THE MODERN VALUE OF THE STATE OF NATURE IN ROUSSEAU'S POLITICAL THOUGHT

Emre KARATEKELİ*

ABSTRACT

Rousseau's early work on political philosophy, Discourse on the Origin of Inequality, *seeks to conceptualise the transformation of the savage human of the state of nature into the rational human of the state of civilisation. The overall narrative seems to construct a pessimistic narrative of history, demonstrating the inevitable downfall of humanity from a blissful starting point to a bloodstained, conflict-ridden terminus. In this article, I aim to re-evaluate this negative value of the state of nature in Rousseau. To this end, I emphasise the shift in the role of society as regards freedom in his later political work,* On the Social Contract, *in which not the egoist savage human but the sociable modern human being is thought to be the ultimate goal. I suggest that, instead of considering the hypothetical period of the state of nature as a bygone era of humanity, it could be re-evaluated as providing us with a goal for the human being of the state of civilisation. The simplicity and compassion of the savage human, who is immune from the destructive sentiment of* amour propre, *might be seen as equipping the modern human of excessive egoism with a horizon to determine its line of development.*

Keywords: *Rousseau, savage human, freedom, state of nature, state of civilisation.*

ROUSSEAU'NUN SİYASET DÜŞÜNCESİNDE DOĞA DURUMUNUN MODERN DEĞERİ

ÖZ

Rousseau'nun erken dönem siyaset felsefesi eseri olan İnsanlar Arasındaki Eşitsizliğin Kaynağı, *doğa durumunda yaşayan vahşi insanın medeniyet durumuna ait rasyonel insana dönüşümünü kavramsallaştırmaya çalışmaktadır. Genel olarak bakıldığında, Rousseau'nun anlatısı insanın mutluluk dolu bir başlangıç noktasından kan ve ihtilaf dolu bir bitiş noktasına doğru kaçınılmaz düşüşünü gösteren kötümser bir tarih anlatısına yaslandığı söylenebilir. Bu çalışma, Rousseau'nun siyaset felsefesinin görünürde bu olumsuz anlamı taşıyan doğa durumu kavramını yeniden yorumlamayı hedeflenmektedir. Bu amaçla, Rousseau'nun geç dönem eseri olan* Toplum Sözleşmesi*'nde yer alan toplumun rolünün özgürlük açısından geçirdiği değişime odaklanılıyor. Buna göre, artık egoist vahşi insan değil toplumcu modern insan nihai amaç olarak ele alınmaktadır. Buradan yola çıkarak, doğa durumunu hipotetik bir döneme işaret eden geçip gitmiş bir dönem olarak görmek yerine, medeniyet durumu insanının ulaşması gereken hedef olarak değerlendirebiliriz. Sade yaşamı ve merhametiyle birlikte* amour propre*'den muafiyeti göz önüne alındığında, vahşi insan kavramı aşırı egoizm sahibi modern insanın gelişim çizgisini belirleyecek bir ufuk olarak ele alınabilir.*

Anahtar Sözcükler*: Rousseau, vahşi insan, özgürlük, doğa durumu, medeniyet durumu.*

---

* PHD Candidate at Middle East Technical University, Faculty of Arts and Sciences, Department of Philosophy. emrekaratekeli89@gmail.com, ORCID: 0000-0002-1678-4941

I would like to acknowledge TUBITAK for its scholarship, 2211/E National Scholarship Programme for PhD Students, for supporting my studies.

