

ROUSSEAU'S CONCEPT OF EDUCATION

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INTRODUCTION

All that we lack at birth and need when grown up is given, to us by education. This education comes to us from nature, from men or from things. The internal development of our faculties and the organs is the education of nature. The use we learn to make of this development is the education of men. (Cahn 155)

These are the words of a man who has had a propound influence on the field of education. This man is none other than Jean Jacques Rousseau.

Rousseau is one of those philosophers who has been greatly misunderstood. Many have criticized his philosophy as being totally outdated and not much applicable in today's situation. But this seems paradoxical as Rousseau has also been that person who has had a great influence in the field of education. If not his method, then other methods fashioned on his philosophy have been introduced in different fields of education.

So one would consider whether Rousseau has something to offer us or not. The reply to such a doubt is yes. If not his method, then the philosophy behind the method is of great importance.

It is important to understand that Rousseau has been criticized more because people have not really understood why he expressed himself the way he did.

Two main aspects come out very strongly in his philosophy. They are nature, and the child. Both these were of great importance in his philosophy of education. In order to grasp the reason for his philosophy one ought to understand his background and the context in which he wrote. Thus a brief life-sketch and his works, in the Introduction, should enable us to see what events and situations conditioned Rousseau to think and

write the way he did. Chapter 1 deals with his philosophy of education. Before understanding anyone's philosophy of education, one ought to get a general idea of philosophy of education is. Chapter 2 deals with Rousseau's philosophy of education. Chapter 3 deals with his major work, *Emile*, which contains all his ideas on education. Chapter 4 deals with his influence. Finally, the Conclusion aims at a general analysis of him.

0.1. Early life and training

Jean Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778), was born of upper class parentage in the simple Protestant city of Geneva. His father, a watchmaker, was descendent from a Parisian family, and inherited much of the Romanticism, mercurial temperament, and love of pleasures of his forbears. The mother of Rousseau, too, although the daughter of a clergy man, was of a morbid and sentimental disposition. She died at the birth of Jean Rousseau. (Graves 77)

Rousseau was brought up by an indulgent aunt, who never bothered to correct him when he faltered. She completely failed to instill in him any moral principles. This tendency for a want of self-control was furthered increased by his father, who had an equally careless attitude. When Rousseau was only six, his father would sit with him night after night and read to him the most silliest and sensational romances, which were left behind by his wife. It is for this reason that extreme emotionality, imaginativeness and precocity were nurtured within the child at a really early age.

“After a year or so, the novels were exhausted and Rousseau had to turn for material, to the more sensible library of his grandfather, the preacher.” (Graves 78) Some of these works included the parallel lives of Plutarch and the standard histories of the day. These works had a lasting impression on his character.

They contributed to his sense of heroism and what he afterwards termed ‘that republican spirit and love of liberty, that haughty and invincible turn of the mind, which rendered me impatient of restraint.’ His want of control may in this way have first come to turn itself toward the revolution and the destruction of existing society. (Graves 78)

This made Rousseau extremely fond of reading.

“When he was ten, his ‘best of fathers’ ran away, and Jean Rousseau, together with his cousin, was sent to school in a village of Bossey. This constituted the only training he was destined to receive.” (Eby 320) Here his love of nature, which had already been cultivated by the beauties of the Genevian environment, was greatly heightened. He found a wonderful enjoyment of this rural life. He was happy, played with zest, learned to garden and acquired a strong love for nature. However, a severe punishment for a boyish offence led to this period of schooling ending in disappointment. “Thereupon he declares, he began to evolve the theory that it is through restraint and discipline of the impulses and departure from nature that humanity has ever been corrupted and ruined...” (Graves 79)

After this he retired to Geneva and spent a couple of years in idleness and sentimentality. This was because he always found it difficult to adjust himself to social and vocational life. However, during his trade apprenticeships, he was further corrupted by low companions, and gave free reign to his impulses to loaf, lie and steal. He ran away from the city and spent many years in vagrancy and menial service. During this time, the beauties of nature continued to have their effect on him, especially the wonderful scenery of Savoy. He priest felt pity on him and fed him. He was placed for his spiritual edification under the guidance of a Madame de Warrens. She was charming and was of shallow character, and it was because of this that Rousseau made little progress in piety. “With her assistance he put forth many efforts to find a congenial vocation. He served as a lackey, studied for the priesthood, practiced music and became in turn a government clerk, a teacher of music, and a secretary.” (Eby 321) He was employed to teach the two sons of Monsieur de Plalby, but this too ended in failure, due to his hot temper. He thus returned to Madame de Warrens, and ended being her paid secretary and lover.

Two features of these years are of special significance: the experiences gathered in his wanderings, and his somewhat desultory studies. His excursions, offered a vivid insight into the revolting miseries of the French peasantry. His studies served to acquaint him with the current social and philosophical problems agitating the minds of men. Montaigne, Leibniz, Locke, Pope and Voltaire made the deepest impression. (Eby 321)

In course of time, he and Madame de Warrens grew tired of each other, and in a fit of jealousy, he broke up with her, and moved to Paris. However, in spite of his poverty, he was able to make friends with Voltaire, Diderot and other leaders. Thus, by being associated with the most brilliant literary and philosophical group in France, he began to accept their pessimism and engaged in their libertarian life. He earned a meager livelihood by copying music.

He met Therese Levasseur, a vulgar and very stupid girl, who lived as his mistress for 23 years, before they got married. Five children were born, and without delay they were sent to the foundling hospital. None of them were ever traced. This was one of the most unaccountable of the performances of this paradoxical genius. (Eby 322)

He spent the remaining years of his life writing. But in spite of the fame he received later on, his last years were no happier than the first. He died in exile, in poverty and in solitude, in the year 1778, at the age of 66.

0.2. His Works and Contributions

“Rousseau reached the ripe age of 37 without displaying a scintilla of intellectual superiority. Genius awakened in him, with the suddenness of a bolt of lightning.” (Eby 322)

All this began by a curious accident in October 1749. While he was walking leisurely, he came across an essay competition, held by the academy of Dijon. The topic was, “Has the progress of Sciences and Arts contributed to the purification or the corruption of morals?” This topic suddenly brought to focus all chaotic thoughts that had been surging within him. This led to him writing a scathing denunciation of civilization and how the advancement has led to the corruption of society. “The chief marvel was not that he won the prize, but that the members of the Academy voted in favour of his essay; for they had in view something very different. In any case Rousseau vaulted into fame, and felt himself seized by a holy mission for the reordering of civilization.” (Eby 323)

Three years later, he participated in another essay competition offered by the same Academy, on the subject, “The Origin of Inequality among men.”

In his decision on the subject, Rousseau holds that the physical and intellectual inequalities of nature which existed in primitive society were

scarcely noticeable, but that, with the growth of civilization, most oppressive distinctions arose, especially through the institution of private property. (Graves 82)

As Rousseau's democratic and revolutionary spirit developed, Paris, with its hypocritical and cold-blooded atmosphere, became more and more stifling to him. In 1756, he withdrew to the village of Montmorency and the society of a few friends. In 1761, after a period of idleness and an unfortunate love affair, he produced another remarkable work, *The New Heloise*. "The New Heloise departs somewhat from the complete return to nature sought in the two discourses. He commends a restoration of as much of the primitive simplicity of living as the crystallized traditions and institutions of society will permit." (Graves 84)

A year later he brought out an important work known as *The Social Contract*. This had a profound influence on political ethics.

In the *Social Contract*, Rousseau finds the ideal state, not in that of nature, but in a society managed by the people, where simplicity and natural events control, and aristocracy and artificiality do not exist. A state of nature, however, is still the starting point. (Graves 84)

Thus society originated when men found the obstacles to self-preservation too strong, and thus came together to form an association to protect its rights and needs. In this regard, the government which it sets up, whether a monarchy aristocracy, or a democracy, maybe abolished at any time, by the general will of the people. This doctrine of his, created a stir in the monarch-ridden France.

