

Rousseau and the Ancients
Rousseau et les Anciens

edited by
sous la direction de

Ruth Grant
&
Philip Stewart

Pensée Libre N° 8

**CANADIAN CATALOGING
IN PUBLICATION DATA**

Main entry under title:
Rousseau and the Ancients
(Pensée Libre: no. 8)
Text in French and English
Includes bibliographical references

ISBN 0-9693132-7-6

1. Rousseau, Jean-Jacques, 1712-1778. I. Grant, Ruth. II. Stewart, Philip. III. North American Association for the Study of Jean-Jacques Rousseau IV. Title: Rousseau and the Ancients. V. Series

**DONNÉES DE CATALOGAGE
AVANT LA PUBLICATION**

Vedette principale au titre:
Rousseau et les Anciens
(Pensée Libre: no. 8)
Texte en français et en anglais.
Comprend des références
bibliographiques

ISBN 0-9693132-7-6

1. Rousseau, Jean-Jacques, 1712-1778. I. Grant, Ruth. II. Stewart, Philip. III. Association nord-américaine des études Jean-Jacques Rousseau. IV. Titre : Rousseau et les Anciens. V. Collection

The publication of this volume was made possible by cooperation of the North American Association for the Study of Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Duke University and Wabash College.

Ouvrage publié grâce au concours d l'Association nord-américaine des études Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Duke University et Wabash College.

ISBN 0-9693132-7-6

© North American Association for the Study of Jean-Jacques Rousseau/
Association nord-américaine des études Jean-Jacques Rousseau, 2001.

Collection *Pensée Libre* dirigée par Melissa Butler
Pensée Libre series editor: Melissa Butler

Imprimé aux États Unis
Printed in the United States

Émile, or On Philosophy? Rousseau's Modified Platonism

Let us call your future beloved Sophie.
The name Sophie augurs well." (Émile
329)¹

If Rousseau and the Ancients is a broad topic, Rousseau and Plato is only slightly less so. Fortunately, a promising point of entry to the latter can be found in a much narrower comparison; namely, Book v of *Émile* with Book v of the *Republic*.

Book v of *Émile* treats the same three themes, in the same order, as Book v of the *Republic*, and so can rightly be seen as a response to it.² The response appears at first to be largely negative. Whereas Plato has Socrates argue for equal treatment and education of the sexes, Rousseau strenuously insists on differences. Whereas Socrates seems to advocate abolition of the family in favor of communism of women and children, Rousseau stresses the importance of romantic love and family to a good life. And whereas Socrates argues that the only solution to human ills would be rule by philosopher-kings, Rousseau suggests that a king who is wise would abdicate his throne (467); and rather than a philosopher-king it is a private woman of ordinary gifts who is to govern Émile (even as he commands her) and who stands as the greatest guarantor of his happiness. Yet despite initial appearances, Rousseau's response to Plato's "three waves" of paradox is not simply — in several ways, not *even* — negative. In fact, Book v of *Émile* is in important ways consistent with and even a development of the Platonic argument. First, though, a brief word on context is in order.

Émile's connection to the *Republic* is apparent from the start. Early in Book One Rousseau cites the *Republic* as *the* book on public education (in the process correcting those who take it to be a book about politics) and seems to offer his own work as a counterpart which treats "domestic education or the education of nature" rather than public education, that is, the education of a man rather than a citizen (40–41). In fact, though, *Émile* might better be seen less as a counterpart than as a rival or even a companion, for immediately after identifying its topic as domestic or natural education, Rousseau speaks of achieving "the double object we set for ourselves," by which he means educating a man to be both natural and social — which is to say that Émile's natural education is also, though admittedly