FLSF (Felsefe ve Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi) *FLSF (Journal of Philosophy and Social Sciences)*
2021 Bahar, sayı: 31, ss. 211-224 *Spring 2021, issue: 31, pp.: 211-224*
Makalenin geliş tarihi: 24.02.2021 *Submission Date: 24 February 2021*
Makalenin kabul tarihi: 28.04.2021 *Approval Date: 28 April 2021*
Web: https://dergipark.org.tr/tr/pub/flsf ***ISSN 2618-5784***

General Framework

Jean-Jacques Rousseau is known for his trenchant criticism of modernity. This criticism draws its strength from his incessant questioning of the values of the Enlightenment, which were regarded as unconditionally tenable and worthwhile among his contemporaries. Yet, this critical distance of him should not be construed in black-and-white terms. As the Neo-Kantian philosopher Ernst Cassirer puts it, "Rousseau is a true son of the Enlightenment, even when he attacks it and triumphs over it."[1] On the other hand, it is out of the question that both his writing style and constantly shifting standpoints make it gruelling for the interpreter to pinpoint his ideas on a firm basis. His corpus bears this difficulty firstly in its style. Excepting his relatively well-ordered works, *Emile* and *On the Social Contract*, almost all of his writings are the product of an impassioned mind, articulating itself in an unsystematic yet spirited manner.[2] One should therefore bear in mind that to acquire an insightful interpretation of Rousseau's ideas too systematic a reading of him must be evaded.[3] Paradoxically, the prodigious son of the *Aufklärung* was far from clarity (*Klarheit*) in terms of writing.[4]

Apart from social and political philosophy, Rousseau's writings range over a vast number of fields from literature and music, botany and education, to autobiography and religion. Considering the scope of this paper, the three discourses and *On the Social Contract* are of interest here. In the *First Discourse*, entitled *Discourse on the Sciences and the Arts*, he inveighs against the absolute authority and value ascribed to the arts and sciences in the age of the Enlightenment, arguing that they in fact lie behind humankind's moral degeneration. *Discourse on the Origin of Inequality*, or the *Second Discourse*,[5] furthers the same line of critique, but this time on a broader basis: modern society and political life lead to such an excessive inequality among human beings that decadence and unhappiness are the hallmarks of human society, even for those who can be said to be materially benefiting from this condition. On the other hand, *Discourse on Political Economy*, or the *Third Discourse*, contains the seeds of his mature work, *On the Social Contract.* The general will and its legitimate application in society are the questions dealt with in these

[1] Ernst Cassirer, *The Philosophy of the Enlightenment*, trans. Fritz C. A. Koelln and James P. Pettegrove (Princeton, Oxford: Princeton University Press, 1979), 273.
[2] Ernst Cassirer, *Rousseau, Kant, Goethe: Two Essays*, trans. James Gutmann, Paul Oskar Kristeller, and John Herman Randall (JR. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1970), 3-4.
[3] Ibid, 45.
[4] Ibid, 59.
[5] Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Discourse On the Origin of Inequality*, in *Basic Political Writings of Jean-Jacques Rousseau*, trans. Donald A. Cress (Indianapolis/Cambridge: Hackett Publishing, 1987).

two works – though, much more complicated and thus seminal in the latter than in the former.

Given the brief descriptions of these four works of Rousseau, it is obvious that the first two works, namely the first and the second discourses, are critical works which zero in on the negative aspect of our modern social and political condition; yet, the last two works, the *Third Discourse* and *On the Social Contract*, are constructive in that they deal with establishing a legitimate political order with a view to cultivating genuine humanity. As has been stated above, this shift of focus and object demonstrates the unjustifiability of reading Rousseau's ideas in a clear-cut way.

Taking into account these intricacies and complexities of his thought, in this paper I will be working out Rousseau's views on modern inequality and modern human's losing sight of the natural human, which is the principal issue of the *Second Discourse*. After the examination of relevant topics centring around the theme of inequality, I will be suggesting my own account of interpreting Rousseau's problematic stance on the issue to be able to obtain a fruitful perspective on it.

