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Ruth Grant
&
Philip Stewart

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Jean-Jacques Rousseau and Bernard Lamy: the Platonic education of *amour-propre*

In the *Confessions*, Rousseau acknowledged his debt to the Oratorian father, Bernard Lamy. Of Père Lamy's educational treatise, *Entretiens sur les sciences*, he wrote admiringly, "je le lus et relus cent fois; je résolus d'en faire mon guide" (1: 232).¹ Rousseau discovered Lamy as he set himself on a program of self-study at Les Charmettes during the happy summers of 1736–1738. In this key phase of his autodidactic education, Rousseau attached particular importance to religious works, and especially those within the French Augustinian tradition. He stated that those "qui mêlaient la dévotion aux sciences m'étaient les plus convenables ; tels étaient particulièrement ceux de l'Oratoire et de Port-royal. Je me mis à les lire au plutôt à les dévorer" (1: 232). Just what did Rousseau gain from this theologically rich diet of Oratorian and Jansenist pedagogy? What place did Père Lamy's teaching come to occupy in Rousseau's mature thought?

To answer these questions, I propose to give Père Lamy a more prominent place in the study of several pivotal issues in Rousseau's work: his moralism and Platonism, and, more specifically, his opposition of the ideas of *amour-propre* and the love of order. The re-orientation of *amour-propre* through the love of order lies not only at the heart of *Émile*, but at the center of everything Rousseau sought to accomplish as the Enlightenment's most severe moral critic. I submit that Père Lamy and Oratorian thinking about a properly ordered mind and soul provided essential resources for Rousseau's assertion that *amour-propre* could be re-directed. As I shall show, Oratorian thought on the problem of *amour-propre* and Original Sin stood in a post-Renaissance tradition of French moralism. With their concept of order, Oratorians such as Lamy appropriated the Platonic notion of erotic ascent in seeking a means to turn away from Original Sin and its profane manifestations (Levi 49–50, 126–41, 202–10). Placing Rousseau's argument about the love of order in the context of this tradition of discourse allows us to understand its specific Oratorian content.²

The case of Bernard Lamy remains one of scholarly neglect. Scholars have cited Rousseau's tribute, but they have scarcely probed the substance of what Rousseau drew from Lamy.³ Where they have mentioned Lamy at all, interpreters have usually just followed Rousseau's indication that Lamy helped him become acquainted with Malebranche, Descartes, Locke, Leibniz, and Plato — authors all deemed more worthy of extended commentary (1: 238).⁴ Nevertheless, the similarities between Lamy's

Entretiens sur les sciences and Rousseau's own work, especially *Émile*, suggest that much work remains to be done. Several ideas in *Émile* found direct support in remarks by Lamy: Rousseau's much-discussed notion that *Émile* should learn through confrontation with things and at remove from *le monde*; a cautionary statement that books alone could not amount to true learning; and the appearance of a "bon Ecclesiastique" part way through the story.⁵ These parallels establish the extent to which Rousseau kept Lamy's works close at hand while writing *Émile*. More significantly, however, they raise substantive questions about Rousseau's appeal to Oratorian thinking on the problem of *amour-propre*. If we peruse his statements on order found in the first section of the "Profession de foi du Vicaire savoyard," we can see that Rousseau's debt to Lamy and Platonism was more profound. In short, the Oratorians provided Rousseau with the very concept of order he needed to re-direct *amour-propre*.

***Amour-propre* and perfectibility: Rousseau's historicized moralism**

Rousseau scholars and students of the Enlightenment more generally have repeatedly noted the central place Rousseau gave to the problem of *amour-propre*. Ernst Cassirer long ago drew our attention to the manner in which Rousseau turned Pascal's Jansenist view of Original Sin and *amour-propre* into a problem of human social development. Reading Rousseau's discussion of *amour-propre* in Jansenist terms provides a rich understanding of everything he sought to criticize about the state of civilization in the eighteenth century, from the corruption induced by pride and social relations to the dependence on luxury, wealth, and hypocritical civilized behavior which appeared as a result. Cassirer rightly perceived that Rousseau had treated the arrival of *amour-propre* as something awakened in the process of mankind's social development, while for Pascal and the Jansenists it was a consequence of Original Sin.⁶ The difference here between Rousseau and the Jansenists becomes the salient issue. For Rousseau, the social, indeed historical, appearance of *amour-propre* permitted that it be either re-directed or even spur moral striving. The Jansenists' strict Augustinian position, by contrast, precluded such development in the very idea that pride is insuperable.