In the same year, he brought another work, *Emile*, which was a revolutionary treaty on education. "Emile, aims to replace the conventional and formal education of the day with a training that should be natural and spontaneous." (Graves 85)

Some of his other works are *Dissertation on Modern Music* (1743), *Letter to Voltaire on Providence* (1756), *Moral Letters* (1757-8), *Considerations on the Government of Poland* (1769-70), *Dictionary on Music* (1767), and *Letter on French Music* (1753). A few of his controversial works are *Letter to Christophe de Beaumont, Archbishop of Paris* (1763), *Lettres Ecrites de la Montagne* (1764) and *Letter to M d' Alembert on the Theatre* (1758).

Some of his uncompleted works are *Elementary Letters on Botany and Dictionary on Botanical terms*, *Essay on the Origin of Language*, *Reveries of the Solitary Walker*.

So, even though Rousseau spent much of his time as a vagabond, he still learnt a lot from nature and was always affiliated with the poor, and had great sympathy for them. In this way, Rousseau who was emotional, uncontrolled and half-trained, brought to consciousness and gave voice to the revolutionary and naturalistic ideas and tendencies of the century.

Chapter 1

PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION

In order to understand philosophy of education, it would be helpful if we first defined the two concepts separately. These two concepts are education and philosophy.

1.1. Education

Definition: education has been defined in many ways, with each author stressing some or the other important dimension of education. Some of the definitions of education are as follows:

Education is the creation of a healthy mind in a healthy body.
- Aristotle

The aim of education is to dispel error and discover truth.
- Socrates

Education is the process of remaking experience, giving it a more socialized value through increased individual experience, by giving the individual better control over his own powers.
- Dewey

Education means a natural, progressive, and systematic development of all the powers.
- Pestalozzi

To prepare us for the complete living is the function which education has to discharge.
- Spencer (Cunningham 18)

1.1.1 Education as a process

As a process, education may be looked at from two points of view. They are from a social point of view, and from an individual point of view.

1.1.1.1 The social point of view: Society seeks to perpetuate itself by handing on its cultural acquisitions to each succeeding generation. Here is where we find education as a social process. This was more a characteristic of oriental peoples.

1.1.1.2 The individual point of view: As an individual process, education seeks to bring about growth and development within the individual. This was the educational theory of the Occidental peoples.

We must, however, keep in mind, that these two aspects are complimentary rather than conflicting. “*Individual development* is unthinkable (in the beginning at least) except insofar as the individual comes into the possession of social inheritance; and *social transmission* is impossible without bringing about changes within the individual.” (Cunningham 4)

Thus we find that both the point of view treat education as that which brings about a change.

1.1.2 Aims of education

It is the aims which help the process to be realized. Every activity is followed by some purpose or the other. With regard to education, they mainly concern the educator and society. There are, however, different aims of education. The reason for this is that every person by nature is different from the other. Likes and dislikes differ from person to person. Some may give importance to morality, others to culture, and so on. So there is a tendency for people to reflect their own individuality in their aims. We shall now consider some of the aims of education.

1.1.2.1 Social Aim

“Man is a social being. He cannot live apart from society and so it should be the foremost aim of education to inculcate the sense of co-operation in the child to enable him to enjoy the amenities of life and utilize his own innate powers for the benefit of the other.” (Rai 9)

The supporters of this viewpoint believe that isolation from society spoils a person and destroys the life values. Since a person is a social animal, his or her

development is only possible through social contacts and relationships. He or she cannot be a man or a woman all alone. The individual will mould itself according to the will of society. The individual will have to act in accordance with the needs and the requirements of society. Thus this process of moulding and curbing the individual goes on continuously both consciously as well as unconsciously.

1.1.2.2 Individual Aim

The supporters of the social aim give importance to the society. They claim that through education an individual should be enabled to acquire the aim of sacrificing his or her own interests for the sake of the society.

Those who support the individual aim hold just the reverse view. They believe that it is the individual who should be given importance. “According to Prof. T. P. Nunn, Education must secure for every one the conditions under which individuality is most completely developed.” (Rai 11)

There are certain institutions such as family, school, etc. which are for the betterment of the individual.

1.1.2.3 Morality as an Aim of Education

If we take this aim in the wider sense we find that the formation of right conduct is nothing but a character developing process and this process ultimately leads to the point which is called moral development. If a child is seeking truth or knowledge, it is forming the right conduct. This good conduct develops the qualities of its character, and when developed take the form of moral force and the child becomes morally high. All this has to be done through the means of education.

Thus by understanding the aims of education, we are able to get an idea of what education is, and what it is basically aims to achieve.

1.2. Philosophy

1.2.1 Definition and meaning

Edgar S. Brightman. “Philosophy is essentially a spirit or method of approaching experience rather than a body of conclusions about experience.”

C.J. Ducasse. “Were I limited to one line for my answer to it, I should say that philosophy is a general theory of criticism.”

Joseph A. Leighton. “Philosophy like science, consists of theories of insights arrived at as a result of systematic reflection.”

Herbert Spencer. “Philosophy is concerned with everything as a universal science.” (Sharma 30)

The above mentioned definitions of philosophy show us that some view philosophy as being critical, while others see it as a synthetic discipline. But both viewpoints would seem one sided as it is both critical and synthetic.

Literally speaking the word ‘philosophy’ involves two Greek words – ‘Philo’ means love and ‘Sophia’ means wisdom. In this sense philosophy would mean love of wisdom. Thus, a philosopher is one who is constantly engaged in the search for truth, and uses the method of reflection to achieve this purpose of investigation.

1.3. Philosophy of education

1.3.1 Definition and meaning

“Education is nothing but a means to equip the person to face life and to grow into worthy citizens. This can be successfully done only when the educational process is planned in such a way as to be geared to the ideals and requirements of life. This requires a philosophical background. In other words we may say that education should be in conformity with the philosophy of life.” (Rai 99)

Philosophy of education is one of the oldest yet one of the newest disciplines. It is one the oldest since Plato, and the one of the newest since it began to emerge as a separate discipline only in the twentieth century.

Philosophy and Education are but two stages of the same endeavour: philosophizing to think out the highest values and ideals; education to realize them in human personality.

Thus philosophy of education is essentially a method of approaching educational experience, rather than a body of conclusions. It is the specific method which makes it philosophical. Philosophical method is critical, comprehensive and synthetic. Therefore, philosophy of education is the criticism of the general theory of education. It is a synthesis of educational facts with educational values. In brief it is the philosophical process of solving educational problems through philosophical method, from a philosophical attitude to arrive at philosophical conclusions. This would imply that it is philosophy in the field of education.

1.3.2 Scope and nature of Philosophy of education

The scope of philosophy of education is concerned with the problems of education.

The main problems of philosophy of education include the aims and ideals of education, analysis of human nature relationship of education and state, educational values, theory of knowledge and its relationship to education, economic system and education, the place of school in the educational system, the curriculum and the process of education and finally the relationship of education and social progress. (Sharma 73)

These problems explain the scope and clarify the nature of philosophy of education. Its scope includes a critical evaluation of the different aims of education held and propagated from time to time. Thus, we find that philosophy of education aims at presenting a synthesis of various aims and ideals of education.

1.3.3 Need for Philosophy of Education in Modern Times

All modern educationists hold the view that not only should the educator be equipped with knowledge of a variety of subjects, but also that he or she should have his own philosophy of education, without which he or she cannot effectively solve the problems that face him or her in teaching day to day.

The most fundamental question in the field of education concerns its aim. This question raises queries about the nature of a person and the possibility of its modification and transformation. A person's nature is very much concerned with his place in the cosmos. Therefore, the aim of education is very much concerned with the question of the nature of the universe. This is what makes for the close relation between philosophy and education.

