

Discussing human connectivity in Rousseau as a pedagogical issue*

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Abstract

Although the title of this article may evoke a broad analysis of human relations, the text is limited to the analysis of the human connectivity in the political and pedagogical theory of Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778). Hereby I defend that the capacity for human connection and relationship can be well used for moral improvement, for social and even for political ends - idea well explored in the book *Emile or on education*, as well as on *Julie or the New Heloise*, both written by the philosopher of Geneva. This perspective can be spotted and categorized through the 'pedagogical scenes' validated by the tutor for his student. Those 'scenes' provide practical experiences and human connections enough to expand friendship and social relations in order to educate the *amour-propre*. Hence the reason for an education full of human connectivity and situations in which this potential can be developed as much as possible is providential. This is to ensure a moral formation that can prepare the individual for a virtuous coexistence - which is possible only if one has experienced significant situations capable of internalizing this feeling enough to become a norm, just as it has happened to Emile and to Julie: two key characters to understand Rousseau's pedagogy of friendship and personal relations.

Keywords

Rousseau - Friendship - Human relations - Education of the *amour-propre*.

Although the title may evoke a broad analysis of human relations, this text is limited to discussing the importance of human connectivity as a pedagogical issue in the political and educational theory elaborated by Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778). And in considering that the idea is best put forward in the book *Emile or on education*, and to a certain extent in the book *Julie or the New Heloise*, both written by the philosopher of Geneva, this article tries to defend that human connection and relationship can be

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well used for moral, social, and even political purposes, if well conducted – i.e. the issue is pedagogical.²

First of all, it is worth mentioning that it is not easy to rely on Rousseau when the subject is about human relations or sociability in a broad sense of the term. Starting with his personal life, the Genevan philosopher has never been an example of kindness or of a long-lasting friendly relationship. His disagreements with Voltaire, Hume, and so many others of his inner circle of personal relations are well known. Even with Diderot, his best friend, Rousseau ends in quarrel due to the difference of opinion about intellectual independence, as well as to some details in moral and musical issues. According to Citton (2009), this “miserable querelle” broke a notorious and fruitful friendship, preventing a prosperous joint production of these two icons of nineteenth-century philosophy. His long relationship with his wife Thérèse de Levasseur (or Marie-Thérèse Le Vasseur) was perhaps only possible because, even with the intellectual and social abyss between them, Thérèse was an attentive, caring and affectionate companion. In the way Rousseau portrays his spouse, in his *Confessions*, it is not hard to figure that since she was illiterate she never contradicted him, but served him sweetly, providing a puerile environment, close to the primitive condition.

It seems that Rousseau does not criticize only a specific form of society, or another, but the social organization in itself. Which makes him a kind of an “apostle of solitude” (WARNER, 2015, p. 11), particularly when his personal life is considered, as well as his works praising a lonely existence. However, since the human condition is that of life in society, the best way to remedy evil is in the very poison that causes the disease (PAIVA, 2007), i.e. in the act of improving human relations in order to foster an affective constitution of the social body. Even though the social reality is degenerate – mostly by the rise of malignant *amour-propre* –, the path of healing is not, against all odds, through isolation and social avoidance. By saying that, the pedagogical challenge is posed, which is to educate the *amour-propre* in its positive potential (NEUHOUSER, 2013). Since this passion cannot be extinguished, maybe it is possible to channel its energy into a dimension of human respect and dignity. On that, Rousseau may be a good reference and his philosophy a good medicine.

Although Rousseau has not theorized specifically about human relations, and his writings have exalted all kinds of independency, self-sufficiency and freedom, a clamor for sociability is also clear in his political works, such as in his *Social Contract*; as well as in his autobiographical works. The opening of the *Reveries of a Solitary Walker*, is punctuated by a lamentation against those who “forced” the “most sociable of men” to live as an outlaw, far from social life (ROUSSEAU, 1959, p. 995). This outstanding paradox begins to dissipate when we come to understand that there is in Rousseau’s thought an ontological bipolarity that ends up supporting a bipolar anthropological reading. The passages of the *Second discourse* in which Rousseau exalts the primitive conditions of

2- Given the complexity of Rousseau’s work, and the diversity of interpretations and translations, we limit ourselves to referring the *Oeuvres complètes*, Pléiade’s edition. In order to facilitate the reading of the Portuguese-speaking scholars, in most cases we include in the references the location in the Portuguese translations of *Emílio*, and *Júlia*. The *Discourse on the Origin and Basis of Inequality Among Men* will be abbreviated for *Second Discourse* and its reference will follow the order “author: year” just like the other works that support the argumentation raised here.

the natural man are well known, in which he comments poetically about enjoyment of freedom and self-sufficiency. Though, in the Chapter VIII of the *Social Contract*, the author writes about the civil state in such exalted rhetoric that turns the point into another direction, stating that man “would be bound to bless continually the happy moment that took him from it forever, and out of a dull and limited animal made a thinking being, a man” (ROUSSEAU, 1964b, p. 364). In the first case, there is no sociability that leads to a participatory, fractional experience. Man is a unity in such a state, and any feeling is prone to self-protection or possibly to help the species in a dangerous condition that requires momentary cooperation. This can possibly be taken as human bonds, but never as civil bonds – which is the main topic of the latter: bonds to make a virtuous man, as part of a nation constituted contractually, a homeland. More than that, in his *Political Fragments*, Rousseau makes it very clear that love for humanity generates virtuous actions, such as sweetness, moderation, indulgence and even charity, but never courage and heroism – which are feelings of love for the fatherland (ROUSSEAU, 1964b).