Rousseau clearly thought that moral progress was possible. With his indication of a human capacity for perfectibility in the *Discours sur les origines d'inégalité* and his statements in *Émile* about generalizing *amour-propre*, Rousseau saw a way out of the depravity into which he thought humankind had fallen. But, Rousseau rejected as morally corrupt the materialist and commercial notion of perfectibility outlined by Turgot, Voltaire or Diderot.⁷ Rousseau specified, however, that "tous les malheurs de

l'homme" could not be blamed on the capacity for perfectibility (3: 142, cf. 162). Rather, *amour-propre* bore the responsibility for moral decline. Since he never wished to suggest a return to a life on all fours, he needed a notion of moral progress — distinct from materialist notions of progress — to right the decline into which man had fallen.⁸ If *amour-propre* and its attendant evils arrived in the passage of history, man's future history could be the story of its re-orientation. Standing apart from the Jansenist's strict Augustinianism, the Oratorian notion of love of order as articulated by Lamy, based as it was on a Platonic notion of erotic ascent, offered him that vehicle. We may now turn to Père Lamy in order to place him in the context of seventeenth-century French moral thinking about *amour-propre* and to see how he developed the concept of order in his principal work, *Entretiens sur les sciences*.

Père Lamy

Bernard Lamy was born at Mans in 1640 and educated at the Oratorian college there. His chief influence was probably Malebranche, to whose philosophy he adhered in his views on occasionalism, Cartesian scientific method, and the pursuit of truth as requisite to proper order and morality. Called in 1673 to teach at the University of Angers, Lamy was censured soon thereafter for the Cartesianism in his courses. He would eventually return to Paris in 1686 after a virtual exile in the Dauphiné. In 1675, Lamy published his *L'Art du parler*, a work self-consciously styled as a counterpart to Arnauld and Nicole's *Grammaire du Port-Royal*. *L'Art du parler* eventually became one of the most important rhetoric manuals of the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries (France 5–6).⁹ Lamy conceived his major work, the *Entretiens sur les sciences*, during the 1670s, publishing the first edition in 1683 with subsequent revisions before the third edition of 1706, the text Rousseau knew.¹⁰

Lamy's friendship with Nicole and Arnauld did not prevent dispute over theology. Their use of the Platonic notion of ascent set the Oratorians apart from the Jansenists who, as stricter Augustinians, recognized no worldly escape from Original Sin. Both the Oratorians and the early Jansenists, especially Saint-Cyran, owed much of their theological outlook to Cardinal Pierre Bérulle, who had founded the French branch of the Oratorian order in 1611. Interestingly enough, Bérulle was among several early seventeenth-century moralists inclined toward Renaissance Platonism (Levi 136–41).¹¹ Taking cues directly from Ficino and Pico della Mirandola, Bérulle saw the Platonists as "les plus élevez entre les Payens en la cognoissance des choses sublimes." (Bérulle 3: sec. 4, qtd. in Levi 138). Bérulle upheld, however, an Augustinian emphasis on the impotence

of man without grace (Levi 137–39).¹² Oratorian views on grace and Original Sin similarly accepted an Augustinian understanding of the two loves, concupiscence and charity. As each group elaborated its theology, however, a gap widened between the Jansenist and the Oratorians on precisely the issue of achieving a true love of God in this world. In the hands of Pascal and Arnauld, later Jansenism developed a rigorist view of Original Sin which recognized no capacity to overcome the machinations of self-love. Christian love was purely God's love, *agape*, and therefore left no room to man to merit his salvation. By contrast, the Oratorians became more lax in permitting the possibility of true charity in this world. Their inclination to Platonic notion of *eros* bestowed on man a capacity to reach to the divine, to merit salvation, even as they disclaimed the Pelagian implications of this view.¹³ We may now turn to the *Entretiens*, first noting Lamy's Platonism and the general intent of the work, and then specifically moving to his use of the love of order as a key weapon against *amour-propre*.

