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The Generational Debt: Rousseau and Plato on Education

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DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY

AN HONORABLE DECLARATION

I hereby declare that I have written this Bachelor thesis independently, and without the aid of unfair or unauthorized resources. Whenever content was taken directly or indirectly from other sources, this has been indicated and the source referenced.

Bratislava, 30. 04. 2014

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The Generational Debt: Rousseau and Plato on Education

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ABSTRAKT

Moje štúdium diel Rousseaua a Platóna, konkrétne *Émile alebo o Výchove* a Platónov *Štát*, ma priviedli k porozumeniu významu vzdelania dieťaťa. Je možné dosiahnuť šťastie rodiča a jeho potomka prostredníctvom správnej výchovy? Bakalárska práca bude popisovať prístup Rousseaua a Platóna ku vzdelávaniu a metódy, prostredníctvom ktorých ho možno dosiahnuť. Platónov *Štát* mi bude poskytovať perspektívu, ktorá mi umožní nazrieť do výchovy antických Atén.

Obaja títo myslitelia opisujú dva druhy citu človeka v spoločnosti, ktoré významne ovplyvňujú jeho život. Platón opisuje *Eros*, Rousseau zasa *Amour*. Na základe dôkladnej analýzy týchto textov, budem prezentovať možné nezhody a podobnosti, ktoré majú títo autori.

V mojej práci sa zameriam na podmienky vzdelania, za ktorých by mohlo byť poskytnuté. Budem riešiť otázku, či takéto vzdelanie môže byť poskytnuté rodičmi. Aj keby nebolo ideálne, mohlo by byť najpraktickejšie. Generačný dlh je výsledkom správneho vzdelania, ktoré podnieti človeka k návratu a vďačnosti k zdroju svojich vedomostí.

ABSTRACT

By studying the works of Jean Jacques Rousseau and Plato, specifically *Émile or Education* and Plato's *Symposium*, my thesis will concentrate on the importance of educating a child to achieve both his and the parent's happiness. The paper will describe Rousseau's approach to education and the methods of doing so responsibly and effectively. Further, my work will connect Rousseau's claims with Plato's, who reveals an insight into the education of the antique Greece.

I will then depict Rousseau's and Plato's ways of balancing the two sentiments: *love of self* and *self-love* for Rousseau, and *Eros* turned to *being* or *becoming* for Plato. Based on the profound analysis of the full texts by both these influential authors, I will try depicting possible disagreements and compliance in their thought.

My goal is to reveal the conditions, which are necessary for the proper education to arise. Further, I will try to prove that the parent could provide a substantial education. Even if it would not be the most ideal, it could be the most practical.

Rousseau stressed the importance of education from an early age. He depicts both sides of the upbringing, which are necessary – the child, as well as the governor. Could the biological parent handle the natural education, and replace the governor? The generational debt is a result of such education: it motivates a person to return and be grateful to the source of his knowledge.

PREFACE

A week has passed since my sudden seclusion from the society. Knowing that there are two days of rest ahead of me, I now find the time and strength to begin the work, which I came here for. As a preface to this work, I find it necessary to address the possible problems, and possible arguments one might have after being finished with the reading.

Before I tackle these, I am intrigued to reveal the real reasons for coming here, into this magnificent wilderness, as honestly as I possibly can. The birth of the main idea of this project has revealed itself to me at a philosophy class with Mr. Matthew Post. His passionate interpretations of important past thinkers of political thought are often so impressive, that they inspire one to bring these theories further by adapting them to modern society. His extensive explanations, of the difference between Rousseau's *self-love* and *love of self*, made my mind glow with what I love about philosophy the most: validating theories by testing them on myself. The difference he explained was one that especially awed my mind, as if it was the last piece of puzzle needed to finish my picture.

I could now see clearly the motives of my inclinations in a society, but more importantly I could differentiate between them. Such polarisation is critical to understanding, which of these are damaging, and which are to be nurtured. Since I have dedicated my thoughts in the past to exactly what Rousseau addresses in *Émile* my attention was alarmed to hear a new, but somehow similar, interpretation of why humans are never completely satisfied with what they have. Such emotion is common to all of us, but not all of us believe that there is a way of getting rid of it.