Therefore, the human *connectivity* is, in the perspective of this paradox (or bipolarity), a significant conjunction between the individual subject and the social order. Although it is a social feeling *par excellence*, it is present in the natural state when a furtive connection for reproduction occurs, and also when sympathy drives one to help the other, out of the pity impulse (*pitié*). Still not a freewill move but an instinctive animal action that is, according to Rousseau (ROUSSEAU, 1999), overlapped by the course of events in which man felt a free agent, able to escape the rule prescribed by Nature by his own choice. Hence, Rousseau explains, in the *Second Discourse*, how the multiplication of ideas and the development of new communicative signs propitiated a level of articulated language, among other faculties once in potential. The human connectivity has been the best response for the immediate needs, like basic communication, barter trading and other meaningful exchanges.

In the second case, going beyond natural and furtive encounters, there is a stronger connection between the species described by the hypothetical anthropogenesis of the *Second Discourse*. Nevertheless, according to Rousseau’s anthropological theory, no sociability or cultural bonds can be traced. The initial gatherings happened only by chance (*hasard*) either because a group could have ended up more efficient to hunting down a great prey or to caterings and sittings around the fire pit. Although a picturesque scenery, this spontaneous aggregation does not mean association or unity, but a “dispersed” junction, i.e. a non-unity, which could or could not have occurred.

The meaning of human relations is backed by Rousseau’s psychological theory and not by his anthropological exposé. Friendship, for example, is not a development of the *pitié*, as an empathic feeling *en course*, but the attainment of a heartfelt relationship evolved probably by the drive for recognition – which is, according to Rousseau, the reason for all human bonds. In the perspective of society, the source of good and evil is the same: the desire to be recognized, accepted, approved and loved. Once asleep and in a virtual state, this feeling is awake by the rupture between what a man is (*l’être*) from what he appears to be (*le parêtre*). In this very moment, the natural man ceases to live for himself and feels the need to attract the gaze, admiration and recognition from the others.

He feels a psychological drive to project an image of himself, quite artificial, to make a good impression and captivate a public esteem.

It is not difficult to imagine all the scenes described hypothetically by Rousseau in his *Second Discourse*. The image of a primitive man hunting for food in a prairie or in the midst of a jungle flows easily on our minds. It is not difficult to also imagine that a human grouping came to be more effective on hunting a bigger animal. Further then, the distribution of the spoil and the sharing of a great fire, both to toast the food and to escape the cold, might have preserved the proximity of those hominids. Needless to say, they were not same like, and Rousseau himself recognizes the physical inequalities: one stronger, another faster, still another who fished and prepared his traps in a different way, and so on. Unfortunately, the first look of self-recognition was of pride in their abilities to the detriment of others. Likewise, the less able developed a feeling of inferiority and envy (ROUSSEAU, 1999), as Rousseau remarks: “Each one began to consider the rest, and to wish to be considered in turn; and thus a value came to be attached to public esteem” (ROUSSEAU, 1999, p. 92). Ending this split matter and denouncing the problematic birth of human connectivity and civility, he adds:

Whoever sang or danced best, whoever was the handsomest, the strongest, the most dexterous, or the most eloquent, came to be of most consideration; and this was the first step towards inequality, and at the same time towards vice. From these first distinctions arose on the one side vanity and contempt and on the other shame and envy: and the fermentation caused by these new leavens ended by producing combinations fatal to innocence and happiness. (ROUSSEAU, 1999, p. 92).

As Warner (2015) points out, at this moment, this man is no longer natural but a social being. From this point - specially with the enhancement of the *amour-propre* - nothing can be done without the consideration or the perspective of the others. In this new social status, men cease to be isolated unities to be fragments of a whole, no matter if it comes out of a social contract or the imposing force of a political power, i.e. in any kind of association the idea of an isolated man as a unity gives space for the idea of a relational man, a fraction of a fragmentary whole.