CHAPTER 2

ROUSSEAU'S PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION

“Correct education disposes the child to take the path that will lead him to truth when he has reached the age to understand it, and to goodness when he has acquired the faculty of recognizing and loving it. – Rousseau” (Cunningham 21)

Through all the centuries the theory and practice of education had been determined from the standpoint of adult interest and adult social life. No one had dreamed there could be any other point of view from which to approach the training of the young. Rousseau boldly assailed this basic assumption as not only utterly false but absolutely harmful. In place of the ideas and views of adults, he substituted the needs and activities of the child and the natural course of development. “No change could have been more revolutionary. Just as Copernicus destroyed medieval cosmology, Rousseau put an end to the traditional conceptions of the child, by showing that he is a creature of nature and that he acts and grows in harmony with her laws.” (Eby 335)

The adult point of view carried numerous erroneous and misleading assumptions that were now seen to be quite absurd. Much of the treatment of children as well as most of the methods of instruction, had to undergo radical revision. One of these misconceptions was that the child was a miniature adult, and that enlargement in size and the increase in knowledge are the processes of education. The result being that the children were treated as little men and women. They were expected to understand the same subjects and to be interested in the same ideas as adults. They were obliged to practice the same conventionalities of polite life and, at the same time, to observe a far more rigorous standard of ethical behaviour.

It was from such artificiality that Rousseau wished to liberate the child.

Education had been conceived as a process by which the child must acquire certain habits, skills, attitudes, and a body of knowledge which civilization had handed down. It was the task of the school to transfer these unchanged to each new generation. On the one hand, the stability of society depended on the success of the transfer; on the other, the success of the individual depended on acquiring them. The fact that children are imitative, that the retentive power of memory is strongest in childhood, that they have an

extraordinary ability to acquire language apart from the ideas symbolized – all these have conspired to mislead pedagogy. (Eby 336)

It was the great service of Rousseau to abolish this false system of education. His supreme contribution lay in making the child the centre from which education must be viewed. Teaching and training consist, not in inculcating ideas, but in furnishing the child with opportunities for the functioning of those activities that are natural for each stage.

Another problem was that the interests of society were placed above those of the individual. The child was trained to conform to the existing society. The individual was sacrificed to the whims of society. This is what angered Rousseau, who believed that the goodness and happiness of the individual are more essential than the development of his talent for social service. Thus in setting the needs of the individual above those of organized society, Rousseau reversed the universal order. The heart of his educational theory is the study of nature of the child. His principle involved understanding what nature itself is developing in the child.

2.1. Rousseau's Educational Aims

2.1.1. Final end

It can to some extent be emphasized, that the ultimate aim of Rousseau was the preservation of the natural goodness, and virtues of the heart, and of society which was in harmony with them. In the physical world he observed order, harmony, and beauty; but in the world of man he observed infinite conflict, ugliness, selfishness, which finally resulted in plenty of misery. It was exactly this contrast between the world of nature and the world of man that led to evils in society and to the education given to the young. "The supreme end to be attained is a society in which the noble, primitive virtues – courage, endurance, temperance, equality, fraternity, simplicity and liberty – are realized." (Eby 340)

2.1.2 Individuality the problem of education

The recognition and the liberation of the individual in the modern world came slowly. The first significant expression appeared at the time of the Renaissance. It was confined to the gifted and the aristocratic classes, and, even then, only the personal and artistic aspects of the person were involved. This remarkable display of individual expression in art, scholarship, and literature quickly gave place to an imitative formalism. The Protestant Reformation carried the spirit of revolt and individualistic expression over to the religious side of life.

Meantime the recognition of the individual was making rapid progress in the field of law and government. Hobbes, Grotius, Pufendorf, and Locke set forth the naturalistic basis of the personal and civil rights of the individual. But it still remained for someone to set forth the rights of individuality in the social and philosophic spheres and to correlate these with the civil and religious. Such was the profound service performed by Rousseau. By inner and outer experience he was fitted, as was no other man, to expound and defend the significance of individuality. (Eby 341)

Rousseau was not really opposed to social life. On the contrary, he aimed to enable the individual to enter whole-heartedly into all the basic relationships of humanity. But a person was to enter a society which was adjusted to his or her natural virtues and capacities, and not one in which he or she would be but a packhorse to serve others.

It was in this regard, that Rousseau found it necessary to construct two systems of educations for radically different social conditions. The first system was conceived as a form of education for a state and society organized according to man's natural being. Such a state was compact and small. In this state, education is a public function and extends to every child. Its purpose is to foster the natural, simple virtues, and the sense of solidarity. (Eby 341)

For Rousseau, education was the important business of the state, and natural education was the privilege of free men. Children should be educated together and it is by means of common plays, patriotic training and songs, that a society builds a sense of solidarity.

The second form of education was for existing civilization. So before a child enters social life, his sense of independence, inner goodness, judgment, and resistance, must be built up to withstand the degrading influences of social life. "He must live as a savage, in order that he may keep unscathed the primitive virtues which distinguish man's estate." (Eby 342)

Rousseau had in view the education of the upper classes. The lower classes do not need education, as the circumstances of life produce in them the sense of equality, simplicity, spontaneity, and all the other virtues of which they stand in need. But it is the children of the rich, who are brought up in luxury and artificiality, who require natural education.

2.1.3. General versus specialized education

In the beginning, education aimed to produce the gentleman-scholar to serve the church and the state. This involved the specialization of the powers of the individual and his subjection to others. Rousseau saw in this a direct threat against the fundamental integrity of the person. In making a citizen or a laborer, education made him or her less a person. It was a choice between the natural individual and the distortion of his or her original nature. Thus in opposition to the educational aims of the past, Rousseau was trying to establish a generous and liberal cultivation of the native endowments of the child. The child ought to be developed as a whole, before the cramping moulds of specialization distort its being. Education according to him was meant to fit a person for a changing environment and a changing fortune. Therefore the child should not be trained for a definite vocation or a definite social position.

The variation of individuals in wealth and station makes such training for a single position extremely dangerous. Rousseau drew attention to the fact that society itself is always changing and that man is not a creature fixed and unalterable, because human nature is still in the process of development.
(Eby 343)

Since we do not know the future, and how society will further develop, we cannot intelligently educate for the future. Along the lines of this reasoning it ought to be considered that the child should be educated, not for some uncertain future, but of the present. Rousseau's reason is that the child is wholly incapable of visualizing what the future holds for it. Moreover, in being trained to use its powers in changing conditions of life, the child is best prepared to meet any situation when it shall arise.

2.1.4 The educational institution

What institution shall train a child? Is education a public or a family function? These were some of the doubts that were raised during Rousseau's time. For Rousseau both were important depending on the needs involved. Both systems were designed to preserve those fundamental virtues which constituted the supreme end of life and the chief good of the state. "They are both cooperating factors in a small state, and through both the common life, habits, and sentiments are communicated to the young. Both unite in developing equality, fraternity, simplicity, liberty, and all the other virtues." (Eby 345)

2.2. Purpose of Emile

The work that made Rousseau famous and which would be great for us would be his *Emile*. It is in this book that one will find all his concerns of the child, and his aims of education. *Emile* undertakes to show how education might minimize the drawbacks of civilization and bring man as near to nature as possible.

As the *Social Contract* and his discourses were written to counteract the oppressive social and political conditions, the *Emile* aims to replace the conventional and formal education of the day with a training that should be natural and spontaneous.

We learn that under this *ancien regime* little boys had their hair powdered, wore a sword, 'the chapeau under the arm, a frill, and a coat with gilded cuffs,' that a girl was dressed in equal ridiculous imitation of a fashionable woman, and that education was largely one of deportment and the dancing master, for 'this is to be the great thing for them when they become men and women, and for this reason it is the thing of chief importance for them as children.' On the intellectual side, education was largely traditional and consisted chiefly of a special training in Latin grammar, words, and memoriter work. Rousseau scathingly criticized these practices and pleaded for reform. Hence in the *Emile* he applies his naturalistic principles to the education of an imaginary pupil of that name, from the moment of his birth up to the time when, having become a mature man, he will no longer need any other guide than himself. (Graves 86)

2.3. Emile and Education according to Nature

In this long tale, part novel, part dialectic exposition, Rousseau describes the education of the youth appropriate to his ideal society. The child is taken from his parents and the schools, isolated from society, and put into the hands of a tutor, who brings him up in contact with nature's wonders and nature's

beauties. In this treatise, 'education according to nature' receives fullest exposition. (Monroe 28)

2.3.1 Threefold meaning of Nature in Emile

While Rousseau is not consistent in his use of the term nature, and employs it, as is frequently done by others, in a very vague way, yet one of three definite meanings can usually be assigned to it.