Only when Mr. Post arrived to discussing details of Rousseau's theory, did he bring up the issue I feared most. Rousseau is confident that once we are born into a society, we will never be fully capable of ridding our self of the constant discontent with our lives. Nevertheless, he at least left me a glimmer of hope by slightly

compromising this notion. A strong individual which is able to seclude himself from the comfort of the society for an extensive amount of time *might* be able to diminish the effects of *self-love* to a certain level, and therefore bring about the pure sentiment from being alive – *love of self*.

Since any kind of experimentation on others that would try to prove the validity of such proposal, could be nothing but inhumane, the only possible way of testing it, is by doing so on oneself. Nevertheless, I was too tempted to refuse such challenge, and that is why I am now sitting at this wooden desk, looking out the window in a deserted hut, in the middle of the Arctic Circle. The view is so picturesque that it could be easily mistaken for an impressionist painting. Rousseau painted a picture of a society from the 18th century, which I still see alive today. As he noted in his *Reveries*, individuals die, but the group persists. I believe that one can change even if the society stays the same.

Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION	10
CHAPTER I.....	11
1 Justice in the family as a preliminary to the justice in the city	12
1.1 Poetry as a means of education.....	16
1.2 Personalized education given by the parent	20
CHAPTER II	25
1.3 <i>Émile or on Education: A man longing for his nature</i>	26
1.4 The emergence of social awareness: individual in union with others	30
1.5 Self-love vs. Love of self: Finding a balance in competition.....	31
1.6 Personalized education: or nature's intent	36
1.7 <i>Émile and Sophie: Love through the varying Educations</i>	41
1.8 A governor or the parent: who can give the education?	44
CHAPTER III	48
1.9 Plato and Rousseau: common education or one that is personalized?	48
1.10 Eros turned to being or becoming: the balance of love of self and self-love.....	50
1.11 The Generational debt.....	52
REFERENCES.....	56
SÚHRN.....	58

INTRODUCTION

In the following pages I will depict my understanding of Plato's and Rousseau's philosophy. My next endeavour is to compare the two philosophers and try offering a way to reconcile their thoughts on education. The first chapter will focus on Plato's *Republic*. It will shortly discuss the central theme of justice, in order to reveal what the city in speech should resemble. For Socrates, the education of the citizens is necessary in order to have order in the city. I will devote major parts of this chapter to art: a method of education in antique Greece. This will also depict the problem with pedagogues exercising pederasty on their pupils. The chapter will deal with the question whether it would be better to leave the education to the parent, or to someone outside of the family. The chapter will close by showing the difference between Eros turned to being, and to becoming. Chapter II will turn our attention to Rousseau. In *Émile*, Rousseau discusses the importance of education for the development of a child, and the following of such path through adult life. He believes that a natural education is ideal for the children: it cannot be forced, and cannot be lacking in explanations of the uses of its knowledge. The children need to be permitted to follow their natural inclinations as much as possible, while directing them to pursue knowledge themselves. The result of such education would be able to balance the two conflicting sentiments that everyone, who lives in a society, necessarily has. The last chapter will compare the two thinkers and will depict their differences and similarities. I will bring my findings together and offer a resolution. My goal is to reveal the conditions, which are necessary to give the proper education to children. Rousseau and Plato both offer a different path of achieving such goal, but their intention remains the same: bringing one closer to a virtuous life by inspiring him to love wisdom in itself.