It is in this sense, the *Social Contract*, as well as the *Emile* and even the *New Heloise*, can be interpreted as pieces of a political puzzle, well elaborated in order to minimize the impact of human fragmentation. The educational treaty is certainly the most appropriate way to denaturalize man and conduct him into healthy human relations. That is why Vargas (1995) considers it as the best treaty of natural policy. Instead of defending the establishment of a political order or a public education *tout court*, what is proposed in this book is the educational formation of a young man by a movement of reconciliation between his self and the world around him. This political movement cannot be imposed from the outside, by instruction and teaching of rules, orders and scientific knowledge into human's brains, but by the contrary, it better be developed from the inside through a series of pedagogical actions. They may prepare the heart and broaden the wisdom of men to live with their fellows, respecting not only the neighbor but also the institutions, the laws and the social order itself.

To this end, several “pedagogical scenes” (PAIVA, 2010) are strategically placed throughout the narrative to introduce Emile to complicated relationships with “others”, beyond “things” and “nature.” By these so-called “scenes,” the tutor acts pedagogically to prepare the young man’s spirit for the reality of social conditions in all their dynamics and dangers – which could lead us to see the citizenship, or the cosmopolitanism, as the final goal of Emile, as it has been interpreted by some scholars. As Warner (2015, p. 30) admonishes, “the attempt to turn Emile into a ‘citizen’ leads not only to an inaccurate interpretation of *Emile* but also to an unduly restrictive account of Rousseau’s intention as an author”. Nevertheless, to leave the social dimension of Rousseau’s pedagogy aside, and to ignore the socializing didactics of Emile’s tutor is also a restricted understanding of Rousseau’s philosophy. All radical point of view must be avoided, when dealing with the Genevan philosopher. For instance, it is a crass mistake to affirm that Rousseau is against citizenship, only based on the rhetorical affirmations found in the beginning of *Emile* that “public institution no longer exists”, because “there is no longer fatherland”, so that the words “fatherland” and “citizen” should be effaced from modern languages (ROUSSEAU, 1969, p. 250).³

Rousseau’s references to “fatherland” and “citizen” is Plato’s *Republic*, as well as the Spartans’ civic and military engagement. Which is, clearly, a rhetoric realm to back a criticism on the education of his time – ranging from the Jesuit pedagogy and schools to a void public and governmental education. According to Prado Jr. (2008) Rousseau addressed his critical statements to his own time, and since the Eighteenth century’s taste was prone to dramas and all kind of entertainments, how could he better address people, if not rhetorically? How to draw attention to the need for a social order, respect for institutions and the real dimension of democracy via the location of the sovereign in the people themselves, if not through a pamphlet treaty like the *Social Contract*? It is more understandable as a “measuring scale” (NASCIMENTO, 1988) to analyze the existing forms of government. Likewise, instead of a rigid treaty of education, the book *Emile* is better fit as an essay on the best way to denature man. A narrative of possible actions to reconfigure this man in a smooth way, so that even in a civil order the natural elements can prevail (PAIVA, 2010). None of his works were written to be literally put into practice, like manuals.

Far from being a radical solution to the problem of unity - lost forever in the moment when man left the state of nature - Rousseau’s pedagogical thought devises a way of alleviating this problem through the formation of man in the most natural way possible. After the process, this man can choose to live by himself or to dwell in any society. More than that, he can be a “composed man” (JIMACK, 1960, p. 96) ready to be man and citizen at the same time - accomplishing the possible coexistence of the two dimensions. This double man could mean a new way to remove contradictions and obstacles to human happiness. This perspective is well expressed in the beginning of the book *Emile*, both in the first draft – the *Manuscrit Fravre* – and in its final version: “If perchance the double object we set for ourselves could be joined in a single one by

3- (Bloom’s edition: 1979, p. 40).

removing the contradictions of man, a great obstacle to his happiness would be removed” (ROUSSEAU, 1979 [1973], p. 41). A “composed” person would be a solution to the schism between being and appearance, as well as a response to the human relations deteriorated by the development of the *amour-propre*.

Although the awakening to this reality happens only in Book IV, when Emile is morally and psychologically driven to an earthly reality – such as marriage and constituting a family –, his tutor was careful enough to insert in his previous lessons small doses of human relations to prepare the spirit of the child. The first education, purely negative, is like a vaccine, administered by drops to prevent evil. The boy’s sociability cannot be forced or hastened into moral obligations, thwarting his natural advancement. After the completion of the *age of nature* and the *age of force*, when the youngster turns fifteen, with all the natural and physical knowledge, he shall be able to understand the world around him. Even though a “solitary man” or a natural being “alone in a human society” (ROUSSEAU, 1969, p. 488), he has gone through an expansion of his self-love and commiseration (*amour-de-soi and pitié*) to become minimally capable of attachment and sensitive to that of others.

At this point, after entering the *age of reason and passions*, it is necessary to expand the self, both morally and psychologically in order to understand human relationships in a broader sense. As Rousseau points out, “to have the social virtues, too, he lacks only the knowledge of the relations which demand them; le lacks only the learning which his mind is all ready to receive” (ROUSSEAU, 1969, p. 488).⁴ Unlike before, when the matter was introduced in small doses and through pedagogical scenes, human relations are henceforth vitals to constitute his identity (WARNER, 2015), because they are the ones that will form political opinions, moral feelings, aesthetic preferences and the various orientations for well-being in the social environment.

