Rousseau's kit to this end, tactically contrived within a moral project of constituting disciplined subjects. Submerged within the recurrent and endless metabolism with nature and identifiable not by their singularity but by the quanta of "biopower" they contribute to Mankind, as a biological species, the *Émiles* and *Sophies* have been constituted within an object of technical intervention, the healthy and productive "population."

To conclude, I have argued that the profession of faith cannot be read as containing Rousseau's philosophic principles. The vicar's system is open to insurmountable objections on the basis of the new philosophic truths and political matrix and thus is rendered ineffective in regulating the social effects of the new individualism fostered by materialism. The traditional restraints of a transcendent morality can only be seen as arbitrary or quaint from the point of view of the man who embraces the materialist teaching on human nature and realizes that his selfish designs now have philosophic sanction. Rousseau had realized that the consequences of this new teaching on social life were calamitous.

However, he could not simply revert to a classical cosmology and impose a refutable system of morality upon men. Although such depictions of virtue as presented by the vicar may charm corrupted men's hearts and dispose them to virtue, the ancient ideas could not be sustained in the new commercial governments. Nor did Rousseau believe it possible to simply ignore the materialist findings and postulate that man nonetheless has a distinct realm of freedom that exempts him from mechanical necessity. Man is one of the mechanically-regulated phenomena of nature. It is from his nature that the means of regulating his nature must be taken. Rousseau's moralizing of the human machine is found elsewhere in the multiple modes of power and knowledge his account sustains.

It was Nietzsche, of course, and not Rousseau who taught us that with the death of God, "Man" was gone too. But Rousseau also seemed to recognize that "Man" had become problematic and to have ventured on the path implying that "Man" is technically constituted through various modes of power, and that morality is but an armature of that power. It is the public responsibility and caution Rousseau adapts in constituting the moral and political subject, however, that distinguishes him from many of his inspired and willful followers.