2.3.1.1 Social significance

The first and fundamental meaning of nature is the social one. In *Emile*, he describes an education based, not on the forms of society, on the meaningless traditions of the school, and on an entire ignorance of childhood, but on a deep knowledge of the true nature of a person. In his *Social Contract* he claimed that the only rights of a person were found in the laws of their own nature. In *Emile*, he claims that education should be guided by these same laws. The natural person is not a savage one, but a person governed and directed by the laws of their own nature. Such laws are discovered through investigation.

2.3.1.2. Psychological significance

A second meaning given to nature is that the instinctive judgments, primitive emotions and natural instincts, are more trustworthy as a basis for action, than are the reflection or experience that comes from association with others. Thus Rousseau constantly attacks the formation of habits in education. The only habit which a child should be allowed to contract is 'no habit whatsoever'. "Habit, in the sense of primary disposition unaltered by enlightenment or by suggestion from others, is to be followed. Habits, in its usual significance, as that fixed method of action which is acquired by direct imitation, or by suggestion from others, is to be shunned." (Monroe 285)

2.3.1.3 Phenomenal or Physical significance

The third sense, in which nature is used, is to indicate inanimate and subhuman nature. The mal-education that comes from man must be counteracted by contact, fearless and intimate, with animals, with plants, and with physical phenomena and forces of all

kinds. Rousseau was a lover of nature, and through his teachings began a movement of finer and fuller appreciation of nature. This movement found its expression in a wide school of literature in England.

CHAPTER 3

EMILE

The book is divided into five parts, four of which deal with Emile's education in the stages of infancy, childhood, boyhood and youth respectively. The fifth part deals with the training of the girl who is to become his wife. Thus, through an imaginary student, Emile, Rousseau projects how a child should be educated and trained.

The education of children of children is determined by the various periods of development. Each stage has its own dominant faculty, which emerges and becomes the mainspring in organizing life. "The recognition of the stages of development was not something new. It was, however, Rousseau who made it a vital principle for education, by showing its deeper significance." (Eby 338)

According to him, the various stages are sharply marked off from one another by their special characteristics or functions. The first stage from birth to five is the animal stage. Then there emerges the dawn of self consciousness. At twelve, he suddenly becomes conscious of his self in a deeper way. The rational faculty awakens and with it, the higher sentiments emerge. But the child is still an isolated being without true moral life. The next stage is reached at puberty, with the emergence of a person's sexuality, which is the most important factor in the entire life history of the individual. With the emergence of sex, the social life of the individual properly begins

As the periods are sharply marked in their rise, they are independent of each other in their development. No period should be made a means of getting to the next. Each is an end in itself, an independent whole, and not merely a transition to higher period. Each stage has its own special needs and desires, and forms the habits that are best suited for the perfect self realization of life at that stage. (Eby 339)

Thus, the principles to be followed in one period do not hold for another, for the task is to foster the budding activities and the interests of the child's nature, and not to give him the conventional habits and ideas of society.

3.4.1 Stage I: Infant Education

We are born with a capacity for learning, but know nothing and distinguish nothing. The mind is cramped by imperfect half-formed organs and has not even the consciousness of its own existence. The movements, the cries of the new born child are purely mechanical, quite devoid of understanding and will.

Children's first sensations are wholly in the realm of feeling. They are only aware of pleasure and pain. With walking and grasp undeveloped, it takes a long time for them to construct the representative sensations which acquaint them with external objects; but even as these objects reach up and depart from their eyes, if one may put it so, the recurrence of the sensations begins to subject them to the bondage of habit. (Cahn 158)

3.4.1.1 The method of nature in training infants

Education begins at birth or before, and the first period of five years is concerned primarily with the growth of the body, motor activities, sense perception, and feelings. The method of nature had to be followed in everything. Thus Rousseau, with impassionate pleading, recalled mothers to their natural duties, and even made it fashionable to breast feed their offspring.

The individuality of each child had to be respected. It was wrong to model different minds on after one common pattern. The concern was not to alter the natural disposition of the mind, but to prevent degeneration.

“The doctrine of individual differences is fundamental to Rousseau. He wrote: One nature needs wings, another shackles: one has to be flattered, another to be intimidated. One man is made to carry human knowledge to the farthest point; another may find the possibility to read a dangerous power.” (Eby 346)

Rousseau condemned the prevailing styles of dressing infants in swaddling clothes, which hindered the free movements of the body and the limbs. On the other hand, he liberated helpless babies from the bondage of dress; on the other hand, he accepted the hardening process for the body. Even in infancy, the facing of hardships is nature's method. In this regard he claims, “Observe nature and follow the route which she traces for you. She is ever exciting children to activity; she hardens the constitution by trials of every sort; she teaches at an early hour what suffering and pain are.” (Eby 346)

Nothing must be done for the child that he can do for himself. This was the principle that governed infancy. “Life is a struggle for existence; this is the most fundamental biological law – a law to which the child must conform. Skill in walking, in talking, and in self-help is to be developed in direct relation to his needs, and with as little assistance as possible.” (Eby 347) Rousseau detested medicine and considered hygiene less a science than a virtue or habit of right living.

Moral and social life are absolutely alien to the infants mind. However, the interval between birth and the age of twelve is the most dangerous period in human life. The reason being that at this time errors and vices begin to germinate. All vices are implanted by unwise coddling or pampering of infants. By allowing this to happen, one germinates in their little hearts, the spirit of caprice and an insatiable appetite for self-aggrandizement.

3.4.1.2 Educational process at this stage

For Rousseau education does not arise from without; it springs from within. It is the internal development of our faculties and organs that constitutes the true education of nature. The first education is the free and unhampered expression of the natural activities of the child in relation to the physical environment. The important thing is that the child is allowed to obey the inner impulse to action, and that he experiences directly the results of his behaviour.

3.4.2 Stage II: Education from five to twelve

Keep the child in sole dependence on things and you will follow the natural order in the course of his education. Put only physical obstacles in the way of indiscreet wishes and let his punishments spring from his own actions. Without forbidding wrong doing, be content to prevent it. Experience or impotence apart from anything else should take the place of law for him. Satisfy his desires, not because of his demands but because of his own needs. He should have no consciousness of obedience when he acts, nor of mastery when someone acts for him. Let him experience liberty equally in his acts, and yours. (Cahn 160)

This is the most important and most critical period of human life. It has to be controlled by two principles, namely, education should be negative, and that moral training should be by natural consequences.

3.4.2.1 Existing methods of teaching and training

Rousseau was a severe critic of the methods then in fashion in the schools. For most children, childhood was a sorrowful period, as instruction was heartlessly severe. Grammar was beaten into their memory. Teachers had not yet imagined that children could find any pleasure in learning, or that they should have eyes for anything but reading, writing, and memorizing. The only form of learning that teachers knew was learning by rote. Rousseau considered this a grave error; for he believed that the child had no real memory, and that purely verbal lessons meant nothing to him.

3.4.2.2 Rousseau's opposition to books

Rousseau saw in such a method only a means of slaving mankind. This was the education that depended on books and upon the authority of others. Of his bitter aversion to books Rousseau expressed himself vigorously. "I hate books; they merely teach us to talk of what we do not know." (Eby 348)

This distrust in books is not confined to one stage of life. The book comes in between the child and things. Moreover, the knowledge that the child learns from books takes the place of the exercise and formation of his own judgment.

3.4.2.3 Naturalism vs. a soft pedagogy

One will most likely conclude that, in adopting a system of doing nothing and allowing nothing to be done, Rousseau became the advocate of a soft and easy-going pedagogy. Some of his statements would seem to favour this interpretation. However, Rousseau had in view something very different from the ordinary conception of the easy-going life. He aimed to avoid not only a *laissez-faire* policy on the one hand, but also that of the martinet on the other hand. He relieved his fictitious pupil of the harsh yoke of the conventional system of education, but in its place he put the severe yoke of getting food, clothing and shelter.