less so than Plato's, a public education. And even before Book One, in the Preface, the *Republic* is called to mind, though not by name. "In every sort of project there are two things to consider: first, the absolute goodness of the project; in the second place, the facility of execution" (34). These are the same two criteria established by Socrates in connection with the three waves in Book v of the *Republic* (450c–d) and systematically employed by him and his interlocutors throughout their consideration of those radical proposals. Or, rather, they are *nearly* the same. Where Rousseau speaks of facility of execution, Socrates had asked whether "the things said are *possible*"; and where Rousseau speaks of absolute goodness, Socrates had asked whether they "would be what is *best*" (emphases added). The similarity of the two sets of standards surely links the respective projects of the two works, or at least it links *Émile* with the *kallipolis* of the *Republic*'s middle books. But Rousseau's slight modification of the Socratic standards is as important as the similarity. In each case, Rousseau's revision shows his project to be less utopian than Plato's. "Facility of execution" presupposes possibility; and "absolute goodness" constitutes a more expansive and therefore a less difficult standard to meet than whether a thing is best (since a thing can be good without being best). Indeed, Rousseau's relative realism is seen in the extraordinary detail in which he outlines *Émile*'s education. Whereas Aristotle could charge the Platonic Socrates with failing to consider what his proposals would produce in actuality,³ Rousseau undertakes to do just that: "I have hence chosen to give myself an imaginary pupil [...]. This method appears to me useful to prevent an author who distrusts himself from getting lost in visions; for when he deviates from ordinary practice, he has only to make a test of his own practice on his pupil" (50–51). This is not to say that Rousseau intended this project to be adopted in practice. In the *Lettres écrites de la montagne*, Rousseau characterizes *Émile* as "a new system of education the plan of which I present for the study of the wise and not a method for fathers and mothers" (*OC* 3: 783). But it does suggest that Rousseau is in earnest when he claims that his project is in fact good and possible, if only in principle, and that it is so because it accords with nature — which is something that we cannot say with any confidence of Plato and the *Republic*'s city in speech.⁴ In the person of *Émile*, Rousseau means to show us the extraordinary possibility open to an ordinary mind.⁵

The three waves

It would be nice to know how Rousseau read Plato; whether, for example, he shared Montaigne's view (with which he must certainly have been familiar) that Plato propounded doctrines and proposals in which he did not believe.⁶ The difficulty of knowing how Rousseau read Plato is

increased by Rousseau's own art of writing: if he did, say, share Montaigne's skepticism about Plato, prudence might well have kept him from saying so.⁷ But we do at least know that Rousseau read Plato unconventionally, as seen in his correction, cited above, of those who read the *Republic* as a political work. And we certainly know that he read Plato carefully; a close reading of almost any of Rousseau's major works demonstrates that.⁸ So whatever he thought of Plato's seriousness regarding equal treatment and education of the sexes (the first wave), communism of women and children (the second wave), and rule by philosophers (the third wave) in a real city, he also knew that the city in speech was created as a sort of soul writ large and that what is said about the city is supposed to be true in some sense of the soul — indeed, that at least some of what is said of the city may be true *only* of the soul.⁹ And it is here, where what is said of the city is applied to the soul, that we discover significant affinities between *Émile's* Book v and that of the *Republic*.

The facility with which we can extract a teaching regarding the soul varies among the three waves, but there can be little doubt that each of the waves carries such a teaching: the city in speech, after all, is said in the end to be a pattern for the soul (592b), and so what is ostensibly said to be necessary for the noble and fair city has some bearing on what is necessary for the noble and fair soul.¹⁰ More specifically, each wave says something about the constitution and orientation of what emerges as the most noble and fair of souls, that is, the philosopher's soul. It has been reasonably suggested that the analogue of the first wave in the soul is a kind of spiritual bisexuality: the equal treatment and education of the sexes, applied by analogy to the soul, comes to mean equal development and nurture of masculine and feminine elements or characteristics or capacities.¹¹ As for the second wave, it would seem to express the necessity of generalizing and elevating one's eros. Although there is no obvious analogue of communism of women and children within the soul, the need to overcome a narrow and exclusive love of one's own and attach one's eros to something more elevated and non-exclusive than a particular corporeal being is decisive among the requirements for the philosophic soul as it is presented in the *Republic*. The third wave, finally, is the easiest to apply: for the rule of philosophers over the city we need only read rule by the philosophic part over the rest of the soul. With apologies for this cursory treatment of the three waves, let us now look for these same themes in *Émile*. They are indeed there to be found. (They are even found in the same order.) And they are there because *Émile*, like the *Republic*, speaks to the development of the philosophic soul.