Père Lamy and Plato and Augustine

Although he rarely mentioned Plato in the *Entretiens*, Lamy's thought bore a clear Platonic mark. Citing St. Augustine's approval, Lamy extolled Plato as the classical thinker most agreeable to Christianity (Lamy 250–51).¹⁴ He wrote, "on voit des choses dans Platon qui aprochent si fort de nôtre Religion," going on to praise his method of abstract sciences such as geometry as leading him from the world to spiritual things. "Aussi, a-t'il [Platon] parlé plus dignement de Dieu," Lamy continued,

de l'immortalité de l'Ame, de sa spiritualité....il inspire de l'amour pour la verité. La lecture de ses écrits élève l'Ame au dessus des choses sensibles. Il a sondé assez profondément le cœur de l'Homme. Il a connu que l'état où nous naissons, n'est point celui d'une Creature innocente : qu'une vie aussi miserable que la nôtre, est la peine de quelque peché : que Dieu étoit la fin de l'Homme, qu'il nous avoit fait pour lui être semblables. (250–51)¹⁵

Lamy's appreciation of Plato thus conjoined the Christian doctrine of Original Sin with the Hellenic notion of *homoiosis* by noting the aspiration to raise up to the divine. Numerous sixteenth- and seventeenth-century moralists understood Plato in such mixture with Augustinian terms. More immediately, they did so through appropriation of the Renaissance Platonic terms of Ficino's *Commentary* on the *Symposium*, which elided Plato's love of the Beautiful and the Good with the love of God (Levi 41, 45–49).¹⁶ Lamy commented that St. Augustine had not thought at all of God

until he studied the Platonists, from whom he became “capable de comprendre et de goûter les choses spirituelles” (48–49). In the eyes of the later Jansenists, Lamy’s stress on a Platonic Augustine could only bring Augustine dangerously close to Pelagianism and misrepresent the historical Augustine’s injunction about the inescapability of Original Sin (Nygren 519–21). This tension revealed itself fully in the disagreement between the Port-Royal and the Oratoire over the issue of salvation (Riley 6–10, 39–45).

Lamy’s stated purpose in writing the *Entretiens* was to create an educational treatise to teach young men to make “l’esprit juste, et le cœur droit.”¹⁷ The *Entretiens* took the form of dialogues between a teacher and two students, reminiscent of Platonic dialogues where the students, often initially representing competing views, were slowly convinced by the teacher. In the “Lettre préliminaire” and in the “Préface,” Lamy described the book as a first manual for young pupils to start their education on the right course, without being tempted or misled by something other than the search for truth. Lamy aimed to teach a proper method for learning the sciences. Nevertheless, he also endeavored to instruct young men in the proper way to live in order to make their scientific knowledge useful in “le [Dieu] connoître & pour le servir” (27). He stressed throughout that by learning the proper method for seeking the truth and by seeking that truth in study dedicated to the service of God, scientific study and religion will accord well. Rousseau appreciated precisely this idea when he claimed in the *Confessions* that he liked best books “qui mêlaient la dévotion aux sciences”(1: 232).

Thus the first “Entretien” began with an Augustinian and Platonic image: “nous sommes faits pour connaître la vérité ; mais le péché nous en a éloigné en nous éloignant de Dieu. Nous ne pouvons l’atteindre qu’avec des difficultés, d’autant plus grandes, que comme elle est le soleil de notre ame, sans elle nous sommes dans d’épaisses tenebres, qui nous dérobent la vue de chemin par où il faudrait marcher pour la trouver” (Lamy 37).¹⁸ Lamy thus accepted sin as the course of man’s fall from God and from truth, but unlike his Jansenist friends, he thought that the truth and the release of the soul from the obscurity of sin was attainable for the properly directed mind and will. In short, the right method for discovering the truth would lead to piety and away from Original Sin. Lamy asserted:

L’expérience fait connaître que Dieu ayant donné à l’âme les principes des sciences, et de l’esprit pour les comprendre, il n’est question que de faire un bon usage de ce secours, et de faire attention à ces premières vérités dont toutes les autres découlent comme de leur source. Il ne s’agit donc que de régler ce qu’on appelle les operations de l’esprit, apercevoir,

juger, raisonner, ranger nos pensées, nos jugements et nos raisonnements.
(65)

In this respect, Pascalian *divertissements* found in reflection “sans vocation de Dieu” could be surmounted by regulated thinking and acting (Lamy 41, 61). “Indifference” to the truth causes “disorder” and “disutility” in scientific study. The pursuit of truth for its own sake and not in the service of God was only vain curiosity (Lamy 73–74).¹⁹ In the *Entretiens*, Lamy thus aimed to present a practical manual by which readers could properly orient their minds and wills, achieving an uncorrupted love of God in his concept of a non-hypocritical *honnêteté* and in the concept of order.²⁰

Order and Providence in Lamy

Synonymous with the correct alignment of mind and will, the notion of order became a central moral concept for Lamy. The love of order supplied the means by which human beings could quell concupiscence. Following in the Augustinian mode of the Oratoire and the Jansenists, Lamy claimed that disorder resulted from man’s concupiscence, and that self-love became such a habit that disorder among men clearly reigned in the world (321, 325).²¹ But, as he reminded his readers, “nous avons promis dans le Baptême de combattre la concupiscence; nous sommes donc obligé [...] de résister à toutes les tentations qui nous détournent de l’ordre” (323). In Lamy’s view, such resistance was possible for the true Christian, whose hope for consolation in eternity was justified precisely by the regularity with which he practiced virtue (325–26).²² Love of order thus equaled the love of God.

Earlier in the text, Lamy asserted that order would also accord with nature, if human beings followed it correctly. Lamy stated that “la souveraine félicité” depended on God who gave it only “à ceux qui sont dans l’ordre, c’est-à-dire, à ceux qui vivent selon les Loix qu’il a voulu établir.” Moreover, this order emerged in human beings if they were mindful of nature. Indeed, Lamy imagined an essential concord between natural inclinations and God’s commandments: “or quand on est attentif aux inclinations de la nature, l’on ne peut ignorer ce que Dieu demande de nous. Parmi la corruption de l’homme on y aperçoit l’excellence de la nature [...] tous les sentiments qui sont véritablement de la nature, viennent de Dieu” (121–22).²³ This naturalization of Christianity — a feature often uniquely ascribed to the philosophes of several decades later — placed within human beings all requisite impulses to a divine order. With this move, Lamy manifestly shifted the focus from Original Sin, and utter dependence on God’s *agape*, to an aspiration to the divine contained within the idea of *eros*.

Immediately following this remarkable passage, Lamy engaged Nicole's elaboration of an *amour-propre éclairé* and charity, as well as, Pascal's dark prognosis that *amour-propre* works so subtly that it even hides us from ourselves (122–23).²⁴ For Pascal, virtue's incomprehensibility, forever hidden behind the veil of self-love, made its realization in this world impossible. Lamy disagreed with Pascal by affirming that the inclination to order and virtue could be found in man. According to Lamy, proper study brought man's heart and mind to his natural inclinations. Moreover, history demonstrated the operation of these natural sentiments, for alongside all the vices witnessed in the unfolding of time was the constant condemnation of those vices. History allowed men to see that they were made for eternity and that "ils ne devoient agir que pour le Ciel" (122).²⁵ As evidence of both natural vices and virtues, history played thus an essential educational and providential role.