Inequality and Its Victims

"Man is born free, and everywhere he is in chains."[6] This famous assertion of Rousseau is taken as a starting point in *On the Social Contract*. Nevertheless, its extensive treatment is undertaken in his earlier work, the *Second Discourse*, which was composed to answer the question 'What is the origin of inequality among men, and is it authorised by natural law?', set by the Academy of Dijon.[7] To investigate modern human's miserable condition of excessive inequality, Rousseau envisages a conjectured period of time in human history; i.e. the state of nature, in which the savage human lives without such inequality. He cautions against mistaking this fictitious, hypothetical period of time for a factual, empirically attested one.[8] Thus, the account of the savage human's metamorphosis into the civilised one is not an issue of scientific historiography

[6] Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *On the Social Contract*, in *Basic Political Writings of Jean-Jacques Rousseau*, trans. Donald A. Cress (Indianapolis/Cambridge: Hackett Publishing, 1987), 141. For similar formulations, see Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Emile* or *On Education*, trans. Allan Bloom (New York: Basic Books, 1979), 222; Christopher Bertram, *Rousseau and* The Social Contract (London, New York: Routledge, 2004), 19.
[7] Nicholas Dent, *Rousseau* (London, New York: Routledge, 2005), 57-8.
[8] Rousseau, *Discourse on Inequality*, 38, 59; Blaise Bachofen, "Der erste Naturzustand als wahrer Naturzustand. Die Tragweite einer anthropologischen Untersuchung," in *Jean-Jacques Rousseau: Die beiden Diskurse zur Zivilisationskritik*, ed. Johannes Rohbeck and Lieselotte Steinbrügge (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2015), 104, 105-6.

but of political philosophy, inasmuch as the latter deals with the logical and conceptual sense of this change.[9]

Rousseau's method of describing the savage human consists in stripping modern human of its artificial characteristics with a view to reaching the genuine kernel of human being, the savage human.[10] Specifying the conditions of the latter can serve both as the starting point of the historical account and the basis for the criticism of modern human: "Everything that comes from *nature* will be true; there will be nothing false except what I have unintentionally added."[11]

This reliance on nature can be likened to the Cartesian methodical doubt in his search for an Archimedean point of certainty.[12] Both Descartes and Rousseau endeavour to establish an unshakeable ground to start philosophy. Accordingly, the modern elements of the human being not compatible with nature can be evaluated as artificial and thus the source of our inequality. As Cassirer states, this method of Rousseau can be traced to the development of political thought as a (so-called) strict science. Likening its method to the rationalist epistemology, which had succeeded in purging itself of all theological assumptions, in the 17th century, thinkers such as Thomas Hobbes and Hugo Grotius were in search of an indubitable principle of politics. Such fundamental principles could function as the self-evident starting points for their non-theological (political) science, just as the Euclidean geometry starts with axioms which are not in need of further proof. In the wake of the revival of Stoicism, according to which the universality and autonomy of reason can provide us with a philosophical system regardless of particular conditions of the human being, the social contract theory turns into an axiom of political philosophy in the 17th century.[13] After a brief look at the historical background of Rousseau's theory of the state of nature, we can now delve into the details of his account.

"The simplicity of the earliest times"[14] makes the earlier human being immune from what Rousseau calls "moral or political inequality"[15] of modern

[9] Ernst Cassirer, *The Myth of the State* (New Haven, London: Yale University Press, 1974), 173.
[10] Rousseau, *Discourse on Inequality*, 40.
[11] Ibid, 39, emphasis added. For a similar formulation, see Rousseau, *Emile*, 92, where he maintains that "the first movements of nature are always right. There is no original perversity in the human heart."
[12] Bachofen, "Der erste Naturzustand als wahrer Naturzustand. Die Tragweite einer anthropologischen Untersuchung," 115.
[13] Cassirer, *Myth of the State*, 165-173.
[14] Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Discourse On the Sciences and the Arts*, in *Basic Political Writings of Jean-Jacques Rousseau*, trans. Donald A. Cress (Indianapolis/Cambridge: Hackett Publishing, 1987), 14.

society, which is rife with rapacious relationships between human beings. By this type of inequality Rousseau understands the artificial, institutionalised inequality between human beings in modern societies, which knows no boundaries. Devoid of modern social institutions causing this, the savage human is subject only to what Rousseau calls "natural or physical"[16] inequality. Since the latter is dependent on the difference between the natural qualities of humans; e.g., the difference of age, bodily and mental strength, etc., its possibility of reaching extreme proportions is non-existent.