The first wave

Rousseau certainly identifies various mental capacities as belonging more to one sex than to the other. The question then arises: does he believe that the full development of one's humanity depends upon developing equally elements associated with both sexes? One is tempted to say no, for he counts on the uneven development within man and woman as the very grounds of their mutual spiritual complementarity: men and women in whom the psychic strengths of each sex were fully developed would have less need for one another and hence a weaker bond. One might say that for Rousseau full humanity is achievable not by the individual (or at least not by the ordinary individual) but rather by the "moral person" that is created by the union of separate and incomplete individuals (377). In fact, though, Rousseau does suggest that the full development of one's humanity requires the cultivation of both male and female characteristics. This becomes clear upon considering just what, or who, constitutes full humanity for Rousseau.

The person who most represents full humanity in Rousseau's works is Rousseau himself, at least as described in his final autobiographical writings, and especially the *Reveries of the Solitary Walker*. There Rousseau presents himself as one who exercises the highest or most distinctively human capacities largely unimpeded by the intellectually and psychologically crippling *amour-propre* that taints almost everyone and everything human. And he also presents himself there, as in all his autobiographical writings, as spiritually bisexual, as one who has the strengths of both sexes — as a *person* more than just a man. Space constraints must keep us from exploring the full meaning of Rousseau's bisexuality; and in any case the issue has been well treated elsewhere.¹² But the point of greatest relevance to the present inquiry is that his bisexuality is essential to his activity as a philosopher.¹³ If Rousseau seems to assign philosophy to the male brain, so to speak, that is hardly a compliment to men: more often than not "philosophy" refers to abstruse and arid speculation or else simple sophistry (indeed, to my knowledge "philosophy" *never* signifies something that is simply praiseworthy for Rousseau unless it is preceded by a modifier such as "true"¹⁴). So when he says that "Men will philosophize about the human heart better than she ["woman"] does (*Émile* 387)," we know better than to take that as a statement of the sufficiency of masculine mental characteristics for an adequate philosophic understanding of things. And indeed, the lines that immediately follow, including the remainder of the sentence of which the line just quoted is only a part, assert quite clearly that understanding the human heart — that the practice of *Rousseauan* philosophy —

requires a marriage of masculine and feminine strengths. Consider the larger passage:

Men will philosophize about the human heart better than she does; but she will read in men's hearts better than they do. It is for women to discover experimental morality, so to speak, and for us to reduce it to a system. Woman has more wit, man more genius; woman observes, and man reasons. *From this conjunction results the clearest insight and the most complete science regarding itself that the human mind can acquire — in a word, the surest knowledge of oneself and others available to our species.* And this is how art can constantly tend to the perfection of the instrument given by nature. (387, emphasis added)

As Schwartz observes, *Émile* itself means to provide just this “clearest insight and [...] most complete science regarding [...] the human mind” (172). Which is to say that its author relies on the combined mental strengths of both men and women.¹⁵

But enough about the author; what about the hero? Does *Émile* himself, who represents the fullest humanity attainable by a man of ordinary gifts, attain anything like the bisexuality of his creator and governor? It seems probable that to a degree, at least, he does. Undoubtedly the “conjunction” of which Rousseau speaks consists in the first instance in the conjunction, the marriage, of Sophie and *Émile*, and does not refer to anything internal to *Émile*; and the mention of “art” in the closing line refers to the social artifice of marriage. But it is also possible that the art referred to is the art of pedagogy, and it seems probable that something of this conjunction does take place within *Émile* — as indeed it must, if and to the extent that he ever successfully philosophizes.