CHAPTER I

The *Republic* approaches us with a question we have failed to reconcile with for centuries. In my view, this is why we continue studying this work. Even though each of us is different from the outside, there is something inside we all know about each other. It is the goal of every single human path through life. The highway towards it is in turmoil. If being in the lead is all that matters, we sometimes do not refrain from achieving such goal by pushing others backwards. The goal is what we all share, it is what unites us, it is the achievement of being happy. Is there a way of achieving global happiness, without restraining the freedom of others? Is it ever just to harm anyone for our own profit? In order to prove the opposite, we must know what it takes to give each and everyone a proper education that fits his character. The affection a parent typically feels for his child could be a premise to giving such a suitable upbringing. But can we trust someone other than ourselves in raising our child? The education given in Athens was not institutionalized. Pedagogues, poets, and men of knowledge or wealth were providing it in the city. If it was performed in small groups, there is a possibility that the teacher knew his pupils well: being able to provide them with a personalized education. The problem is that the pedagogues could have abused their authority, either giving their pupil inappropriate information, or seeking solely their own ends in providing it. The possibility of ridding the city of this risk could rest in devising a system of education, wherein experts teach the future rulers collectively. This is what Socrates explores in the *Republic*. But this regime turns out to be highly impractical, thus suggesting an alternative: teaching the parent how to handle such responsibility. The love that a parent typically feels for his child would motivate him to be careful and dedicated. We could turn anyone's Eros to truth and virtue, if we could sufficiently defend that it is as close to immortality a human could get: that loving truth and virtue brings happiness, while deceit and disregard bring misery. In inventing his city in speech, Socrates needs to reveal what the just is,

whom should be to one teaching it to the citizens, and what the content of such education should be.

If it is the governors, they need to keep in mind that they will be giving a model for a proper education. If they cannot handle such responsibility it would seem like it would be most practical to leave the personalized education to the biological parents.

1.1 Justice in the family as a preliminary to the justice in the city

The question that Plato's *Republic* proposes is whether justice is something independent of us that is naturally a part of ourselves, or if it is a concept we created that we can interpret however we wish. Its goal is to reveal the content of justice by examining its effects on the human behavior. The subject of justice is one that is critical to our living in accord with each other, because it sets down the level of freedom we can exercise without restraining the freedom of another. The kind of justice, working as a barrier that stops us from interfering with the rights of other people, could be called the vulgar justice (Sachs, p.141). It suggests that the means of coercion must be used in order to divert people from the unwanted behavior that could harm the regime's system: the laws have to be in place to guarantee justice. Glaucon is not pleased with such definition, and so he begs Socrates to defend justice as something to be honored for the good in itself (Plato, *Republic*, 357a).

In Book II, Glaucon classifies the goods into three classes: 1. The ones we do for the rewards that come from them, 2. The ones we delight in for their own sake, 3. The ones we do for both because their own sake and what comes from them (Plato, *Republic*, 357b – d). The first class consists of activities that we engage in just because of receiving some profit in return: a job we do not like, but which is necessary for its outcome. The second class determines activities, which we would do even without profit attached: for example reading fictional literature for pleasure. Socrates claims justice to be in the highest class; justice is to be praised for being

good in itself, but also for what naturally comes from it (Plato, *Republic*, 358a). In such a case, we could feel pain from doing an activity, but it would still remain choice-worthy because of the good it contains within itself. Education can be and often is drudgery because of how it is imposed. However, people can take pleasure when learning something that they are themselves authentically interested in, and devoted to. Glaucon sees people acting justly and praising the order in the city because they see the good that comes from it even despite the pain they might need to endure. In the opening of Book II, Adeimantus poses an argument against Socrates' that not all of the classes he devises are equally happy. He refuses the guardians the pleasures he grants to others (Plato, *Republic*, 419a). Socrates defends himself by saying that his motive was not making some group of the city in speech outstandingly happy, but making the whole city so (Plato, *Republic*, 420b). He suggests control of the unnecessary pleasures one could desire even if it means curtailing one's freedom (Plato, *Republic*, 420d). This is conspicuously related to Locke's concept of the social contract where the individual gives up a part of his freedom for the good of the whole.¹ Glaucon talks about people claiming that there is profit in doing injustice, but the one who suffers it feels pain that far exceeds the profit of the wrongdoer. That is why the city invented laws and covenants that would spare one from being subjected to injustice (Plato, *Republic*, 358e-359a). The guardians protect against excessive wealth or property in the *lower* classes. The guardians themselves do not have private property as such (Plato, *Republic*, 416d).