In seeking order within the course of human life and in seeing it revealed in history, order became virtually synonymous with according one's will to that of God's Providence. In this respect, Lamy closely resembled Malebranche. Malebranche argued that order was the proper relation of everything in the universe as was willed generally by God, and man achieved true freedom by seeking to align himself with that order. God created the universe in conformity with His general will, thus entailing that He not be required to intervene particularly in human affairs; in other words, God did not save men through particular acts of grace (Riley 28–44, 102–7).²⁶ Because man has free-will, according to Malebranche, he is able to choose between concupiscence and order: "à l'égard de l'Ordre, il peut le suivre malgré les efforts de la concupiscence[...] il peut aussi préférer son bonheur actuel à ses devoirs, et tomber dans l'erreur et dans le dérèglement. Il peut en un mot mériter et démériter" (22).²⁷ Malebranche equated order with God's general will and *amour-propre* with the actions of particular wills. Affirming a similar view of order unfolding in God's plan, Lamy remarked,

[L]'ordre fait la beauté de l'univers. La justice de Dieu, qui est un de ses principaux attributs, n'est autre chose que la force avec laquelle il empêche qu'il ne soit impunément violé. Ce qui est si essentiel à Dieu, qu'il ne serait pas ce qu'il est, si par sa puissance et par sa sagesse il ne réglait même le dérèglement des hommes, s'en servant pour composer l'harmonie des siècles. (320)

Lamy and Malebranche opined not only that human beings possessed free-will, but that the choice between a regulated and unregulated life fit squarely within God's general Providence. In this manner, the Oratorian notion of

order stood within a constellation of ideas predicated on the capacity of human beings to achieve moral perfection and salvation. We may now turn to Rousseau to see how his statements in *Émile* on the love of order and the re-orientation of *amour-propre* become crystal clear if understood in terms of the tradition of French moralism and specifically in the Platonic terms of Oratorianism.

Rousseau: *amour-propre* and order in *Émile*

In the first part of the "Profession de foi," Rousseau attested to several convictions: the harmony of the universe, a general intelligence and will which has created it, the force of conscience to reveal morality, and the free-will in man to choose morally correct action. The concept of "order" formed the nucleus around which these elements cohered. For Rousseau order was the natural harmony of all particular relations in the world, and conscience "s'obstine à suivre l'ordre de la nature contre toutes les lois des hommes" (4: 566, 581–83). Although Rousseau alternated between "la nature," "l'Être Suprême," and "Dieu," the term order bound them conceptually. For Rousseau, disorder came from the operations of *amour-propre* in precisely the same manner it did for Lamy and Malebranche. Rousseau intoned,

Mais quand pour connaître ensuite ma place individuelle dans mon espèce, j'en considère les divers rangs, et les hommes qui les remplissent, que deviens-je ? Quel spectacle ! Où est l'ordre que j'avais observé ? Le tableau de la nature ne m'offrait qu'harmonie et proportions, celui du genre humain ne m'offre que confusion, désordre ! Le concert règne entre les éléments, et les hommes sont dans le cahos ! les animaux sont heureux, leur roi seul est misérable ! Ô ! sagesse, où sont tes lois ? Ô ! providence, est-ce ainsi que tu régis le monde ? Être bienfaisant qu'est devenu ton pouvoir ? Je vois le mal sur la terre. (4: 583)

Like Malebranche and Lamy, Rousseau refused to accept that the disorder of the world should make him doubt the general nature of Providence. He implored, "homme, ne cherche plus l'auteur du mal, cet auteur c'est toi-même." Moreover, the evil in social man contrasted sharply with the order of the universe: "le mal général ne peut être que dans le désordre, et je vois dans le système du monde un ordre qui ne se dément point" (4: 588, cf. 583–584). Thus, for Rousseau the decline brought by *amour-propre* mirrored the disorder in the world which the seventeenth-century moralists ascribed to Original Sin.

In the end, Rousseau averred that human beings have a choice between aligning themselves with order or succumbing to the passions in-

duced by *amour-propre*. He observed:

En méditant sur la nature de l'homme j'y crus découvrir deux principes distincts, dont l'un l'élevoit à l'étude des vérités éternelles, à l'amour de la justice et du beau moral, aux régions du monde intellectuel, dont la contemplation fait les délices du sage, et dont l'autre le ramenait basement en lui-même, l'asservissait à l'empire des sens, aux passions qui sont leurs ministres et contrariait par elles tout ce que lui inspirait le sentiment du premier (4: 583).