3.4.2.4 Criticisms of the elementary curriculum

Rousseau was not eager to have Emile, before twelve, learn anything of the conventional character, not even reading. He did, however, expect a boy to pick up reading incidentally. He opposed fairy tales and fancy for the pre-school age, because they are not real. He even objected to fables for the age of boyhood. "Aesop's fables, chosen particularly for their moral value, had for many centuries formed the first reading text. But it was because of their supposed moral significance that Rousseau cast them aside. The reason being, that the boy was not a moral being yet, and also because these fables were misleading." (Eby 350)

Moreover, the reaction against the extreme application to ancient languages reached its climax in Rousseau. He did not believe that a boy could learn more than one language, and that had to be his mother tongue.

History was another study to which objection was raised for this stage, and on several grounds. Children do not have true memory, and therefore, they are unable to form ideas of human conduct and to judge historic situations. Furthermore, history was confined to too much wars, kings, dates, and political facts of secondary importance. It did not treat the significant events of human value. Again, history deals with society, and the child is incapable of understanding social phenomena. History, according to him, therefore, had to be excluded from this stage of development. Geography, also, was too advanced for the children.

Thus, Rousseau rules out not only the older subjects which had formed the curriculum for centuries but also the new materials of the new era. In no respect did Rousseau violate universal tradition so much as in the rejection of religious instruction. The child had not to hear of God until he reached the age of reason. This idea had far circling consequences on education.

3.4.2.5 The curriculum and practical activities

The activities which spring naturally from the needs of life form the curriculum at each stage. The needs of boyhood are simple, merely pertaining to existence. First come play and sports, which improve the body, bringing health, strength and growth. Then, too, the child engages in securing a livelihood. "Agriculture is the first employment of

man; it is the most useful, the most honourable, and consequently the most noble that he can practice.” (Eby 351)

The child learns to handle the spade and the hoe, hammer, plane, and file – in fact, the tools of all the trades. These activities lead him to count, measure, weigh. And compare the objects with which he deals. He judges distances, learns to observe and to draw accurately the things he observes. Speech, singing, arithmetic, and geometry, are not learned as formal schoolroom subjects, but as activities that are related to life situations.

Before the age of twelve, the child cannot reason. His needs are simple and few, and can easily be satisfied. His power to secure satisfaction is not yet commensurate with even these simple needs, and accordingly a feeling of weakness and dependence is experienced. He is still in a pre-social, pre-moral stage of being, and is only capable of responding to things and to necessity. The general policy for his education is:

“Exercise his body, his organs, and his powers, but keep his soul lying fallow for as long as you possibly can. Be on your guard against all feelings which precede the judgment that can estimate their value!” (Eby 351)

At this stage the child does not know the will of another, and should not be subjected to either commands or punishments. His activities are caused by necessity, and he can have no real sense of responsibility or of duty.

3.4.2.6 Negative Education

The prevailing conception of human nature, reinforced by both educational and religious teachings, was entirely opposed to that of Rousseau. Human nature was considered essentially bad. The purpose of religious training as well as that of education in general, was to eradicate the original nature and to replace it by one shaped under man’s direction.

Rousseau opposed this idea with the following principle: ‘The first education, then, should be purely negative. It consists, not in teaching the principles of virtue and truth, but in guarding the heart against vice and the mind against error.’ With him the entire education of the child was to come from the free development of his own nature, his own powers, and his own natural inclinations. His will was not to be thwarted. (Monroe 286)

Rousseau adopted this method for several reasons. The first reason being, that it followed logically from the principle that human nature is good and that it unfolds by virtue of inner compulsion. Any interference with this natural unfolding would be corrupting. The evils of man are directly due to the bad education that he has received.

He was incensed at the bad methods of motivation and discipline involved. He disapproved of rebukes, corrections, threats, and punishments. Worst of all, he hated prizes, rewards and promises. These for him, only induced them to do or learn something that was alien to their active interests.

By this negative education, Rousseau did not maintain that there should be no education at all, but that there should be one of a different kind, from the normally accepted educational practices. Rousseau claimed that positive education was that type of education which formed the mind prematurely, and which instructed the child in duties that belonged to man. Negative education according to him, was that education which perfected the organs that are the instruments of knowledge, before giving the knowledge directly. It further prepares the way for reason by the proper exercise of the senses. Negative education does not imply a time of idleness. It does not give virtues, but protects the person from vice. It does not inculcate truth, but protects one from error. It helps the child to take the path that will lead him to truth, when he has reached the age to understand it. It will also help him to take the path of goodness, when he has acquired the faculty of recognizing and loving it.

3.4.3 Stage III: The Age Of Reason

At twelve or thirteen the child's powers develop much more rapidly than his needs. The sex passions, the most violent and terrible of all, have not yet awakened. He is indifferent to the rigours of weathers and seasons, and braves them light heartedly. His growing body heat takes the place of clothing. Appetite is his sauce, and everything nourishing tastes good. When he is tired, he stretches himself out on the ground, and goes to sleep. He is not troubled by imaginary wants. What people think does not trouble him. Not only is he self-sufficient, but his strength goes beyond his requirements.... It is not a question of teaching him the sciences, but giving him a taste for them, and methods of acquiring them when this taste is better developed. This is certainly the fundamental principle in all good education. (Cahn 165)

This is the period in life in which the strength of the individual is greater than his needs.

3.4.3.1 Emergence of reason

When he broke with then leaders of the Enlightenment, on account of their exaggerated emphasis on reason, Rousseau reacted to the extreme position and denied the value of the rational nature. Later he saw his error and assigned to reason a genuine, though subordinate function. As he conceived it, reason does not arise from sensation, as the materialists held; nor is it an original and innate principle, as the rationalists believed. It is a natural faculty that had its origin in the emotional life. (Eby 352)

The period from twelve to fifteen, Rousseau called the 'Age of Reason,' for the emergence of reason is its most important characteristic. Self preservation is the fundamental urge of life, the spontaneous expression of inner, biological animality. Our first impulses are naturally self-ward, and all our behaviour is for individual well-being. Sensory experiences do not form the origin of mental life. It is not comes from without, but what comes from within that produces human behaviour and determines the course of development.

The rise of self-consciousness is a fact of deeper significance than the mere increase of sensory experience. It is a higher principle of life, one which imparts unity and continuity to all the varied movements and experiences of the mind. It marks the departure from the stage of mere animal feeling to the higher sentiments and faculties of the soul. From these sentiments arise man's higher life, for they form the motives of all adult activities. Thus, we find that Rousseau's psychological views were formed as a direct protest against both materialism and rationalism.

What causes the emergence of rational judgment at this stage? The explanation that Rousseau gives is one of the deeper theories that he evolved. The inner life of the child is conditioned by the relation, which his needs bear to the strength that he can exert for the satisfaction of those needs. In infancy, his needs are few and simple, and his strength feeble. At the age of twelve, the strength of the child is developed much more rapidly than his needs. Owing to his pre pubertal increment in muscular power, the youth is much stronger than is necessary to satisfy his needs, which have as yet remained few

and simple. “He whose strength exceeds his desires has some power to spare; he is certainly a very strong being.” (Eby 353)

It is this preponderance of strength beyond the satisfaction of his needs that causes reason to emerge.

3.4.3.2 Reason, an accessory faculty

“Our needs or desires are the original cause of our activities; in turn, our activities produce intelligence, in order to guide and govern our strength and passions, for reason is the check to strength.” (Eby 353)

Inasmuch as intelligence evolved in relation to activities, it is necessary that these be developed to a high degree before reason appears. “Childhood is the sleep of reason. Furthermore, Rousseau declared: ‘Of all the faculties of man, reason is that which is developed with the most difficulty and the latest.’” (Eby 353)

Only when the child has reached the age of twelve, does reason begin to stir, and the time for its uninterrupted development is exceedingly brief. When the strength of youth is augmented out of proportion to his needs, reason awakens in order to furnish guidance, for this is the function of the rational life.