At the very beginning of Book I, Socrates coincidentally meets an old friend of his: Cephalus. Seeing him at one with himself despite his old age, Socrates becomes curious in what this wise man has got to say. Cephalus had a rather short performance in the *Republic*, but he still leaves us with a very central theme in the discussion of justice. Justice is necessarily tied with debt, conscience being the greatest guard of its repayment (Plato, *Republic*, 330e). Cephalus claims that money was never too much of a bother for him, since he has inherited a considerable amount, which helped him enough to get on his feet, and accumulate money thereon by himself (Plato, *Republic*, 330c). He also elucidates that in terms of moneymaking he stands between his grandfather, who has multiplied his wealth, and his father who has

¹ Locke talks about the sacrifice of our executive power that we have in the state of nature for the civil society since it is the only institution that can handle such power more effectively and responsibly.

left his son off with less money than he received. Cephalus' effort made it possible for him to actually leave his children off with more than he himself inherited (Plato, *Republic*, 330b). Cephalus' last claim is that wealth's greatest good is that it enables one to be just – more particularly to pay off one debt and not be tempted to commit injustice for personal gain (Plato, *Republic*, 331b).

Socrates then offers an example which shows that in some cases repaying what one owes can be harmful, and just when he is about to challenge Cephalus, his son, Polemarchus, steps in and defends him (Plato, *Republic*, 331d). The following might seem like a petty interplay before the rise of a new argument, but Plato rarely wastes his time with unnecessary words. When Polemarchus is about to take over the argument, he asks his dad (who seems to give up the conversation rather abruptly), if “he is to be his heir in everything.” (Plato, *Republic*, 331d) What this suggests, is that not only is Polemarchus the heir of his father's fortune but also to his arguments – or the views he has on life. The implication I am making is that if fathers of children have a corrupted notion about what is just then the children will necessarily inherit such views likewise. On a different note, if the child is heir of everything that his parents leave behind, then so will he inherit their debts.

It is striking, that the only mention of fathers in the whole of Book II, is when Glaucon accuses them for not defending justice for its own sake, but for the good things that come out of it (Plato, *Republic*, 362e). Neither Glaucon nor Adeimantus ever praise their own father for being the source of their knowledge; they always speak of fathers as “they”, or the other fathers. That is when Socrates praises the two brothers for naturally understanding a divine thought: he implies that a lot of the ethical education in Athens depended on the fathers (Plato, *Republic*, 368a). This is Socrates' subtle reminder that even they are affected by the notion with which they have been inscribed since they were children. Cephalus only sketches his argument disregarding its accommodation with at least some evidence. Through Socrates' classic method of disintegrating arguments he is quick to convince Polemarchus that justice is not aiding one's friends and harming one's enemies (Plato, *Republic*, 335e). Socrates points out that it is never just to harm anyone because a just person is inherently good, and as such, he does not see revenge as an antidote to injustice. As he says, harming someone would, it seems, make someone less just, and it's strange

to say that the practice of justice makes others, even enemies, less just. (Plato, *Republic*, 335d-e). Seeing that his father's claim has been defeated, Polemarchus still tries to defend Cephalus by turning to a Greek poet Simonides whose claim was that justice is to give to each what is owed to him (Plato, *Republic*, 331e). Socrates reveals the essence of the argument, but it seems that Cephalus has not thought of it enough. If one were to borrow a sword from a friend, who asks for it back in a state of distress to use it to commit injustice, it would not be just to give it back to him (Plato, *Republic*, 331c). Cephalus has not sufficiently educated his son on question of justice, but the problem, especially at the time Plato was writing, was greater than this. After the Peloponnesian War and the Plague of Athens, which reputedly killed a third of the population and led many to abandon the old virtues and behave disgracefully. It was more common for children to grow up either without fathers or at least without fathers as moral authorities (Thucydides, *The Peloponnesian War*, 47-54). Another reason why children did not get educated by their fathers is simply because they neglected them. If the fathers were not the primal source of education for the children they needed to depend on gathering knowledge from either the sophists or the poets.