Émile is no Rousseau. His “ordinary mind” (245) presumably precludes his joining the ranks of great philosophers. But he does receive something like a philosophic education. His final journey with his governor, which might seem to be only a political education, begins with a trip “back to the state of nature” in order to examine such questions as whether men are born enslaved or free and whether they are naturally social (459); and it involves an effort “to know men in general” (451) and the discovery (discovery, not mere receipt) of the principles of political right.¹⁶ (Nor should we forget his earlier study of history, which Rousseau likens to “a course in practical philosophy” (242).) Indeed, the entirety of his education preserves or inculcates such extraordinary qualities as to suggest that he will be, if not a great philosopher, a true one — even according to the conventional sense of that term (i.e., one who engages in high-level theoretical activity). Three of these qualities seem to me to form the core of a philosophic mind.

First, his education teaches him how to think — how to reason on his own from facts which he himself has observed. Second, it preserves him from distorting prejudice, so that his observation and reasoning will be true. And third, and probably least widely noticed, it encourages his natural curiosity until it grows into an ardor to know. These three characteristics, combined with the goodness that is preserved in *Émile* and the virtue that he acquires, cover most, and arguably all, of the traits said in the *Republic* to constitute the elements of a philosophic nature.¹⁷ Surely *Émile* remains less bisexual, more strictly masculine in his mental profile, than Rousseau. But needing or loving a woman does not indicate that a man lacks the mental endowment to be a philosopher. Rousseau himself, after all, fell in love with his own Sophie (d'Houdetot) while at the peak of his powers. And Wolmar, a true philosopher particularly notable for his powers and love of observation, traits identified as feminine by Rousseau, came to be dependent on Julie.¹⁸ And whether or not *Émile* ever does become a philosopher, it remains true that the education he receives opens the door to philosophy and encourages the capable student to walk through it.

This last point is crucial and deserves development. That Rousseau's pedagogy purports to teach the pupil how to think for himself and that it purports to keep him free of prejudice is obvious. But even if these ends are accomplished, *Émile* would not thereby be a philosopher in the conventional or Platonic understanding of that term,¹⁹ notwithstanding the fact that he would have avoided ever being imprisoned in the *Republic's* famous cave (514a–517c). To be a philosopher requires, additionally, philosophic eros or an ardent desire for the truth. If we can show that *Émile's* education instills or encourages this final element we will have established that it is an education toward, and perhaps even *in*, philosophy, and we will thus have exposed the core of the kinship between *Émile* and the *Republic*.

The second wave

My interpretation of Plato's second wave as applied to the soul is that it signifies the need to detach one's eros from the private and exclusive and redirect it upward toward that which is common or general — toward knowledge of the *ideas*. (This process finds its most succinct expression in Diotima's ladder of love in the *Symposium*, where the final object of eros is the *idea* of beauty.) Does the education outlined in *Émile* aim at something comparable? In fact it does. To be sure, the sublimation of eros adumbrated in *Émile* is not as comprehensive as that of which Diotima speaks — *Émile's* eros does not become *exclusively* philosophic (neither did Rousseau's, as mentioned above) — but it does become at least partly philosophic. *Émile* develops an "ardor to know" (167) which ultimately incorporates objects

of philosophic inquiry unrelated to any personal interest other than the pleasure of knowing.

This ardor is not originally philosophic. It is born of strictly utilitarian concerns. There is an ardor to know [...] which is born of a curiosity natural to man concerning all that might have a connection, close or distant, with his interests. The innate desire for well-being and the impossibility of fully satisfying this desire make him constantly seek for new means of contributing to it. This is the first principle of curiosity, a principle natural to the human heart, but one which develops only in proportion to our passions and our enlightenment. (167)