3.4.3.3 Education during the age of reason

Reason then is not some divine entity, but only an accessory faculty. This is the age when real education by the human agency begins. Up to this time, the unfolding of the child has been determined by natural laws; and with the action of these laws the educator must never interfere. However, the new stage is the period of labour, of instruction and study.

Teachers have made numerous mistakes they have not understood the nature of reason and the time when it arises. The first blunder was to educate the child through reason. This for Rousseau was to begin at the end. Thus all efforts to reason with children before reason emerges, is not only foolish but injurious.

The common error of parents is to suppose that their children are capable of reasoning as soon as they are born, and to talk to them as though they are already grown up persons. Reason is the instrument

they use, whereas every instrument first ought to be used in order to form their reason... (Eby 354)

The design of nature is obviously to strengthen the body before the mind. When allowed to awaken at the proper time, reason projects the future of the child.

The second blunder has been to substitute authority for the child's own mental efforts.

The third blunder of traditional pedagogy was attributing to reason a power that it did not possess. This was the mistake of the rationalists. As reason appears later than the passions, and as it emerges out of them, it is subordinate to them. It is not the reliable guide for conduct. "Rousseau startled philosophy by declaring that a 'the divine voice of a man's heart and his inner conscience alone are the infallible guides and capable of bringing him happiness.'" (Eby 355)

3.4.3.4 Imagination

Of all the faculties which emerge at this stage, Rousseau had a positive aversion for the imagination. He never thought of imagination as producing something that is good. It creates unnecessary and artificial needs which spring from social rivalry. It inflames the passions and is, therefore, the one faculty that is responsible for the vices and evils of social and moral life.

3.4.3.5 Curiosity and utility as motivations

As the feeling of need causes the activity of the body, so curiosity causes the activity of the mind. It is the motivating power for intellectual life. The child is curious, because every object or situation has significance for his struggle for life and well-being. As curiosity is caused by desire for well-being, it relates only to that which will be of real service to the child. Utility is, therefore, the one and only principle that determines the curriculum at this stage.

All the artificial means that teachers employ to make children work, such as sense of honour, pride, rivalry, or the approval of elders, are useless and injurious. The true

motive for learning is the desire to know or the usefulness and service of knowledge. Rousseau agreed with Bacon and Locke in exalting utility as the best motivation.

3.4.3.6 Rousseau's hatred of rivalry

Rivalry had always been one of the chief motivations in school. Rousseau regarded it as the arch evil of social life and utterly prohibited its unemployment.

“Let there be no comparisons with other children; as soon as he begins to reason let him have no rivals, no competitors, even in running. I would a hundred times rather he would not learn what he can learn only through jealousy and vanity.” (Eby 355)

This clearly shows the detest Rousseau had for rivalry or emulation.

3.4.3.7 The curriculum

For intellectual instruction no definite course of study should be projected. Those subjects which make a genuine contribution to the self preservation of the individual should given greater attention. Geography and astronomy are the first subjects of interest, and these ought to be learnt directly from nature. This is then followed by the physical sciences. This further leads to agriculture and arts and crafts. When the student has a good acquaintance with these, he is trained in cabinet making. Such ought to be the curriculum from 12 to 15.

The central concern of Rousseau was threefold:

- 1) The first was to implant a taste for knowledge. He believed that knowledge had to be given, but the person should also be taught how to acquire it when necessary. This will enable the student to estimate its worth, and to love it above everything else.
- 2) The second was to think clearly. Thus for Rousseau the important thing was that only those ideas which were accurate and clear should enter the mind.
- 3) The third was to furnish the right method. It was not only important to teach the student the sciences, but to also give him a taste for it. This for him was the fundamental principle of all good education. (Eby 356)

3.4.3.8 The method of training

Rousseau firmly believed that we learn things much better if we learn them by ourselves. Thus his great principle was that nothing should be learnt on the authority of others.

Thus Rousseau placed Emile in situations that obliged him to depend upon his own strength, to get his own bread, to think his own thoughts, to reach his own conclusions. By this Rousseau was basically trying to say that Emile had to depend on his own brains and not on the opinions of others.

3.4.3.9 The students must invent the apparatus

Another principle which Rousseau stressed was that the student should make his own apparatus. After observing geographic facts, he is to make charts, maps, and globes.

Finally, Rousseau pictures the ideal boy at the end of this stage to be industrious, temperate, patient, firm, and full of courage and endurance.

3.4.4 Stage IV: Education From Fifteen To Twenty

But man is not meant to be a child for ever. At the time prescribed by nature, he passes out of his childhood. As the fretting of the sea precedes the distant storm, this disturbing change is announced by the murmur of nascent passions....

With the moral signs of changing mood go patent physical changes. His countenance develops and takes on the imprint of a definite character. The soft slight down on his cheeks grows darker and firmer. His voice breaks, or rather, gets lost. He is neither child nor man, and he speaks like neither. His eyes, organs of the soul, which have hitherto had nothing, find language and experience as they light up with a new fire. (Cahn 170)

3.4.4.1 Puberty and the social period

The most crucial event in the history of the human being is the emergence of sex. Up to this stage, life was more an animal existence, but now human sentiments begin to emerge. Hitherto the child's body, senses and brain have been formed. It is now time for his heart to be shaped. The child had been educated solely for himself and by himself. Now he has to be educated for a life with others and is to be educated in social relationships. Love for others, now becomes the controlling motive. Emotional development and moral perfection becomes the goal.

3.4.4.2 Limitations of the child's mind

The mind of the child is limited to a low level of experience. He knows things but does not know their relation to others or to man. He does not know himself, and in the consequence, he cannot judge others. He is, accordingly, incapable of social and religious experience. It is because of this reason that he cannot comprehend and appreciate the meaning of life. The world of the spirit, morality, art, and philosophy is as yet sealed to him. Nevertheless, these are the interests that raise mankind above the level of the savage. Up to the age of 15 Emile knows nothing of history, morals or society. He can generalize and can comprehend but a few abstractions.

3.4.4.3 The crucial development

All the highest experiences and sentiments arise due to the emergence of the sex life. As soon as a man has the need of a companion, he is no longer an isolated being. All his relations with his species, and all the affections of the soul are born with her. The sex life arouses many other sentiments which are secondary to it. Among these senses are those such as appreciation of beauty and the sublime, the perception of human relations, the sense of moral and social life and the religious emotions.

3.4.4.4 Social and moral life

Once the student becomes conscious of his dependence, he becomes obliged to begin a study of his own nature and his relation to others.

Discussing education during the period of adolescence, Rousseau wrote, 'It is at this age that the skillful teacher begins his real function as an observer and philosopher who knows the art of exploring the heart while attempting to mould it.'

First of all is the need of warding off evil passions. Second, Rousseau would now arouse the higher emotions such as friendship, sympathy, gratitude, love justice, goodness and philanthropy. These emotions are to be awakened by the study of the mental, social and moral nature of man. These subjects are not only to be studied indirectly through books, but to be experienced in life. (Eby 359)

The true work of education is the inner emergence, growth, exercise and the integration of the feelings, sentiments and the passions. It is not so much the outer

discovery, or observation of reality, as the evolution of inner feelings which invest outer phenomena with meaning, use and value.

The awakening of inner feelings must precede the attributing of these feelings to outer causes. It is with this inner development and integration, that the world of spirit, morality, duty, art, religion, and philosophy dawns. Rousseau believed that it is this inner unfolding and enrichment of experience which has raised civilization above the level of a savage.

3.4.4.5 The curriculum

The curriculum at this stage will include knowledge of human nature and the social order, which today would classify as psychology, sociology and ethics. Rousseau did not have in mind primarily the study of these subjects in books; but in concrete life situations, the warm experiences of the actual relations of living men. With regard to literature, Rousseau favoured the ancient literature. He prescribed fables to help in the moral training. Religion too, had an important part to play. By religion, he was referring to the natural religion of the human heart, and not of the dogmas and creeds of the church.