Polemarchus chooses a poet as an authority to his argument, rather than continuing with the claim of his father. "But I suppose that, as desires are expelled, others akin to them are being nurtured unawares, and because of his father's ignorance about how to bring him up, they grow numerous and strong." (Plato, *Republic*, 560a) The son's possible rejection of the father's way of life is compared to a revolution in the city. The young man's soul begins to transform, as his mind aches for external desires that he inherited from his father (Plato, *Republic*, 559d). He lets the appetitive part prevail, and enslave his spirited and rational parts resulting in being wretched (Plato, *Republic*, 553d). This raises the question of who should be the one educating the youth. If it is the rulers, they need to keep in mind that they will be giving a model for a proper education that the parents will need to follow.

Throughout the whole of Plato's *Republic*, Socrates always mentions future governors as the main subjects of true education, and the ones who should be giving it. He attributes a high purpose for them because they are the ones who should have the responsibility of educating the youth. The governors are to be taught in music and gymnastics, which are really designed for the training of the soul and the body (Plato,

Republic, 403c). Plato stresses the importance of the development of precisely these two arts: music and gymnastics, because he sees them as the greatest endeavors of the soul. He sees them that way because they both chiefly contribute to temperance. Their correlation is necessary in order for the individual to not have a deficit in each. When finding beauty in music, one's soul uncovers the simplicity behind a great form of art. But in order to have a sound mind for music one needs to have a healthy body (Plato, *Republic*, 404e). Such education, though, is only necessary for the future guardians, or the ones whose soul is classed by Socrates as gold. The souls of the citizens each correspond with a certain type of soul – iron, bronze, silver, or gold. The bronze and iron stand for farmers and craftsmen, the silver stands for auxiliaries, and the gold citizens, being the most valuable, are destined to be rulers (Plato, *Republic*, 415a-c). With each successive level, the class becomes more naturally intelligent and ambitious, and thus more dangerous if not educated properly. He advocates that each of the members of this class should do what is best suited to them, and should not meddle with the occupations which are suited to others, in order to not harm the city (Plato, *Republic*, 421a). However, these are only mere generalizations, which cannot suffice to understand every individual. Socrates might have a different reason in mind for setting a class for every citizen. It is obvious that generalizations are useful when dealing with a large group of complex people, but this does not mean that such a generalization is actually sufficient in giving the best education to an individual. Socrates himself points out that Glaucon does not fit into any specific class. He describes Glaucon as someone who is more obstinate and less well trained in music and poetry, even though he is their lover (Plato, *Republic*, 548d-e).

1.2 Poetry as a means of education

Poets in the ancient Greece need to be understood wholly differently from our contemporary artists. Sure, the works of some poets were made purely for entertainment, but there were others, which had a high authority within the city and were taken as a sort of educators (Plato, *Republic*, 377b). Homer, in his works, has many instances where he does not only speak about the ways of gods, but the gods are

actually using him as the transmission through which they can speak to humanity (Plato, *Republic*, 379d). We should take into consideration that the ancient meaning of the words we see as equivalents of our word justice have a somewhat wider meaning. “*Dikaios*”, the ancient Greek for justice, could also mean “righteous” or observant of duty to gods and men (Liddell, H. & Scott R., *Dikaios*, A Greek English Lexicon). The city in speech needs to have poets who are able to portray justice as something attractive for all, which is why Socrates pays close attention to what art should be permitted in their city.