But utilitarian concerns ultimately give way to an ardor to know simply for the pleasure of knowing. *Émile* becomes curious about all that he sees (and doesn't see). Even before reaching adolescence his curiosity has become general, as seen, for example, when he dines at an opulent home. Amid a potentially intoxicating "apparatus of pleasure and festivity" the tutor puts a question to the pupil: "Through how many hands would you estimate that all you see on this table has passed before getting here?" (190–91). Whereupon *Émile* instantly plunges into meditation, a meditation driven by an intense and self-forgetting curiosity; he even forgets to eat and drink. This particular meditation may not rise to the level of philosophy. But in its character and motive it is perhaps on the way to philosophy: *Émile* "burns" to know something that is not connected to any personal interest. (Nor is this example unique. We are told that *Émile*'s education is designed to give him "the taste for reflection and meditation" (202), and by the time he reaches adolescence he has become, at least compared to others his age, "a contemplative, a philosopher, a veritable theologian" (315).) And so it is with some justice that Rousseau says of his no longer hungry (for food) pupil that "he is all alone philosophizing for himself in his corner."

The process whereby an originally utilitarian curiosity evolves into a more disinterested ardor to know is an interesting and important matter to which we can hardly hope to do justice here. It must suffice to point to what seems to be the key, namely, the distinctively (perhaps definitively) human "desire to extend our being." This, Rousseau tells us, is what "takes us outside of ourselves and causes us to leap," in thought and in exploration, "as far as is possible for us" (168). This desire may or may not be natural, depending on whether one accepts the understanding of nature offered in the second *Discourse* (that is, the natural as the original, with "original" meaning "savage") or the one that informs *Émile* (that is, the natural as the original, with "original" defined as the non-corrupt).²⁰ But it is the motive force behind two phenomena which signify naturalness, namely,

the pity of social men (*Émile* 223) and the expansive reveries of Rousseau himself (*Reveries*, Fifth Walk). And whether it is natural or not, it is certainly a part of “the present nature of man” (Rousseau, second *Discourse* 13). Which is why Rousseau counts on our being able to make our own students curious, despite their not having had the extraordinary upbringing of *Émile*: “Make your pupil attentive to the phenomena of nature. Soon you will make him curious” (168).

But curiosity, no matter how intense, does not in itself constitute philosophic eros — at least not as Plato presents it, and not as Rousseau presents it either. Philosophic eros, being eros, longs for the beautiful. This is illustrated most clearly in the *Symposium*, but it is discernable in the *Republic* as well, where true philosophers, in contradistinction to “the lovers of hearing and the lovers of sight,” are described as “those who are able to approach the beautiful itself and see it by itself” (476b). For the education depicted in *Émile* to be an education in or toward philosophy it must sublimate the pupil’s eros: it must lead him to philosophy for the sake of satisfying his longing for beauty. And so it does. Upon reaching adolescence *Émile* becomes curious about beautiful things. He is curious about them *because* they are beautiful. (316) But his governor is not content to leave the matter rest at curiosity. He “teach[es] him to feel and to *love* the beautiful of all sorts” (344; emphasis added). Given that this line appears almost immediately after mention of the *Symposium*, it is not unlikely that among “all sorts” of the beautiful Rousseau means to include objects of philosophic inquiry.²¹ And indeed, the second section of Book v, the section in which *Émile*’s romance is related as well as the section which corresponds structurally to the *Republic*’s presentation of the second wave, culminates in this perfect — and perfectly Platonic — expression of philosophic eros: “Do you want, then, to live happily and wisely? Attach your heart only to imperishable beauty” (446). Reasonable people might disagree as to what Rousseau means by “imperishable beauty.” The immediate context might suggest that it refers to virtue; and indeed, Rousseau does speak elsewhere of the beauty of virtue (397). But only a page after the injunction to love only imperishable beauty he tells *Émile* that “Except for the single Being existing by itself, there is nothing beautiful except that which is not” (447). Thus does he attempt to direct at least some of *Émile*’s eros beyond the realm of sensual objects — thus does he endorse the second wave — and in the most appropriate of places.²²