3.4.5 Education Of Woman

Emile has now become a man, and a life companion must be found for him. Accordingly the last book deals with the education of woman. It is the weakest part of the book, because Rousseau completely abandons the individualistic training that is given to the man.

The whole education of women ought to be relative to men. To please them, to be useful to them, to make themselves honoured and loved by them, to educate them when young, to care for them when grown, to console them, to make life agreeable and sweet to them – these are the duties of women at all times, and what should be taught them from infancy. (Graves 96)

Like men, women should be given adequate bodily training, but rather for the sake of physical charms and of producing vigorous offspring than for their own development. Their instinctive love of pleasing through dress should be made of service by teaching them sewing, embroidery, lace-work, and designing. Further, girls ought to

be obedient and industrious, and they ought to be brought up through constraint. They have to learn to suffer injustices, and to endure the wrongs of their husbands without complaint. Girls had to be taught singing, dancing, and other accomplishments that will make them attractive, without interfering with their submissiveness. They should be instructed dogmatically in religion, at a really very early age. For him, every daughter should have the religion of her mother, and every wife that of her husband. In ethical matters, they should be largely guided by public opinion. A woman should learn to study men. She must learn to penetrate their feelings thought their conversation, their actions, their looks, and their gestures.

Thus, we see that the education of the boy begins with radical naturalism and individualism, but ends by evolving a romantic idealist. The education of the girl, however, remains hopelessly traditional.

This strange denial of independent personality to women can only be explained on the ground that Rousseau had no contact with women of character and his conception of human personality was not broad enough to include the female virtues. This is why he ends with an anticlimax.

CHAPTER 4

HIS INFLUENCE IN THE FIELD OF EDUCATION

Influence of Rousseau on education is evident even today. If it is accepted that the child should be imparted education, while treating him as a child and conservatism should have no place in education, it is all due to Rousseau. If we talk of vocational or craft being taught to children, the credit goes to Rousseau. He also laid emphasis on educating the heart along with the mind and hands. In fact, he brought about a new era in education. (Rai 251)

Thus the most revolutionary and the most potent effects of Rousselianism appear in educational theory and practice. Few men have had as great an influence upon the organization, method, and content of education. Although his mission was largely to destroy traditionalism, and most of the specific features of his naturalism have in time been modified or rejected, many of the principles in modern pedagogy go back to him. His criticism caused men to rush to the defense of existing systems, and when they failed in their attempts to reinstate them, they undertook the construction of something better.

Rousseau's philosophy has had a great impact in the following areas.

4.1. The Education of Natural Interests vs. the Education of Artificial Effort

Rousseau firmly believed that education is a natural, and not an artificial process. It is a development from within, and not something from without. It comes through the workings of natural instincts and interests, and not through response to external force. It is an expansion of natural powers, not an acquisition of information. For Rousseau, education was life itself, and not a preparation for a future state, which was remote in interests and characteristics, from the life of childhood.

Earlier, education was aimed at remaking the nature of the child by forcing upon him the traditional way of thinking, of doing, and even of emotional reaction.

It substituted for the instinctive or 'natural' reaction of the child those artificial reactions developed through many generations of religious,

intellectual and social formalism. Human affections were evil, and hence the heart had to be separated from the objects of natural desire. Human affections were untrustworthy, and hence they could not be made the basis of knowledge or of instruction. Human inclinations and instincts, springing from nature depraved of its essence, were toward the evil and were to be eradicated. (Monroe 291)

In traditional society, natural interests, which were expressions of nature, had to be shunned in all educational processes. An activity possessed educational value if it were difficult to perform and if it was distasteful emotionally.

The first step in the moral education of the child was to break the will of the child, which represented the evils of human nature. This was to be followed in his social and moral education by the constant effort to mold the child into artificial forms of conduct that were satisfactory to the judgment of the adult, even though such forms might conceal motives contradictory to the external expression.

“The child was considered to be a miniature adult – of no value and of no rights until he could mimic the way of the adult. In this most artificial of all ages, in dress, in manners, in deportment, in pleasures, the child was molded on the pattern of his seniors.” (Monroe 292)

Previous to Rousseau, the child was merely the adult viewed through the wrong end of the telescope. He spoke as an adult, thought as an adult and acted as an adult. Even in the field of education, not only did he study the same subjects as the adult, but approached them from the same logical point of view. This was done through formal grammar, which was mastered through the sheer effort of memory. He thus made use of these subjects in the same artificially organized life.

Thus we find that all the subsidiary precepts of Rousseau were but concrete applications of his one general protest against the traditional conception of education. “Take the reverse of the accepted practice, and you will always do right.” (Monroe 293) This is what Rousseau advised. Thus it is in Rousseau that we find the negation of the conception of education of the Renaissance and all of its subsequent development.

4.2. Education as a process

Rousseau believed that education was a process, and this process was something that lasted throughout life, or from birth to adult life. Thus education finds its meaning for any particular stage, not in a future state, but in the various process itself.

“What must we think, he asks, of that barbarous education, which sacrifices the present to the uncertain future, which loads a child with chains of every sort, and begins by making him miserable in order to prepare him, long in advance, some pretended happiness which is probable, that he will never enjoy?” (Monroe 293)

Thus for Rousseau, education is no longer a harsh, artificial, unsympathetic procedure, by which a child as a little man is made into a big man through the hands of his teacher. It is through allowing natural forces to have their way, that this process becomes an enjoyable, rational, and harmoniously balanced one. For Rousseau, the end is reached, not with adult life, but with each succeeding day, whenever life has its natural activities, its appropriate duties and its corresponding satisfactions.

4.3. The child as the positive factor in education

To Rousseau belongs the honour of deriving his educational theories from the nature of the child. It is with Rousseau, that education finds its purpose, its process and its means wholly within the life and experience of the child. An appropriate development of childhood is the purpose of each particular stage of education. The child's nature and growth are to determine the process, and the child's experience is to furnish the means. “All the reforms of Pestalozzi, Herbart, Froebel, and a multitude of other reformers of lesser influence, find their origin in the teachings of Rousseau.” (Monroe 295)

4.4. The foundation of the nineteenth century educational development

In Rousseau's teachings is to be found the truth upon which all the educational development of the nineteenth century is based. “Rousseau was the prophet denouncing the evil of the old; foretelling, yet seeing vaguely and in distorted outline, the vision of the new.” (Monroe 295)

He became the inspiration of those educational reformers who reduced his vagaries to practicable procedure.

He was the forerunner of many who, all unconscious of their indebtedness to the despised revolutionist, have followed in the trails he blazed until now they have become the broad highway of travel. [...] As nature to Rousseau meant the native instincts, tendencies, capacities of the human being as opposed to those acquired through association with his fellows, he became the precursor of the educational psychologists. (Monroe 295)

It was from out of this that grew the most important and the most fruitful development in the whole of the history of education. The fundamental idea of this tendency in the educational thought derived from Rousseau is that education is a natural process. It starts from natural instincts and tendencies to action, and should be controlled by the principles derived from the study of the child's mind in development and of the adult's mind in its functioning. Also Rousseau's teaching that the educational material should be the facts and phenomena of nature, strongly reinforced the scientific tendency in modern education.

Lastly, in Rousseau's teaching that education should prepare the individual to live in a society wherein each should contribute by his own labour to his own support, should be bound by sympathy to all his fellow men and by benevolence to all that needed his aid, he laid the sociological tendencies in education.

In his individualism he clearly emphasizes the idea of a social education of a new type. This is seen in his introduction of an occupation as a component part of education, in his rejection of the formal education of the times fostered by and fostering in turn the dominant aristocratic classes of his day, and in his emphasis upon the emotional and moral as opposed to the intellectual aspect of education. (Monroe 296)

4.5. The effect on schools

Profound influences do not have their effects on schools immediately. The effects are seen only when the results of these later tendencies are discovered.

In France, where the influence of Rousseau on thought and sentiment was most profound, the old regime was so thoroughly ingrained in the social organization that change could come only as a result of a violent revolution. In addition to this, the

teachings of the *Emile* were looked upon as a direct attack on the aristocracy and upon the church. Hence the vested interest and authority of both were invoked against it.