According to Rousseau, the savage human in its most primitive state was living in forests with no fixed dwelling, lacking any notion of progress. Moreover, it was by no means in need of modern institutions, family relationships, and education. Susceptible only to a few primordial passions, it was leading a solitary, self-reliant life, making the modern necessity of living at the expense of others simply invalid.[17] Living under a tree, by means of which it could satisfy its bodily needs at any time, the savage human was physically robust and agile under the protective arms of nature. Such health made the need for complicated levels of reflection and language simply redundant. Lacking any kind of sophisticated technology, its body was its sole tool, and self-preservation its sole concern. In lieu of a hypertrophied modern mind, its acute senses were a sure guide in hunting.[18]

From a philosophical perspective, what is noteworthy in this description of the savage human is Rousseau's departure from the natural law tradition, which takes human being's sociability as an established fact. The proponents of this view (such as Hobbes and Locke) could be said to be drawing their fundamental idea from Aristotle, who states in the *Politics* that "a social instinct is implanted in all men by *nature*."[19] According to Aristotle, not only human being's sociability but also the existence of a political structure, in his case the Hellenic polis, is a natural given. Accordingly, anyone outside this political sphere would be unfathomable.[20] By contrast, Rousseau denies any emotional or social bond between human beings in the state of nature; instead, an almost complete indifference to fellow beings is the order of the day.[21] This view of Rousseau is based on his understanding of the state of nature, according to

[15] Ibid, 38.
[16] Ibid, 37.
[17] Ibid, 57.
[18] Ibid, 40-44.
[19] Aristotle, *Politics*, trans. B. Jowett, in *The Complete Works of Aristotle: The Revised Oxford Translation*, ed. Jonathan Barnes (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1995), I.2 1253a27-1253a31.
[20] Ibid, I.2 1253a3-1253a5.
[21] Cassirer, *Philosophy of the Enlightenment* , 259.

which self-sufficient savage humans are not in need of each other. *Prima facie*, this view of Rousseau might sound unfathomable and even nonsensical. Yet, given that he is giving a *hypothetical* account to shed light on the current condition of humanity, his point might be interpreted to mean that the savage humans were not as dependent on each other as the modern humans.

Moreover, the significance of Rousseau's non-sociable savage human can be seen in comparison with his contemporaries, most notably the Encyclopaedists, who were (from the perspective of the *Second Discourse*) naïve enough to believe in the untarnished value of community. Accordingly, both intellectually and morally the urban atmosphere was a sure and fertile ground for human cultivation. The unprecedentedness of Rousseau's view lies in its questioning even this view by exposing the duplicity of society, which is strengthened, not diminished, by the progress of the sciences and arts.[22] He adamantly asserts that this progress "has added nothing to our genuine felicity . . . [but] has corrupted our mores . . . [and in turn] the purity of [our] taste."[23] The Enlightenment has produced many good rhetoricians, writers, and poets, but, quite tellingly, virtuous citizens capable of leading a life of integrity and honourable action were lacking.[24]

In the latter part of the *Second Discourse*, we are provided with an account of how the fateful change must have taken place from the solitary savage human to the sociable, modern human. According to the narrative of Rousseau, the relocation of the savage to a cave, namely to a (relatively) fixed dwelling, brings about an unprecedented transformation in its life. It is the starting point for a family-like association and a property-like relation to the things around it. Conjugal and parental love, the division of labour among the sexes, and the decrease of physical strength given the emergent element of cooperation are the salient characteristics of this novel stage. Living together necessarily leads to the formation of mores, conventions pertaining to a specific community. What can be considered the most fateful change is the loss of self-sufficiency of the earliest times, since one is increasingly in need of others' help for its daily life. Metallurgy and agriculture are the most conspicuous instances of these communal works, whose undertaking is by no means possible by a single individual.[25]