The third wave

Much of what has already been said should suffice to demonstrate

that Rousseau is in agreement with, and that *Émile's* education aims at accomplishing, the third wave's teaching when applied to the soul. There can be no doubt that *Émile's* education leads him to be governed by wisdom and the love of wisdom. (True, there is no distinct "wisdom-loving" part of the soul to be accorded rule, as there is in the *Republic* [581b], but Rousseau does present the healthy soul as an internally harmonious soul, which puts him in accord with the corresponding Platonic portrait.) But if the third wave is where Rousseau's agreement with Plato is most obvious, it is also where his departure from Plato is most discernable. Whereas for Plato there seems to be no true wisdom or even love of wisdom short of that which belongs to the philosopher (understanding by that term one who lives the theoretical life), for Rousseau, as noted above, a kind of wisdom and "true philosophy" is available to those who never philosophize; nor does one need extraordinary natural gifts to ascend to what Plato (and we) call philosophy (to be a *great* philosopher, yes; but to be simply a philosopher, no).

In practice Rousseau tends to be an elitist. This is evident in his politics, where his advocacy of popular sovereignty is tempered by his equally firm insistence that the people need to be led by an excellent few (at first by a legislator and later by wise ministers). And it is evident in his effort to discourage the many from pursuing science and philosophy. In this Rousseau is close to Plato. But *in principle* Rousseau is democratic in important ways. Even if *Émile* is not capable of attaining the heights of a Bacon or Descartes — Rousseau is not so democratic as to deny variable innate capacities or their significance — he *is* capable of a kind of wisdom and philosophy. In fact, he is capable of *two* kinds of wisdom and philosophy. First, by virtue of an education that teaches him how to think, shields him from prejudice, and preserves his natural goodness by preventing the growth of corrupt *amour-propre*, *Émile* attains a wisdom or "true philosophy" that consists in listening to his conscience and respecting the limits of the human condition. No such scenario appears in Plato, where the possibility of altogether avoiding the cave is never raised. And, second, the latter parts of his education, the parts recounted in Book v, lead him toward what even Plato would call wisdom and philosophy. As I have shown, *Émile's* education encourages him (successfully, I think) to philosophize and, through his philosophizing, to know "men in general" and to discover the principles of political right.

This democratic project is not a practical one. *Émile* is a work that explores human nature by discovering the limits of the possible, not the practicable. The success of *Émile's* education has depended on the full-time devotion of a great philosopher over more than twenty years, not to

mention the cooperation of many others, from Robert the gardener to Sophie's parents. And so what is possible for *Émile* — what is possible for an ordinary man *in principle* — remains out of reach in practice. And not only out of reach, but dangerous to reach for, at least where the philosophic education of Book v is concerned. Which is perhaps why Rousseau made that philosophic education less than easy for us to see.

Laurence D. Cooper
Carleton College

Notes

¹All page references to *Émile* refer to the Allan Bloom translation. Unless otherwise noted, references to Rousseau's other works are to *CW*.

²The correspondence between the respective Books v was observed over thirty years ago by Roger Masters but to my knowledge has not subsequently been adequately developed. See *The Political Philosophy of Rousseau* 99–100, n. 162. This observation appears amid a larger and worthwhile discussion of “The *Émile* as Rousseau's Answer to Plato's *Republic*” (98–105).

³That the *Republic*'s abolition of private property and privacy for the guardians “is not fine would become evident above all if one could see such a regime actually being instituted” (*Politics* 1264a5–7).”

⁴This is no place to get into the debate over Plato's earnestness regarding the *kallipolis*. Suffice it to say that he has Socrates himself raise serious doubts as to the possibility and goodness of the city, and that these doubts are not all answered very convincingly.

⁵Interestingly, after moderating Socrates' standards in the ways indicated above, Rousseau returns to the Socratic standard at the conclusion of his preface: “It is enough for me that wherever men are born, what I propose can be done with them; and that, having done with them what I propose, what is best both for themselves and for others will have been done” (35). By speaking of possibility rather than facility of execution he implicitly allows for the extreme difficulty of executing his project. By claiming that it is “best” he underscores its goodness and thus puts it in direct competition with the *Republic*.