Rousseau attributed to the love of order the specific content of the study of eternal truth, the love of justice and moral beauty (Plato, *Symposium* 206c–212a).²⁸ Earlier in Book IV, he urged, “entendons l'amour-propre sur les autres êtres, nous le transformerons en vertu” (4: 547). Not obviating self-love but re-directing it became his objective. This task was one of overcoming particular interests: “plus on généralise cet intérêt, plus il devient équitable, et l'amour du genre humain n'est autre chose en nous que l'amour de la justice” (4: 547).²⁹ Speaking of his goal for *Émile*, he continued, “les vrais principes du juste, les vrais modèles du beau, tous les rapports moraux des êtres, toutes les idées de l'ordre se gravent dans son entendement.... Sans avoir éprouvé les passions humains il connoit leurs illusions et leur jeu” (4: 548) Rousseau thus imagined that attaining order, and consequently, justice among men, was a matter of generalizing *amour-propre*. Put another way, love functioned as the concrete manifestation of an act of will. Its moral worth depended on its object.³⁰ Rousseau's appeal to the language of love was no accident. Both the Christian and hellenic traditions conceived of man's relation to God or to the Good and the Beautiful in terms of love, whether it be God's *agape* or man's *eros*. *L'amour-propre* and *l'amour de l'ordre* stood in antithesis. With the import given to man freely directing his will to higher things, Rousseau's opposition operated within the *eros* tradition.

Rousseau's thinking on the resolution of *amour-propre* through the love of order regains much of its historical meaning when placed within the Oratorian context sketched above.³¹ Lamy resolved the problem posed by Original Sin — essentially that of the distinction between *amor sui* and *amor Dei* — through positing the possibility of an erotic ascent to a divine order, however Pelagian and heretical their appeal to platonic love remained. With their “dure théologie,” the stricter Jansenists offered Rousseau an argument about the moral decline of mankind (1: 242). But, since they refused to accept the worldly flight from sin, Rousseau instead found solace, and an argument, in the semi-Pelagian wings of the Oratorians who allowed this ascent through the revered terms of the love of order.³² The plot

structure of this theological framework enabled Rousseau to historicize the decline borne of *amour-propre* and admit the possibility of its re-orientation to a worthy end. Much as his contemporaries Voltaire and Turgot modified theological arguments about Providence into optimism about worldly progress and perfectibility, Rousseau likewise adapted the theological potential in the notions of order and perfectibility.³³ He sought, however, to impart to them a moral valuation irreconcilable with “des guirlandes de fleurs” with which the *philosophes* adorned their optimism.

James Mitchell Lee
University of Wisconsin-Madison

Notes

¹He further avowed that, at the time of writing the *Confessions*, he still re-read the work with pleasure (1: 238). Fortunately, there is a recent edition of Lamy’s treatise, edited by François Girbal. Based on the third edition of 1706, the last Lamy reworked himself, the edition contains a full scholarly apparatus with many useful notes.

²Maurizio Viroli’s thesis concerning the importance of order and disorder in Rousseau is here vindicated, however in a religious constellation of terms which Viroli ignores. Viroli indicates Lamy’s key pages on the concept of order, but fails to explore Lamy’s work. More astonishing, he relegates Malebranche to a mere footnote (29–30). Much more appreciative of the theological foundation of order is Iring Fetscher, who attends carefully to Malebranche’s elaboration of the ideas *amour-propre*, order, and Providence (50–62).

³Charles Hendel has offered one of the only sustained treatments of Lamy. In propounding the Platonic strain of moral transcendentalism in Rousseau’s writing, Hendel recognized that Lamy’s Oratorian Platonism was significant to Rousseau’s intellectual formation. Hendel’s limited historical sensibility allowed him to leave unexamined Rousseau’s more specifically theological appropriation of Lamy. (Hendel 1: 2–8, 2: 125). Also see Gouhier 133–53, who follows Hendel’s lead on Rousseau’s Platonism, all but omitting mention of Lamy.