According to Rousseau, there must have been a ripple effect when this change started to take place. Accordingly, the first stages of agriculture give way to a more intensive one, in its turn, the property-like relation to the things

[22] Rousseuau, *Discourse on the Sciences*, 3-4.
[23] Ibid, 19.
[24] Ibid, 17; 21.
[25] Rousseau, *Discourse on Inequality*, 62-5.

is replaced by a genuine establishment of private property. In other words, the right to utilise a piece of land temporarily turns into a permanent right to do so.[26] The latter necessitates a legitimate order of law, whose existence is reliant on a human being capable of sophisticated reasoning, forethought, and abstract language. As a result of the growing inequality between human beings, those who are more clever, prudent and talented, become the rich or the ruling class. On the other hand, those who are dim-witted, incautious and incompetent, are doomed to constitute the poor or the ruled class. This hierarchy is nothing but the manifestation of moral or political inequality. Rousseau conceives of these last stages of the state of nature as a quasi-Hobbesian state of nature, that is, *bellum omnium contra omnes*.[27]

This destructive inequality between the different segments of the society is sealed when the powerful convince, not persuade, the poor that this incessant state of war should be terminated by a social contract. By dint of this artificial contrivance, a permanent and peaceful political order is to be established, which sanctifies private property. Nevertheless, adds Rousseau, this cessation of chaos was nothing more than a justification and protection of the unequal state of affairs of the last stages of the state of nature. The state of civilisation merely veils the servility of the weak and the dominance of the powerful.[28]

As can be seen, in this narrative there exists no intervention of extraneous elements. In other words, the fateful fall from the primordial, blissful state of the savage human to an inherently decadent one refers to an inevitable process, which shuts the door on a return to the so-called original condition. To comprehend this immanency, we must look at Rousseau's anthropology, the metaphysics of human being, so that we can realise how human being's intrinsic capacities set the stage for these changes under scrutiny. He draws the first line between the animal and the human being: whilst the life of the former is fully regulated by instincts, the latter has one more capacity, the power of willing. Although both are under the influence of natural instincts, it is only the human being that can resist and manipulate them by using its freedom, which constitutes its spirituality of the soul. It is worth noting that for Rousseau what sets the human being apart from the animal is by no means its capacity for understanding, or deliberative faculty, because "in this regard man differs from

[26] Rousseau regards all these 'improvements' in human life as the downfall of humanity. According to him, the presence of luxury and comfortability necessarily leads to the downfall of humanity (Philip Stewart, "Der Zweite Naturzustand des 'goldenen Zeitalters'," in *Jean-Jacques Rousseau: Die beiden Diskurse zur Zivilisationskritik*, ed. Johannes Rohbeck and Lieselotte Steinbrügge (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2015), 135).
[27] Rousseau, *Discourse on Inequality*, 65-8.
[28] Ibid, 69-70.

an animal only in degree."[29] This capacity of human is crucially the element behind the moral corruption of society.

Closely connected with the freedom of the human is its perfectibility. Contrary to the animal, whose instinctual life does not let it diverge from what nature dictates to it, the human being can develop itself by what it learns through its daily encounters between other living beings and things. This plasticity of the human knows no boundaries, and that is the reason why Rousseau lamentably asserts that it "is the source of all man's misfortunes; [and] that this is what, by dint of time, draws him out of that original condition."[30]

The second line is drawn between the savage human and the civilised human. To grasp this distinction, we must briefly look at Rousseau's understanding of human psychology. As Christopher Bertram points out, Rousseau's view of pleasures stands in contrast to the Hobbesian and Humean conceptions of them. Whereas for the latter human pleasures can be considered as uniform in that their satisfaction are required without heeding the kind of pleasure under question, for the former natural pleasures or passions must be distinguished from artificial ones.[31] Rousseau's understanding of pleasures provides us with a more nuanced account, so that he could criticise the condition of modern human.