At the start of Book III, Socrates discusses the influence of art on the city. He is trying to discern between the destructive, and constructive forms of art. Having pieces of poetry offered as an example throughout the discussion of art in the *Republic*, we can see that art was not a product, which was under the control of the city (Plato, *Republic*, 391e). In a way, the artists were the “sculptors” of virtuous citizenship; they were the bearers of the status of educators. Adeimantus and Socrates choose to expunge their city of poets who are trying to voice gods, but are actually dishonoring them by the means of their poetry (Plato, *Republic*, 387b). A problem he proposes is that the poets are debasing justice by portraying it as a fine thing but onerous and not profitable to maintain, while injustice is sweet and easy to acquire: its only negative being the shame it brings in terms of reputation (Plato, *Republic*, 363e). Even Homer, he adds, has a verse in *the Iliad*, which implies that humans can sway gods, and therefore the good is something modifiable rather than a stable ideal (Plato, *Republic*, 364e). “When all such sayings about the attitudes of gods and humans to virtue and vice are so often repeated, Socrates, what effect do you suppose they have on the souls of young people?” (Plato, *Republic*, 365a)

The artists and the recipients of the art they produce are necessarily tied. Socrates claims that the forms of art, which contribute to the development of vice within the city in speech, should not be allowed (Plato, *Republic*, 383c). He uses verses from Homer to provide examples how poetry could be harmful for the warriors (Plato, *Republic*, 386c-d). Such a highly respected poet depicts Achilles, the fiercest legend of the Athenian warriors, as idle and lazy. Achilles was a son of Peleus, a god; Homer is giving bad examples *to emulate* by providing accounts of his undignified behavior. In addition, he questions the scale of truth that an art form could provide for

the citizen, provided that the artists have not even witnessed the situations they depict (Plato, *Republic*, 388a). The obvious gravity that Plato attributes to the possible outcomes of art, suggests that he was very well aware of its effects on an individual's behavior. He questions the scale of truth that an art form could provide for the citizen. Socrates' censorship of art is evident in the text, but this implies that Socrates thinks that art can have a real impact on the education of the young, which is precisely why he sees the censorship as necessary.

In Book X, Socrates compares artists to a mirror (Plato, *The Republic*, 596d). He illuminates a problem that all art is only a certain angle by which we look at things, and therefore it can never depict something in its total existence: in actual truth. A busybody is a term used for someone who constantly meddles with other's affairs in a petty way for his own profit, in opposition to someone, who does so in order to educate others: artists could be viewed as such (Plato, *The Republic*, 433a). Socrates might seem like a busybody because he educates children that are not his. In truth, he gives his education because he is being asked to do so, and he gives it to those whose fathers are absent, due to death or neglect (Plato, *The Republic*, 358d). Artists need to refrain from becoming busybodies for personal gain; they need to understand the higher meaning of their product, which is the revealing of things beautiful. Socrates himself asks that if fathers thought he was harming their children, why did they not come forward to accuse him (Plato, *Apology*, 33d)?

As such, Socrates actually argues for a control of art by the city so that he closes the gap of producing art that is destructive. He compels the artists to only imitate a life of a noble person, so that their product could stand as a model inspiring virtuous behavior. If examples of virtuous behavior are absent in the works of the artists, the youth could lack role models that it could imitate. This reinforces the claim that the city can corrupt an individual, capable of showing him a path of life based on vice, which he can mistake to be profitable (Plato, *Republic*, 392b).

To this day, art remains a great demonstration of the level of freedom within the city and Plato is showing plenty of indications that prove that he understands that art needs to be left alone in order to flourish (Plato, *Republic*, 398a). In a well depicted story, the spectator associates with one of the characters which enables him to feel alike emotions. To refuse art the freedom of natural growth and limitless

possibilities would resemble a hot-air balloon without the burner. I doubt that if art was to be stripped of its resemblance to life's reality one could wholly appreciate its purpose. Socrates is in some way divided on the question of censoring art. The wrong that he attributes it is that it can only imitate a partial truth, and to that extent, it even encourages bad deeds. Even today, there are instances when art seems to be crossing the borders of morally acceptable norms within our society. The book *Lolita*, by Vladimir Nabokov, depicts a pedophile with such striking accuracy that only a few would doubt that the author was sexually healthy (Nabokov, *Lolita*, 1958). I question whether literature, that could possibly awake perverse desires within a reader who was previously unaware of them, should be allowed to be freely distributed. Socrates is against art offering bad characters that could be emulated. He may not be against someone depicting a bad person as long as it includes the bad consequences that follow. If we were to look at art through the full scope of the *Republic*, we would notice that it starts by Socrates narrating it in the past tense (Plato, *Republic*, 327a). Likewise, the climax of the book depicting justice as the idea of the good that we rise up to, is done by Socrates telling a story that has already been told by Er (Plato, *Republic*, 614b). Not only is the *Republic* itself an imitation, but Socrates actually imitates one of the speakers, who he deems as a negative influence: Thrasymachus (Plato, *Republic*, 336b).