⁴Discussion of Lamy’s influence on Rousseau has often been eclipsed by that of his co-religionist and friend, Nicholas Malebranche, who elaborated more systematically similar thoughts on love of order and Providence. See Bréhier 98–120 and Fetscher 50–62. Both authors use Lamy to link Rousseau to Malebranche or Malebranchism. Patrick Riley has advanced our understanding of the transformation of Malebranche’s notion of general Providence into a notion of general will.

⁵Lamy 65–67, 69, 169–95. Just as from Rousseau’s Vicaire, some of the teaching on the choice between self-love and the love of God issued from Lamy’s “bon Ecclesiastique.” And, we should recognize the general similarity in the transformative nature of education in *Émile*, Lamy’s *Entretiens*, Plato’s dialogues, or Fénelon’s *Télémaque*.

⁶In the same vein, Jean Starobinski writes, “Rousseau needs history, however, only in order to explain evil. [...] Historical change is the means by which mankind acquires guilt. Man is not vicious by nature; he becomes vicious” (21).

⁷A specific and contemporary example of this view may be seen in Turgot 1: 214–35.

⁸As Arthur Lovejoy has taught us, human perfectibility was precisely the concept which precluded Rousseau in the second *Discours* from being a (chronological) primitivist (34–35).

⁹Rousseau likewise esteemed *L’Art du parler* in speaking of his own formation and as a curricular suggestion in his early “Mémoire présenté à M. de Mably sur l’éducation de M. son fils” (4: 29). He also relied on it in the *Essai sur les origines des langues*. Receiving a formal education at an Oratorian collège, Montesquieu likewise owed some of his schooling to Lamy’s works.

¹⁰See Girbal 1–4, 9–12, 28–29, 32, 38–42, 59–63.

¹¹Throughout his book, Levi argues that a principal influence on the development of the French moralists’ view of the passions was a long-standing battle over neostoicism. In this debate, moralists reached back to the Florentine neo-Platonists, especially to Ficino’s *Commentary* on Plato’s *Symposium*, for their understanding of love and erotic ascent. The neostoic implication that correct judgments would remove the passions, did not sit well with Christian thinkers who, following Augustine, saw will as vital to the quality of moral actions.

¹²Through his student Saint-Cyran, Bérulle imparted several Platonic and Augustinian themes into Jansenist thought. On Platonism in early Jansenism, see Orcibal 2: 1077–85.

¹³According to Anders Nygren, the downward, theocentric *agape* was the uniquely Christian form of love, but, due to the persistent hellenism in Christianity, the upward, egocentric *eros* continued to appeal to many main-line Christian thinkers. While Plato remained for Nygren the paradigmatic *eros* thinker, Augustine offered a unique synthesis of *agape* and *eros* in the notion of *caritas*, a sythesis which ultimately privileged *agape* through its insistance on the inescapability of Original Sin. Nygren identifies Ficino as the chief Renaissance culprit in destroying the “*caritas-synthesis*” by reinfesting *agape* with pagan *eros* (166–82, 464–84, 519–21, 667–80,

passim). Levi argues that the Jansenists modified Augustine's theory of the two loves into a strict dichotomy between self-love and the love of God in order to enable the coherence of their austere view on efficacious grace (17–18, 225–27). Nygren shows that Augustine indeed conceived of two kinds of self-love, a purely egoistic one which competed with the love of God and a non-egoistic one which drove man to seek his self-love best within the love of God (532–48). In distinguishing between *amour-propre* and *amour de soi-même*, Malebranche (and Rousseau) held to Augustine's two types of *amor sui*, but the Platonic ascent implied in Malebranche's ideas of order and of relations of perfection entailed *eros*, not *agape* (Nygren *passim*, and Fetscher 51–54).

¹⁴No other pagan author merited such high esteem. Also see Hendel 5–6, 16–19.

¹⁵Lamy 250–51; see also Hendel 5. Lamy started his argument here by speaking of the ancient Egyptians who were said to provide a common source, the *Corpus hermeticum*, for the Jews and the Greeks. This view was common to neo-Platonized Christianity after Ficino. See Yates 4–5. Plato also enjoyed special status among pagan authors due to the long-held commonplace that he had been influenced by the Pentateuch (Levi 41).