Secondly, according to Rousseau, the main concern of the human of the state of nature is its self-preservation. He calls this fundamental characteristic of the human being *amour de soi* (love of oneself or self-love). Equipped with the capacity of perfectibility, the human being with self-love has undergone a fateful transformation in the state of civilisation. Self-love, this "benign passion leading us to care for our physical well-being,"[32] turns into the egocentrism of the civilised human, termed by Rousseau *amour-propre* (egocentrism). This novel passion is entirely artificial, engendered in the corrosive environment of modern society.[33] In brief, the crucial distinction between *amour de soi* and *amour-propre* is the bedrock of Rousseau's human psychology, which claims to have detected a cataclysmic, irreducible gap between the savage and the civilised human.

Along with *amour de soi*, another pre-reflective and pre-social principle that characterises the savage human is *pitié* (pity or compassion), which is "the

[29] Ibid, 44-45.
[30] Ibid, 45; Bertram, *Rousseau and* The Social, 24.
[31] Bertram, *Rousseau and* The Social Contract, 18-9.
[32] Ibid, 22.
[33] Rousseau, *Discourse on Inequality*, 106.

capacity to identify sympathetically with the pain and suffering of others."[34] According to Rousseau, this sentiment, which we share with all animals, prevents us from harming others. For this reason, it can be regarded as the fountainhead of our social virtues, such as generosity, mercy, and friendship. Nevertheless, the newfangled reason counteracts this pre-reflective pity, giving rise to the hypertrophy of *amour-propre*, that is, damaging and dissolving the so-called social glue that binds us together. Nevertheless, Rousseau considers *pitié* to be such a deep-seated capacity of the human being that even the most degenerate society cannot eradicate it.[35]

To conclude, in the early stages of the state of nature, under the natural guardianship of self-love and pity, the savage human must have been immune from excessive and corrosive passions such as vanity, contempt, and blind deference to others. With no obsessive need for others except in states of need, the requirement for social and political institutions, such as law, punishment, and property, was non-existent. In place of reasoned justice, states Rousseau, natural goodness originating from *pitié* must have been the prevalent element in this savage state.[36]

An Attempt to Re-evaluate Rousseau's Narrative Within the Context of *On the Social Contract*

Considering Rousseau's conceptualisation of the condition of the modern human being, one can straightforwardly conclude that the entirety of human history is all gloom and doom, that is, the exact instantiation of the fall of human from its original, impeccable condition to a miserable and deplorable one. There is indeed much evidence to interpret the *Second Discourse* in such a fashion. Worse still, even though, as we saw above, Rousseau himself emphasises that the state of nature is merely a conjectural, hypothetical concept, the contrary viewpoint can be adduced from the work too. As Cassirer detects, "it is never entirely clear to what extent his notion of a state of nature is 'ideal' and to what extent it is 'empirical'. He is always shifting from a factual to a purely ideal interpretation."[37]

This interpretative lacuna is evident, yet, as I suggest, so as to obtain a life-affirming, constructive perspective from the *Second Discourse*, the state of nature could be taken not as the original condition of the human being, a return to which is beyond our capability. Instead, it might be considered as the goal of

[34] Bertram, *Rousseau and* The Social Contract, 23.
[35] Rousseau, *Discourse on Inequality*, 53-55.
[36] Ibid, 55.
[37] Cassirer, *Rousseau, Kant, Goethe*, 24.

modern humanity, which could serve as a sure guide in the midst of all confusions, temptations, and deceptions of modern society rife with hypertrophied *amour propre* and atrophied *pitié*.[38] Rousseau's narrative of human history insists that there is no possibility of returning to the blissful period of savagery.[39] Therefore, given the excessive inequality of modern society, what remains to be done is to determine a horizon to orientate oneself towards less inequality. This desirable condition can be found in the state of nature, whose most remarkable characteristic lies in its not having modern type of inequality. As discussed above, the modern type of inequality is artificial and knows no boundaries. By contrast, according to Rousseau, only the inequality of the state of nature is admissible and even desirable, since it is based on nature and cannot reach enormous proportions. Therefore, the state of nature and the savage human could be interpreted as a reference point for us in criticising the present condition.