That is why, through Rousseau’s theory of recognition, the choices must be well-directed. In the desire to be recognized, loved and respected, the man’s action can be carried out in a wrong way, in an aggressive and imposing situation. This is what usually happens with *bullying* – a phenomenon that has only recently come to the attention of educators. It is only one example to remind how aggressive a person can be in search of recognition, like the ancient ones who tried to chant or dance better than their peers, around a fire, and ended up taking the first step towards a path of inequalities, addiction and unhappiness. Personal disputes to gain respect and recognition and comparisons in school environment generally lead to bullying and usually end up in verbal or physical aggression, always victimizing the weak (FREIRE; AIRES, 2012).

Anyways, the awakening of social feeling, which coincides with the awakening of the *amour-propre*, must be accompanied by a meticulous process of denaturation, or rather, of formation that can validate a reciprocal social coexistence. As it appears in the Book Four of *Emile*: “One wants to obtain the preference that one grants. Love must be reciprocal. To be loved, one has to make oneself lovable. To be preferred, one has to make oneself more lovable than another, more lovable than every other, at least in the

4- (Bloom’s edition: 1979, p. 208).

eyes of the beloved object” (ROUSSEAU, 1969, p. 494; ROUSSEAU, 1979 [1973], p. 214). This means that the solution to the problem of sociability, especially in dealing with self-esteem (*amour-propre*), may be the possibility of establishing a direct dependence between the desire for social approval and the desire to deserve it. The feeling of *amour-propre* in itself is not an evil, except when inflamed by decaying passions, such as envy, hatred, and the desire for power. If not, it can be channeled through a gradual and well-conducted socialization.

That is why Emile’s early social relations are introduced only after a long process of natural education, during which the internal development of organs and faculties is fostered by simple educational experiences indicated by nature itself. Under this scenario, when the child is physical and moral dependent, the first relations are with the family. According to Rousseau (1979, p. 43-44), during this time it is important to avoid the “bonds”, like the “linens and trusses” some mothers and midwives use to wrap, and swaddle their babies. Otherwise, how can the baby experience liberty with such constraints? But the situation is obviously much worse when they deny the baby breastfeeding, and Rousseau denounced this terrible habit of his time. For him, every relationship at this stage must be natural, and provide a spontaneous domestic environment in which the child can learn by himself, passing through as few hands as possible. The “paternal” action, regardless from the parents or from a ruler, a nurse or from a professional tutor, should be of a subtle directivity, developed by childish plays, games and other ludic amusements, even though more complex ones, like labor experiments and manual tasks. They all are important, if chosen to meet the urges of necessity and applied wisely to avoid possible deviations.

By all means, the best place for this to happen, where the child can have enough space to exercise freedom both in body and in spirit, is the field. There, when meeting with children at the same age, with peasants in their daily life or with needy people, the child’s first impulses may certainly be of sympathy. In Rousseau’s perspective, who would not sympathize with these simple people, deprived of the luxury of the court and the bourgeois residences which, in his time, were the epicenter of dissimulation and artificiality in human relations, as well as of gambling and vice, so common in Parisian social gatherings? Why would not someone be delighted with the peasant parties that simulate a return to idyllic innocence (STAROBINSKI, 1991), and also to the lost unity (FREITAS, 2033)? Criticizing in the *Second Discourse* the socialization in the way it happened, and praising the pastoral life, Rousseau expresses like this:

The charm of seeing those good people happy is not poisoned by envy; we are truly interested in them. Why is this? Because we feel that we are the masters of descending to this condition of peace and innocence and of enjoying the same felicity. It is a resource for a rainy day which causes only agreeable ideas, since in order to be able to make use of it, it suffices to want to do so. (ROUSSEAU, 1969, p. 506; ROUSSEAU, 1979 [1973], p. 223).

But there is another issue to be analyzed in this context, which even avoided by Rousseau, was not unknown to him: While luxury and wealth were easily found in urban areas, where only 15% of the population lived, the reality of the French countryside, with

its 85% of the population, was poverty, poor hygiene and health problems (GOUBERT, 2007). In most cases, the peasants were forced to get into debt with the landlords, getting into a relationship of subservience (SÉE, 2004). In view of this, in what sense does an entourage on the fields promoted by the tutor can benefit the formation of his disciple? In witnessing such situations, Emile would be encouraged to make comparisons between his reality and the reality of the peasants, who could imprint on his soul both a sense of self-recognition and self-respect, as well as commiseration to others. The sense of piety is natural and extends to the social world in such a way that people easily pity the unfortunates. On the other hand, if the child is firstly shown wealthy people without difficulty or without problems, he could develop envy, but, instead, he is now more sympathetic to helping the needy ones.