⁶Montaigne, himself a skeptic and a believer that in skepticism lay the grounds of a more humane politics, viewed Plato as a skeptic who hid his skepticism behind what was intended as a salutary dogmatism. See, for example, pages 370–80 of his “Apology for Raymond Sebond.” Rousseau's frequent references to the *Essays* show that he knew the book well.

⁷For an excellent treatment of Rousseau's respect for salutary belief and consequent opposition to the espousal of skepticism, see Orwin.

⁸Those who desire more concrete evidence of Rousseau's rigor in reading Plato may consult Silverthorne. And of course one may consult any of a number of scholarly analyses of Plato's influence on Rousseau; for a list of some of the more important of these, see Melzer 24 n. 12.

⁹The city/soul analogy is launched at 368d–369b, where the (first) city is created expressly for the purpose of considering the relative merits of justice and injustice in and for the soul. Among the things postulated of the (noble and fair) city which may be true only of the (noble and fair) soul is the possibility of its existence (592b).

¹⁰In the case of the first and third waves one can reasonably extract a teaching by simply applying the city/soul analogy — that is, by translating what is said about the city's parts into a teaching about the soul's corresponding parts. In the case of the second wave, where the analogy may not hold, extracting a teaching about the soul is not quite so simple; but it is not too difficult, either, as we shall presently see.

¹¹See Bloom, "Interpretive Essay" to Plato 383–84; Hyland; and Craig.

¹²See Schwartz 7, 107–8, and 171–72 n. 60.

¹³Rousseau's self-depiction in his final autobiographical writings (the *Reveries*, *Dialogues*, and the latter part of the *Confessions*) is unlike any traditional notion of the philosopher. As Christopher Kelly puts it, "he paints a picture of himself as a dreamer rather than a thinker" (73). But he is a dreamer who also thinks. The *Reveries*, for example, contain sophisticated and subtle discourses, such as the Fourth Walk's examination of truth and lying. And even when Rousseau paints himself as a dreamer, it is only the subject of the picture who dreams; Rousseau as painter manifestly thinks.

¹⁴By "true philosophy" Rousseau refers to something like intellectual integrity and clarity, and not necessarily to what we, or what Plato, would designate by that term. Those who are considered by common consent to be great philosophers are generally identified by Rousseau not as philosophers but as "sublime geniuses" (preface to *Narcissus* 195) or "celestial intellects" (*Final Reply* 111) or "Preceptors of the human Race" (first *Discourse* 21); and even these terms are used only so long as he is not speaking of their deleterious moral or political influence. Rousseau's distinction between (the disparagingly used) "philosophy" and "philosopher" on the one hand and "true philosophy" or "true philosopher" on the other is maintained throughout all his major works. It is most decisively pronounced in the first *Discourse* and the preface to *Narcissus* 192–95.

¹⁵Note that this passage, which best expresses Rousseau's view of the philosophic mind as a bisexual mind, appears in the first of Book v's three sec-

tions: Rousseau's endorsement of the first wave appears in the section that corresponds structurally to the *Republic's* presentation of the first wave.

¹⁶This of course occurs during the two-year interlude between his romance and marriage. That *Émile's* explorations constitute a philosophic exercise is perhaps obscured by the fact that we recognize this section as a rehearsal of the *Social Contract*, a book which, though available to us, is not available to *Émile* — which is to say that where we need only to receive passively, *Émile* needs to explore actively. The philosophic nature of his explorations is also indicated by the title of this section of the book (“Des Voyages”) and by Rousseau's two comparisons of his and *Émile's* traveling to that of Plato and Pythagoras (412 and 454; Thales is also included in the first reference). *Émile's* journeying and his active pursuit of the truth (he has a guide but no preceptor) are consistent with the principles of Platonic philosophic education. See Socrates' characterization of philosophic education at 518d. Also see Plato's disavowal of teaching by precept at “Seventh Letter” 341b–d.