I would like to indicate that Rousseau's transformation of thoughts on the role of society for the human bears witness to the tenability and veracity of such a reading. Considering Rousseau's intellectual career as a whole, almost within a decade, the outspoken critic of the *Second Discourse* (written in 1754, published one year later), according to which our sociability is behind all our vices and miseries, turns into a champion of the social order in *On the Social Contract* (published in 1762). It seems as if in such a short span of time Rousseau forgot his condemnation of society when he maintains that "the social order is a sacred right which serves as a foundation for all other rights."[40]

This shift in the evaluation of society is undergirded by Rousseau's three-tiered understanding of liberty that he develops in *On the Social Contract*. Accordingly, the freedom to do everything as one pleases is designated as "natural liberty", whilst the right to private property is termed "civil liberty,"[41] and submission to abiding by the law "moral liberty."[42] No matter what he thought about the role of society, Rousseau has always been the philosopher of freedom and liberty: "Renouncing one's liberty is renouncing one's dignity as a

[38] Ibid, 20.
[39] Mensching, "Das Verhältnis des Zweiten Diskurses zu den Schriften Vom Gesellschaftsvertrag und Emile," 179-180.
[40] Rousseau, *Social Contract*, 141.
[41] Rousseau's slant on the role of property is equivocal. Whereas in the *Second Discourse* he condemns it as the source of great evils, in the *Third Discourse* and the *Social Contract* he considers it the *sine qua non* of a healthy social order, see Rousseau, *Discourse on Inequality*, 60; *Social Contract*, 151; Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Discourse On Political Economy*, in *Basic Political Writings of Jean-Jacques Rousseau*, trans. Donald A. Cress (Indianapolis/Cambridge: Hackett Publishing, 1987), 127, 132.
[42] Rousseau, *Social Contract*, 151.

man, . . . [s]uch a renunciation is incompatible with the nature of man."[43] In his discussion of the threefold conception of liberty, Rousseau dismisses natural liberty, which is famously known as negative liberty, as feigned. Instead, the genuine liberty can be achieved only within a well-ordered lawful society, which respects and is consolidated by civil and moral liberty. Accordingly, one's rights, duties, and freedom become compatible with those of others, and this mutual protection of liberty enables individual freedom without being mired in the cut-throat competition of greedy people full of excessive egocentrism.[44]

According to Rousseau, moral liberty can be maintained only through a social pact, which authorises the alienation of individual freedom, i.e. natural liberty, with a view to establishing an association in which "each one, while uniting with all, nevertheless obeys only himself and remains as free as before."[45] As we saw earlier, in his earlier writings Rousseau regarded the social contract as an artifice devised by the rich, or the powerful, to deceive the poor, or the weak, into accepting the unequal, rapacious status quo which benefits the former.[46] What is noteworthy in *On the Social Contract* is Rousseau's change of heart about the fundamental value of this pact. Once the savage human of the state of nature enters into the civil state, Rousseau maintains, "a remarkable change" in it is inevitable: the moralisation of its actions, the replacement of its instinctual life with a dutiful one heeding the tenets of justice, the expansion of its quasi-solipsistic world into a sociable one taking into account the role of society, are the most salient features of this remarkable change. As a result, the natural human of the pre-social realm turns into a modern human of civil society, who acts according to its reason, not, as in the earlier times, its (healthy) egoistic inclinations.[47]

In other words, in *On the Social Contract*, the duplicitous artifice of the rich (of the *Second Discourse*) turns out to be the ground of creating a human-made milieu in which the realisation of the true human is aimed at. In such an artificial environment, the nascent *amour-propre* is not the nemesis to be eradicated at once. As a matter of fact, the possibility of such an enterprise is highly questionable, and the awakening of this sentiment in a society inevitable. Instead, preventing its hypertrophy could be targeted, which can be achieved only under the guardianship of a civil society which secures equal rights for its all citizens. Put differently, the mutual recognition achieved in a rational, lawful