“In England, where Rousseau’s literary influence was very great, and where his social ideas found many converts, his educational ideas received little support. A considerable literature on the subject of education, influenced more or less by Rousseau’s ideas, now appeared, and the rather extensive child literature of the early nineteenth century was a direct outgrowth of the influence of the *Emile*.” (Monroe 297)

CONCLUSION

Rousseau seemed to live in a system that cried out for a more natural system of education that would let the child grow more freely. His comments and suggestions appeared radical; they had to be such, if a change was to be brought about. He wrote at a time when everything was so compartmentalized and controlled, including education. Thus one had to be freed from the shackles of such a system, and it was Rousseau who ventured into this bold task

His stages of development, which is the key to his philosophy, only meant that a child should be allowed to develop slowly. Nature would teach the child. This did not mean that the child had to be left alone; but rather that nature had to be used by, the teacher, as the main instrument in teaching the child. Added to this his concepts of negative education, the curriculum at different stages, etc. were all meant to bring about something in the rather stagnant system of education.

5.1. Merits and demerits of Emile

“The Emile, it must be stated, is often illogical, erratic, and inconsistent. Rousseau constantly sways from optimism to pessimism, spontaneity to authority, from liberalism to intolerance.” (Graves 98)

Even though Rousseau held that society was corrupt, he had great confidence in the confidence of all the individuals of which it is composed of. In the face of history and psychology, he opposes nature to culture, and creates a dualism between reason and emotion. Although the instincts and the reactions of Emile are given free play, they are really under the constant guidance of his tutor.

However, in spite of such inconsistencies, the *Emile* has at all times been accounted as a work of great richness and power. The brilliant thought, the underlying wisdom of many of his suggestions, the sentimental appeal, and the clear, enthusiastic, and ardent presentation have completely over balanced its contradictions and logical deficiencies.

The most marked feature of Rousseau's education and the one that is most subject to criticism has been its extreme revolt against civilization and social control. A state of nature is held to be the ideal condition, and all social relations are regarded as degenerate. The child is to be brought up in isolation by the laws of brute necessity and to have no social and political education until it is fifteen.

The absurdity of this anti social education has always been keenly felt. Children cannot be reared in a social vacuum, nor can they be trained merely as world citizens to the complete exclusion of specific forms of authority. So, although society may become stereotyped and corrupt, it is an important means of carrying the accumulated race experience and attainments. We have to take into consideration that Rousseau was writing at a time when there uttermost need for such an extreme doctrine. If he had not been so powerful in expressing his opinion, he would have not secured the attention of the public, and would have most probably just been brushed aside.

By means of paradoxes and exaggerations he was able to emphasize the crying need of a natural development of person, and to tear down the effete traditions in educational content, organization and methods.

About the position of natural and unsocial education found in the *Emile*, we find many elements of weakness and strength. In the first place, Rousseau is absolutely opposed to all forms of book learning and exaggerates the value of personal observation and inference. He consequently neglects the past, and robs the pupil of all the experience of his fellows and all those who have gone before. However, at the same time he develops the details of observational and experimental work in elementary training to an extent never previously undertaken. He also emphasized physical activity as a means to the growth and development of children.

A fact of greater importance is that, although Rousseau's knowledge of children was exceedingly defective, and his recommendations were marred by unnatural breaks and filled with sentimentality, he saw the need of studying the child as the only basis for education.

In the *Preface to the Emile* he declares: "We do not know childhood. Acting on the false ideas we have of it, the farther we go the farther we wander from the right path. The wisest among us are engrossed in what the adult needs to know and fail to consider what children are able to comprehend. We are

always looking for the man in the child, not taking into account what he is before he becomes a man. [...] Begin then by studying your pupils more thoroughly, for assuredly you know nothing about them..." (Graves 101)

As a result of such appeals the child has become the center of discussion in modern training and we should thank Rousseau for introducing this new principle into education. Thus, despite his limitations and prejudices, he was able to state many details of child development with much force and clearness, which gave an impetus to later reformers, who were able to correct his observations and make them more practicable in education.

By his sharp division of the pupil's development into definite stages that seem little connected with each other, Rousseau has made a remarkable contribution to educational theory and practice. He has shown that there are characteristic differences at different stages in the child's life, but each has a perfection of maturity of its own, and that only as the proper activities are provided for each stage will it reach maturity and perfection.

Finally, we should, on the whole commend Rousseau's religion of nature and deism.

While it is lacking in warmth, reality, and power, it did much to replace the institutionalized and dogmatic Christianity, which had been overwhelmed by the attacks of rationalism, with a pure, lofty, and tolerant faith. His mysterious Being penetrating all nature would seem a deity too vague and too removed to be of comfort and refreshment to human souls, but it was sufficient to purify the dying hierarchical system and duly stress the common interests of humanity. (Graves 102)

5.2. General critique

Rousseau's work was bound up in a revolution from the society, traditions, and education of the past. His theories involved a destruction of the old and moral sanctions, but did not supply much to take its place. A new social order, philosophy, and education were needed to bring about truth and freedom and a reconstructed view of the world. The individual had demanded free sway, and it was now necessary to adjust him or her to their environment without repressing his development. It was in this context, that we see Rousseau becoming a radical in his outlook and method.

However, there are some aspects of his philosophy which do require certain questioning. It is not very wise to leave a child completely free and let it grow without any check or restrictions. The child may learn things from experience, but it also needs guidance at different stages in its life.

Secondly, a child cannot be kept away from society. If it has to learn things by imitating, then it ought to be in society, where the chances of it being able to imitate, will be high. This will also help the child to develop those social qualities which are inherent in it.

Before judging the philosophy of Rousseau, it is necessary to understand that he found in nature, in society, and in education conflicting principles and tendencies. That he endeavored to transcend these conflicts and reach some higher level of reconciliation gives one a deeper respect for his genius

5.3. Personal comments

Rousseau has always been misunderstood, because his philosophy has been analyzed without understanding the context in which he wrote. He aimed at breaking down all the possible barriers that prevented a child from being a child. Much of his life was spent as a vagabond and this resulted with him being very much in touch with nature. So this love he had for nature was something that was bound to be expressed in his writings.

Analyzing today's world, we find that things are quite the same as they were during the time of Rousseau. Two aspects come out very strongly, the first is nature, and the second is the child.

In a world where competition is at its best, nature is just being taken for granted and misused. People rarely have time to stop and appreciate it. Children are only thought those subjects that are career centered. Growing with nature and letting nature guide the process is not something people are willing to consider. Also Rousseau was aiming more at the rich groups. This is quite the same even today. The poor, as compared with the rich, are the ones who are still quite in touch with nature.

Rousseau always felt that nature had so much to teach us. For him Mother Nature was the best teacher. What Rousseau intended was that nature would be less demanding on the child. Nature would not force growth out of the child, but would let things take their toll. However in today's situation everything is so class oriented. We rarely make use of the opportunities to grow and study with nature.

The second aspect, which is of great importance even today, is that of the child. If we had to analyze this aspect we would see that there are many aspects that are connected with it.

The first aspect is that the child is never a child. In Rousseau's time the child was a miniature adult. The same is even today. They are never allowed to enjoy the stage they are in. In childhood they are made to prepare for their teens. In their teens, they are made to prepare for adulthood. They can never really enjoy the stage they are in because they are always trained for the next. The future is the only thing they are trained to see. The present is always the future.

Added to this is the whole aspect of career centered education. The child at the time of Rousseau was always sacrificed at the expense of a career. The same is even today. Everything is so competitive; that the only thing is that the child is supposed to do is to prepare for the future, for a career he or she is unsure of. How can anybody know in their childhood, what career they will indulge themselves in?

Thus Rousseau's method would not be quite acceptable today. Some of his thoughts too would seem quite outdated. But one must not forget the aim Rousseau had in mind. He was only aiming at a better life for the child. So what is most important in Rousseau's philosophy is that no matter what happens, the child should never be forgotten.

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