¹⁶On Ficino's *Commentary*, see Festugière 21–39. For Plato's own statements on erotic ascent, see *Symposium* 206c–212a and *Phaedrus* 237–57.

¹⁷Lamy "Title" and *passim*. In a letter from 1736, Rousseau wrote that he was "travaillant à devenir honnête homme et bon Chrétien. Je me suis fait mon d'études propre a former mon cœur et a cultiver mon esprit" (au marquis de Bonac, *Corr.* 1: 42). See also Bréhier 101.

¹⁸See editors' note on Augustine's use of this image (Lamy 381).

¹⁹Recounting the history of philosophical and scientific thinking from the classical Greek philosophers to Descartes, Lamy prized Malebranche as the thinker best at according the sciences and religion (256, 262–63). See also Rousseau's protest in the "Replies" to the critics of the first *Discourse* that he was not anti-religious and wanted to unite science and religion (3: 43–44, and see the editors' note in Lamy 383).

²⁰Lamy went on at length about the importance of *honnêteté*, which he viewed as a unhyprocritical form of *civilité* (169–95). By contrast, Pascal saw no such virtuous worldly behavior as possible. On the levels of hypocrisy in words connoting polite behavior, see Chartier 71–109.

²¹Augustine himself defined virtue as an "order of love," equating it with charity and, of course, viewing it as corrupted by Original Sin (bk. 15 ch. 22 and bk. 19 ch. 13).

²²In a portion of the text from which Rousseau may have borrowed in writing the first *Discourse*, Lamy further stated that luxury caused disorder in

Republics and that poverty long conserved the order in Sparta (Lamy 326).

²³Lamy further commented that “les Législateurs” have proposed laws little different from those of Scripture. Thus, order contained also a legal or political aspect.

²⁴See Pascal 79–81. In addition to invoking Pascal, Lamy revealed his knowledge of Nicole’s essay “De la charité et de l’amour-propre.”

²⁵Rousseau indubitably knew this section well. In his early project on a “Chronologie universelle” (1737), he quoted a lengthy paragraph from Lamy which just precedes the passages I have cited in the text (5: 487–92). The paragraph appears on pages 489–90 in Rousseau and is drawn from p. 120 in Lamy. The Pléiade fails to indicate clearly the long Lamy quotation, despite Théophile Dufour’s attribution in his publication of the “Chronologie”. Rousseau’s statement that “L’histoire doit faire une des principales parties de l’étude d’un honnête homme” (5: 488) also bears Lamy’s mark, for the cultivation of a true “honnêteté” was a central aim of Lamy’s teaching.

²⁶See also Robinet.

²⁷See also Malebranche, *Traité de la nature et de la grace*. Malebranche proffered, “c’est principalement la connaissance et l’amour des rapports de perfection, ou des vérités pratiques, qui fait notre perfection. Appliquons-nous donc à connaître, à aimer, à suivre l’Ordre : travaillons à notre perfection” (*Traité de morale* 24). For commentary on Malebranche and order, see Fetscher 50–62; Riley 28–31, 51–52; and Hendel 38.

²⁸See also *Laws* 731e–733d.

²⁹As Riley’s work shows, the idea of generalizing *amour-propre* by according it to order has a full range of political implications which we have scarcely broached in this paper.

³⁰The moral worth of the object featured prominently in Augustine’s teaching on the will (Nygren 482–83).

³¹Comparing the research presented here with that of the recent work on Rousseau and Geneva by Helena Rosenblatt, we can see how easily multiple contexts, even multiple religious contexts, may serve to illuminate a complex thinker such as Rousseau.

³²At the moment *Émile* appeared, the issues of Augustinianism and Pelagianism remained vital. Both Jansenists and Jesuits alike sought to vilify the work, even as they used it in their attacks on each other. The issue of Original Sin lay at the center of Christophe de Beaumont’s condemnation. In his reply, Rousseau questioned Christophe de Beaumont’s eagerness to join the Jansenists in condemning him for representing ideas found in many earlier works (4: 932–39). On the controversy, see Cottret 301–19.

³³On the multivalent notion of divine Providence and its connection to his-

torical understanding, see Funkenstein.

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