Although this perspective may signal a veiled narcissism, since Emile would be exposed first to situations in which he would always see suffering people, the negative education clearly shields his spirit against a perverted and narcissist feeling. By this first education, conducted wisely by the tutor, some physical obstacles and hurtful situations were designed to imprint in his soul a stoic bearing as a protection against pride and despise. This experience provides what the Canadian philosopher Charles Taylor (2011, p. 3) calls an “authentic moral contact with ourselves”.

This is probably the best way to teach him the Maxims. For example, in the First Maxim the author states that: “It is not in the human heart to put ourselves in the place of people who are happier than we, but only in that of those who are more pitiable” (ROUSSEAU, 1969, p. 506; ROUSSEAU, 1979 [1973], p. 223). But always with the prospect of making him understand that his situation could be theirs. No doubt there is the risk of narcissistic pleasure here, but it can be avoided, as he outlines it by explaining his *Second Maxim*: “Do not, therefore, accustom your pupil to regard the sufferings of the unfortunate and the labors of the poor from the height of his glory”; and adds: “Make him understand well that the fate of these unhappy men can be his” (ROUSSEAU, 1969, p. 507; ROUSSEAU, 1979 [1973], p. 224). Thus, as Warner states (2015, p. 50), “Emile finds new reasons to love and cherish both himself as well as those who need his help”. Such a relationship is not, as Nietzsche (2007) has understood it, a veiled form of resentment that reinforces the feeling of superiority of the one who does not suffer. It is a feeling of equality and sympathy, because it drives the non-suffering to understand the situation of the suffering ones, and also to commiserate for them, to help them if it is possible, and yet to bare it consciously that he might be in the same place. The feeling of piety, as something natural, has an important action in the psychology of socialization, so to limit the egoism of *amour-propre*, and to develop the power of the *homo empathicus* which seems to dwell within each one of us (RIFKIN, 2009) – since in the Rousseauian perspective, human connections are more easily established through a path of empathy than of sympathy.

However, in order to complete Emile’s moral upbringing and strengthen his self, other connections are necessary. Mostly by practical situations to illustrate complicated and complex relationships, those exercises can smooth the child’s transition from the pure affective sensations – proper to this age – unto the ability of moral judgment – proper to

social life. To take an example from Emile's experience, the tutor is aware that this social life is representational. But, instead of taking the child into urban and crowded areas in order to interact with people, he previously shows him some masks, in a gradual way. From the least to the scariest mask, the boy is induced to get accustomed with them and even to laugh at this grotesque artificiality.

In the sequence, other experiences may be important in teaching the morality of human actions. This is the case of the *episode of beans* – a content of *Book Two*-, whose lesson works as a vaccine against a lot of wrongdoings: injustice, grievance, pride, vanity, as well as a prevention from the effect of an inflamed *amour-propre*. And last, but not least, a good introduction against illegitimate property – which is, teleologically, a preparation for a full social life. For, as Francisco discusses (2015), Rousseau's preoccupation with the good learning of human relations, and the learning of morality, would provide Emile with a new connection to his fellows rather different from the existing social relations of his time.

In this pedagogical scene, master and disciple decide to sow fava beans in a field that, without knowing it, has already been worked by another person who planted Maltese melon seeds there. After a long day of hard labor, they find out that their work has been ruined by the field's owner. They try to argue with the gardener, and what follows is an intense dialogue between two impaired parties – considering that both have had their work destroyed –, but that finally ends up in a mutual understanding. As the property holder, Roberto, the gardener, could have expelled them, demanding compensation for the damage suffered or denouncing the invasion of his property to the authorities. Nevertheless, an evolving dialogue takes place and they come to an agreement. Outside the formality of the law, or within the economic perspective, the stalemate is solved in a way that both parties can profit: the child takes a corner to plant his seed with his tutor, giving the gardener his due quota.

Also in *Book Two*, another episode illustrates well the willingness of the tutor to ease learning by practical situations, and also to introduce moral questions in a softer way. The *candy episode*, in a parallel to the episode with the beans, provides an environment of deep relationship with others and develops in the child's spirit the taste for these shared experiences, especially when it achieves the dual purpose of these scenes: curricular learning, on the one hand, with knowledge of geography, mathematics, etcetera. And, on the other, good denaturation, that is, an insertion in the conventional world, without the burst of exalted passions. As a second moral lesson, the episode is summarized as follows: thinking about ways to develop the body of his pupil, Jean-Jacques puts Emile to perform a series of physical activities every day in the morning, such as running barefoot, walking and jumping, always accompanied by his tutor in order to feel encouraged and keep the stamina. However, a more plausible and more understandable incentive for the child are some candy bars that are devoured during the journey as well as at the end of it. To foster Emile's interaction with his competitors – other children –, the tutor promises to give the candy to the winner, at the end of the race. As expected, several boys enter the game as contestants and the victorious one receives the candy, beyond a praise and the joy of everyone: "The one who won it was praised and given a celebration; it was all done with

ceremony” (ROUSSEAU, 1969, p. 394; ROUSSEAU, 1974, p. 141). In his analyzes of the process of human empathy, Rifkin (2009, p. 95) states that “through play we incorporate some of the imagined reality of the other and thereby become connected”.