¹⁷These elements are laid out two or three times (depending on how one counts) in Book vi. The first of the lists, which is also the most expansive, appears at 485a–486d. Its nine elements are: love of knowledge of everything that truly *is*, dislike of falsehood, moderation, magnificence, fearlessness regarding death, justice (and gentleness), skill at learning, good memory, and measure and charm (or love of proportions and gracefulness).

¹⁸For a characterization of Wolmar as philosopher and passionate observer, see *Julie, or the New Heloise* 402–4.

¹⁹These two attainments *would* qualify the pupil as a true philosopher in *Rousseau's* sense; as noted above, “true philosophy” as Rousseau uses that term does not presuppose theoretical desire or expertise. Rousseau's true philosopher is one who loves a wisdom that consists in knowing and remaining within the limits of the possible rather than knowing or seeking to know the character of the whole; he is one who lives by the original, pre-Socratic understanding of the inscription on the temple of Delphi. Is it possible to be a “true philosopher” in both Rousseau's and the more conventional (and Platonic) sense of the term? Indeed. Rousseau himself qualifies, as do some others, both real and fictional, including to an extent (or so I am arguing) *Émile*. In fact, Rousseau implies that to be a true philosopher in the *conventional* sense requires that one first be a true philosopher in the *Rousseauan* sense; without that, vanity will cause one to move further from the truth even as one purports to pursue it (204). Despite the different vocabulary, Rousseau on this point is close to Plato, who suggests that the proper exercise of the highest mental capacities requires that the vicious part of one's nature have been “trimmed in earliest childhood” (519a).

²⁰For their respective uses of "nature," see the preface of the second *Discourse*, wherein nature is clearly identified with savage origins, and *Émile* 39, where nature and origins are defined in such a way as to include certain historical acquisitions.

²¹It should be noted that Rousseau fears that the *Symposium* (along with the fourth book of the *Aeneid* and Tibullus) will prove too moving for his young student and thus lead him astray. But rather than an indication that he means to steer *Émile* away from philosophy, this is more likely a reflection of *Émile*'s tender age. The passage appears in Book IV, whereas it is not until Book V that *Émile*'s education becomes oriented toward philosophy.

²²Rousseau's statement also indicates the limits of his similarity to Plato, or perhaps better put, his modification of Platonism. Like Plato, he suggests that the greatest beauty is not to be found before our eyes. But unlike Plato, who presents the *ideas* as being *more* real than the visible world, Rousseau indicates that that which is most beautiful is not real at all; for the *ideas* he substitutes ideals.

Works Cited

- Craig, Leon Harold. *The War Lover: a study of Plato's "Republic."* Toronto: U of Toronto P, 1994.
- Hyland, Drew. "Plato's Three Waves and the Question of Utopia." *Interpretation* 18 (1990): 91-109.
- Kelly, Christopher. *Rousseau's Exemplary Life: the "Confessions" as political philosophy.* Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1987.
- Masters, Roger. *The Political Philosophy of Rousseau.* Princeton: Princeton UP, 1968.
- Melzer, Arthur M. *The Natural Goodness of Man: on the system of Rousseau's thought* Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1990.
- Montaigne. "Apology for Raymond Sebond." *The Complete Essays of Montaigne.* Trans. Donald M. Frame. Stanford. Stanford UP, 1965.
- Orwin, Clifford. "Rousseau's Socratism." *Journal of Politics* 60 (1998): 174-87.
- Plato. *The Republic of Plato.* Trans. Allan Bloom. New York: Basic Books 1968.
- Rousseau, Jean-Jacques. *Émile.* Trans. Allan Bloom. New York: Basic Books, 1979.
- Schwartz, Joel. *The Sexual Politics of Jean-Jacques Rousseau.* Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1984.
- Silverthorne, M. J. "Rousseau's Plato." *SVEC* 116 (1973).