[43] Ibid, 144-5.
[44] Dent, *Rousseau*, 45.
[45] Rousseau, *Social Contract*, 148.
[46] For Rousseau's view on the master deceiving the slave, see Rousseau, *Discourse on Inequality*, 69-70, 75; *Discourse on Political Economy*, 134, 137.
[47] Rousseau, *Social Contract*, 150-1.

social order seems to be the only solution to satisfy the *amour-propre* of human beings.[48]

Granted that the civil order is artificial, it is incontestable that it is prone to decay, and hence requires continuous improvement. As has been suggested above, Rousseau's description of the savage, compassionate human of the pre-social order lacking excessive egocentrism might serve as a reference point in our efforts to improve on civil order. That is, to my mind, the constructive work of *On the Social Contract* might be regarded as taking its ultimate goal from the destructive work, the *Second Discourse*.

[48] Bertram, *Rousseau and* The Social Contract, 33.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Aristotle. *Politics*. Translated by B. Jowett. In *The Complete Works of Aristotle: The Revised Oxford Translation*, edited by Jonathan Barnes. New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1995.

Bertram, Christopher. *Rousseau and* The Social Contract. London, New York: Routledge, 2004.

Bachofen, Blaise. "Der erste Naturzustand als *wahrer* Naturzustand. Die Tragweite einer anthropologischen Untersuchung." In *Jean-Jacques Rousseau: Die beiden Diskurse zur Zivilisationskritik*, edited by Johannes Rohbeck and Lieselotte Steinbrügge. Berlin: De Gruyter, 2015.

Cassirer, Ernst. *Rousseau, Kant, Goethe: Two Essays.* Translated by James Gutmann, Paul Oskar Kristeller, and John Herman Randall, JR. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1970.

Cassirer, Ernst. *The Myth of the State*. New Haven, London: Yale University Press, 1974.

Cassirer, Ernst. *The Philosophy of the Enlightenment*. Translated by Fritz C. A. Koelln and James P. Pettegrove. Princeton, Oxford: Princeton University Press, 1979.

Dent, Nicholas. *Rousseau*. London, New York: Routledge, 2005.

Mensching, Günther. "Das Verhältnis des *Zweiten Diskurses* zu den Schriften *Vom Gesellschaftsvertrag* und *Emile.*" In *Jean-Jacques Rousseau: Die beiden Diskurse zur Zivilisationskritik*, edited by Johannes Rohbeck and Lieselotte Steinbrügge. Berlin: De Gruyter, 2015.

Rousseau, Jean-Jacques. *Discourse On Political Economy*. In *Basic Political Writings of Jean-Jacques Rousseau*. Translated by Donald A. Cress. Indianapolis/Cambridge: Hackett Publishing, 1987.

Rousseau, Jean-Jacques. *Discourse On the Origin of Inequality*. In *Basic Political Writings of Jean-Jacques Rousseau*. Translated by Donald A. Cress. Indianapolis/Cambridge: Hackett Publishing, 1987.

Rousseau, Jean-Jacques. *Discourse On the Sciences and the Arts*. In *Basic Political Writings of Jean-Jacques Rousseau*. Translated by Donald A. Cress. Indianapolis/Cambridge: Hackett Publishing, 1987.

Rousseau, Jean-Jacques. *Emile* or *On Education*. Translated by Allan Bloom. New York: Basic Books, 1979.

Rousseau, Jean-Jacques. *On the Social Contract*. In *Basic Political Writings of Jean-Jacques Rousseau*. Translated by Donald A. Cress. Indianapolis/Cambridge: Hackett Publishing, 1987.

Stewart, Philip. "Der Zweite Naturzustand des 'goldenen Zeitalters'." In *Jean-Jacques Rousseau: Die beiden Diskurse zur Zivilisationskritik*, edited by Johannes Rohbeck and Lieselotte Steinbrügge. Berlin: De Gruyter, 2015.