Thus, from situations like this, it is possible to infer that the tutor’s dynamics is pedagogic and gradual. The social interaction begins with the sole basis of walks, exercises and conversations only between the master with his disciple. Then, it continues in an ever-expanding process to include some children in their simple competitions, a prize, the candy and all the compliments to them all. In the end, the apotheosis has nothing to do with the pomp of the royal court or the bourgeois houses but it has to do with the act of cheering up the event and their participants. In this last degree, the shouting, the applause and all the acclamation serve as a form of encouragement and a kind of popular joy - similar to the peasant festivities.

Nevertheless, an issue may be raised. If Emile develops a spirit of competition and a greed for recognition, he is, in fact, nourishing his own *amour-propre*, mainly when he exercises in secret to bet his peers. Yet, what happens next is quite significant and explanatory: Emile enjoys the competitions and manages to win some of them. In the beginning, as all the winners did, he isolated himself with his prize and ate alone the conquered candy. But, behold, the feeling of generosity arises and some questions come to his mind: for what good would it be to celebrate the prize alone? what is a prize without interaction with others, without public recognition and without interaction with a such anacreontic community? By understanding, once again, that human relations are the key, Emile decides to share his prize with the losers. He reaches the point of understanding that the big victory is not actually the candy, but the shared joy and the conviviality and the pleasure of being together.

Following the story, the rules are changed by the tutor to keep the gradual move going. Different degrees are established and the tutor is keen to ‘manipulate’ the whole process to sometimes favor Emile or to provide an obstacle on his way. The purpose of all this is, of course, that the boy should acquire a virtuous moral sense, along with other also necessary subjects, such as geometry, mathematics and other disciplines to which children are supposedly inapt to cultivate. According to Rousseau, “all these examples and a hundred thousand other prove, it seems to me, that the supposed ineptitude of children at our exercises is imaginary and that, if they are not seen to succeed at some, it is because they have never been given practice in them” (ROUSSEAU, 1969, p. 403; ROUSSEAU, 1979 [1973], p. 147).

In a slightly different way, in *Book Three*, the scene is more public, that is, the episode happens in a fair, when tutor and disciple observe a magician (*jouer de gobelets*) attracting a floating wax mallard with a piece of bread. Later on, after the tutor’s explanation about the trick, the boy is incited to challenge the illusionist. Well provided with a loaf and a magnetized needle inside it, Emile performs the same thing and is applauded by everyone. Immediately thereafter, Jean-Jacques puts him away to avoid pride and other temptation. Not enough, the best part of the tutor’s pedagogical lesson is left for the next day when a crowd is invited by Emile to watch his show. Unfortunately, what happens is a total embarrassment to him: Emile puts his bread, hoping that the toy responds to the

attraction of his hidden magnet, but the opposite is the response: the mallard flees in the opposite direction. The disappointment is greater when the magician rips the bread from Emile's hand and removes the magnetized piece, showing them all. The crowd's reproach and boos are enough for the boy and his guardian to withdraw from the scene and close themselves in their room. Duly combined with the juggler, the tutor was behind all this embarrassment, or this kind of lesson to immunize the boy against the pursuit of glory and the extreme self-valorization over others. Just like in the *episode of the fava beans*, when the gardener established a channel of communication, the magician came next day to explain that the boy tried to ruin his job, his unique way of earning a living. Once again, a cordial conversation eases the animosity and provides an apology from the boy. Lesson learned, they return to the fair the next day and, with due respect, only watch the magic tricks presented by the artist.

This experience may be called the *third moral lesson*, since it is meaningful not only to understand physical phenomena, but also moral ideas. Beyond introducing physics through a practical way, with no need for laboratory experiments, the episode is a lesson of social coexistence, respect for other, and also a vaccine against vanity. After all, as Rousseau remarks (1969, p. 445; ROUSSEAU, 1979 [1973], p. 178) "our true masters are experience and sentiment, and man has a good sense of what suits man only with respect to those relations in which he himself has actually participated".

Several situations are provided by the Emile's tutor for the practical development of knowledge and for the gradual insertion of the boy into social life, coexistence and obviously the best relationships he can have with others, such as when he is taken to lunch in a rich house, full of guests, in order to observe them. If philosophy is still unfit for that age, at least it is time to sow its seeds and prevent moral miscarriage. The boy's feelings and judgment may go in a wrong direction, if not backed by a wise move as it has been during the magicians's episode. According to Rousseau (1969, p. 467; ROUSSEAU, 1979 [1973], p. 193):

Thus the ideas of social relations are formed little by little in a child's mind, even before he can really be an active member of society. Emile sees that, in order to have instruments for his use, he must in addition have instruments for the use of other men with which he can obtain in exchange the things which are necessary to him and are in their power. I easily bring him to feel the need for these exchanges and to put himself in a position to profit from them.

In deepening the moral issues, the relationship must be extended in the sense of production, that is, of work. For this reason, Emile is put into handwork learning and encouraged to develop practical activities as a job in order to complement his received lessons. Since I consider this a complex subject and worthy of another analysis, I will limit my considerations just saying that, by seeking such a job, i.e. a manual labor, plenty of lessons may be appropriately provided for developing a good coexistence and nice human relations: such as following orders, instructions, rules created by someone other than the preceptor, as well as avoiding egocentrism. Those relations must be pedagogically extended to meet the needs that are manifested according to the age and the course of

the educational art undertaken by the preceptor, but in such a way that inflamed passions do not manifest and natural goodness can at least act beneficially on the *amour-propre*. Rousseau admonishes that

It is true that since they are not able always to live alone, it will be difficult for them always to be good. This same difficulty will necessarily increase with their relations; and this, above all, is why the dangers of society make art and care all the more indispensable for us to forestall in the human heart the depravity born of their new needs. (ROUSSEAU, 1969, p. 493; ROUSSEAU, 1979 [1973], p. 214).

All these reflections are amplified and deepened in the *Book Four*, in order to answer questions related to these new needs, such as friendship, love, religious life and married life. But it is in Rousseau's epistolary novel – *Julie, or the New Heloise* – the track to find the structural bipolarity that underlies human existence and paves social relations as a whole. Beyond the tension between urban and rural life, according to Starobinski (1991) there is a much more complex tension along this romantic novel's pages, which is the tension between reason and sensitivity.

Written in form of letters, the book tells the story of the passion between the young aristocrat Julia d'Etange and her teacher, the young petty bourgeois Saint-Preux. However, the possible engagement is interrupted by the inflexible severity of the Baron d'Etange, who does not admit the union of his daughter with a plebeian. The philosopher's enchantment for the qualities found in his pupil, among them goodness, serenity, virtue, and wisdom, suffers solipsism when his beloved is promised to Mr. de Wolmar, a wealthy, mature and rational baron. Decided by the proud father, the marriage takes place promptly and the couple vanished into the countryside to abide in a kind of rural community called Clarens, in which Julia plays an important role in the administration of the place and personnel. Although loyal to her husband, Julia does not forget the old lover and sends him letters saying that he shall be well remembered and will be in her heart forever. Timely statement to save him from a state of morbidity and melancholy in which he had immersed himself in Paris and which prevents a nervous breakdown and a possible suicide (FAÇANHA, 2017).

Aware of this old love and considering it an addiction, the virtuous and intelligent Mr. de Wolmar volunteers to heal this passion not through the path of absence, of detachment, but through the presence and personal relationships. Then, he invites the old boyfriend to come and live in the same community. More than that, relying on the imperative of reason, the Baron travels and leaves the two alone for a long period of time. Yet, the sensible reason of a married woman, with obligations to her husband and to the community under her leadership, Julie remains faithful even under such temptation. However, it seems at the end that there is no reconciliation between reason and sensitivity at all, since the novel ends with the accident and the death of the beloved Julie. And in her last hours she confesses to Saint-Preux that she never stopped loving him and hopes to join him in the afterlife.

Then, if reconciliation between paradoxes is impossible, all of Rousseau's work can be taken as an overwhelming attempt to reach it, or a brainstorm on the possibilities. As a response to the man-citizen paradox, for example, the book *Emile* emulates a specific human formation in which the output can be an isolated man living by himself, or a participating citizen living for others. If perchance the "double object" (ROUSSEAU, 1979 [1973], p. 41) cannot be reached, at least it is worth trying. Likewise, Julie's moral steadiness prevented them from going astray and falling into unhappiness, even though not fulfilling their loving dream. In her words: "I have done what I had to do, my virtue remains without blemish and my love remained without remorse" (ROUSSEAU, 1964a, p. 740).

Apart of this platonic love, what is really at stake in their relationship – as well as in human relations in general – is *friendship*. As I have mentioned in the beginning of this text, it seems strange to come up with this subject referring to an author who was unable to maintain the strong bond that he had with several friends. As Labarthe (2014) argues, Rousseau defined himself as the "most sociable of men" who, paradoxically, ended up alone, with no friends or anyone to trust. But instead of blaming himself, he laments in his *Rêveries du promeneur solitaire* that it was his friends who broke the bonds (ROUSSEAU, 1959, p. 995), not him. Is he by chance an ingrate? Without dreaming to answer this question, we may begin to analyze *friendship* as a moral category. By considering *friendship* as the felling par excellence and the real hero of Julie's and Emile's stories, and not love, every kind of human relationship – at the individual or at the social level – depends much more on a solid friendship (*philia*) to be kept alive and well, than on a love-passion (*eros*) dependency. In the civil state sphere, maybe *friendship* can be more effective than an unconditioned and idealized love of the fatherland (*agape*), in the Spartan sense. By developing a solid friendship with fellow citizens, one can enable an enlargement of the *pitié* onto a beneficial *amitié*, capable of considering the good of the others in their otherness and freedom.

However, as it happens with all other Rousseauan categories, *friendship* does not hold a perennial status. Like any other political phenomenon, it can be corrupted if not well nourished and breastfed by the proper milk. In the same way a baby needs the others to develop, this feeling needs the nourishment of a constant relationship based on the principle of equality, respect for the law and citizenship to grow. If not perennial, why is it so important? I consider that it is because *friendship* has the potential to be the articulation that exists between psychology, morality, politics and education in Rousseau. Without this kind of "bond", no social contract can be effective, nor, even, a minimum coexistence in any society.

Despite all this, Bloom (1993) does not see *friendship* as a viable instrument for moral development. He argues that a feeling derived from the *pitié*, may enable a person to contemplate the suffering of the other, but even feeling pity, the response is no active but of passivity. And even without knowing the Brazilian culture, his comments are not so different from the ones made by the anthropologist Roberto DaMatta (1997) about the deteriorated social *philia* of our society. In the Brazilian public life, the social bonds are generally tightened up by a kind of friendship that seeks personal gain, privilege or any kind of situations to "pull the strings" in favor of a "friend". That is, as Bloom has pointed

out, a typified deterioration of *philia* and, according to DaMatta, a flexibilization of moral values.

Even entirely risky, this is not Rousseau's perspective. His idea of friendship is close to the classical concepts, almost similar to the ones developed by Aristotle, Cicero and Montaigne. Which is the sense of friendship as a moral excellence that inspires action, not passivity or privilege. Although there is, for the stagirite, friendship for interest (which would be that of the Brazilian case), and friendship for pleasure, "the perfect friendship is the one of virtue and good, in which friends love each other for their own sake, and they wish good things for each other" (ARISTÓTELES, 2012, p. 167). For Rousseau, differing a little bit from the virtuous perspective conceived by Aristotle, in a deteriorated social environment, friendship would serve more as consolation and a remedy to cure or attenuate the evil already caused. The virtuous Aristotelian friendship would be the best feeling to stake human relations for good, but in a *Social Contract* reality, and never in a corrupt society. A social framework whose reality is woven by the fabric of the *amour-propre*, with a clear manifestation of inequalities and inflamed passions, a friendly relation would cause low impact if it does not stumble and fall into the pit of falsehood and interest, even though it can – as an extension of the natural *pitié*, comfort the suffering of others and sometimes medicate some wounds.

Taken as passive, this kind of friendship turns to be incapable of developing any civic virtue or of assisting in the formation of citizenship. On the contrary, it can be conniving with self-interest, privilege, and other social vices which can be taken as a "normal" response or the only way for justice. That reminds us, back to the old Greeks, Thrasymachus' arguments trying to prove to the skeptical Socrates, in the *Republic* of Plato, that in an unequal society, the interest of the stronger will always prevail, and this will be taken as justice. Although Rousseau praised Plato's work as an example of public education, he developed a different perspective of human formation in his *Emile*. His education treaty does not mean a formation of the civil man, the citizen in the strict sense of the term, in an active participation quite similar to Plato's education as conceived in the *Republic*, or yet, according to the examples of the Spartan citizen in the beginning of his book. Rather than, his plan of human formation is about an individual education, well prepared to live within lax borders of a corrupt reality. But the pupil can endure well immunized by the natural education received and, as an adult, be a virtuous man resisting against social evils and all kinds of moral deterioration.

In conclusion, either from this perspective, or from the perspective of a contractual society, the maintenance of political stability will depend on a harmonious coexistence and a good relationship between the constituent parties. It is not that Rousseau's political theory is summed up in friendship. Although important, it is not a panacea, and, in broader sense, his political and educational thought outlines a path of strengthening the natural man to know how to live in unity with the other; an individual capable of dwelling harmoniously with his fellow men – organized in a group, in a community or in the larger society. In any social structure the individual has several responsibilities to which he must adjust his own interests. Hence the reason for an education full of human

connectivity and situations in which this potential can be developed, ensuring a moral formation that prepares the individual to a virtuous relationship.

And this will only be possible if this individual has passed, as Emile endured, by situations in which the understanding of this aspect has been internalized enough to become a norm, reaching the one's conscience. That is, the issue is pedagogical, and only through human relations, properly oriented, can the individual develop an authentic awareness of the social problems and the best ways to face them. And this statement brings us back to the understanding of friendship as the key to solving most of the social problems. Unfortunately, such an important key has been paradoxically neglected by the citizen of Geneva in dealing with his friends - which leads us to think that we will never get rid of Rousseau's paradoxes.

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