A different reason, why Socrates might have agreed to censure art, is for the mere aim to educate Glaucon. In Book II, Glaucon keeps adding luxuries to the city they are inventing with Socrates, and as such, makes it feverish (Plato, *Republic*, 373a). Later on, in Book III, he agrees with Socrates who offers him suggestions of the ways in which they could purify the city of damaging art forms (Plato, *Republic*, 399c). Glaucon seems to be forgetting that he was the one who has made the city feverish in the first place. Socrates reminds Glaucon of the inconsistency with his past opinion, so that he could enlighten Glaucon that there is a serious tension in trying to moderate art to be an ideal tool of education (Plato, *Republic*, 399e). The degree of his transforming of Homer's charming verse from *the Iliad* (a monotone dry piece of instructive text) was an attempt at a see-through provocation of Glaucon (Plato, *Republic*, 393e). This would suggest that Socrates is not censoring art for the reasons Glaucon provides, but merely to offer Glaucon a personalized education, which would

demonstrate that his invented city would end in a catastrophe if he is not careful in what he brings and takes away from it.

1.3 Personalized education given by the parent

In Book V, Socrates clearly argues that the children should be raised in common: he thus argues against personalized education (Plato, *Republic*, 499c). The education given to the young should be a responsibility of experts, because the parents cannot be trusted in giving the child the appropriate education (Plato, *Republic*, 451c). Later, at the end of Book VII, he deems necessary to purge the city of the citizens who have already been spoiled by a damaging education, and he does so by banishing anyone over the age of 10 (Plato, *Republic*, 541a). How would such an act be possible, and who should be the one who judges which citizen is valuable for the city, is a question that the *Republic* does not answer. This is where the possibility of personalized education in virtue might reveal itself as the most ideal. The underpinning claim that I make to such statement is that Socrates appears to be educating Glaucon and Adeimantus, rather than trying to offer a common education for the city in speech.

“Now, one cares most for what one loves. Necessarily. And someone love something most of all when he believes that the same things are advantageous to it as to himself and supposes that if it does well, he'll do well, and that if it does badly, then he'll do badly too.” (Plato, *Republic*, 421d) Only a child can afflict a good or an evil fortune on his parent by doing nothing to them directly (Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, 1100a). The fact that the happiness of the parent is partially conditioned by the behavior of the descendants seems to be the general Greek view. The child's acts, affecting only himself if there was not for his parents, are ones that necessarily have gravity if the parents are alive. It contains the implication that parents have the ability to provide their child with the best possible personalized education, simply because of the love that they feel for their child, with a love distinct from any other. There would

be no point for Plato to bring this up if it was the regular order of things – that parents always educated their children.

“Then I suppose that in the city which we are founding you would make a law to the effect that a friend should use no other familiarity to his love than a father would use to his son, and then only for a noble purpose, and he must first have the other’s consent; and this rule is to limit him in all his intercourse, and he is never to be seen going further, or, if he exceeds, he is to be deemed guilty of coarseness and bad taste (Plato, *Republic*, p. 90).“

The fact that Socrates mentions that there needs to be a law put in place, so that no governor ever abuses his position to indulge in perverse pleasures with his pupils, is a possible indication that such occasions have taken place in their time. Nevertheless, there is no clear evidence that early childhood teachers would engage in pederasty exercises with their pupils. The education in Athens was not formalized: it was a responsibility of the pedagogues. A successful man with power and experience could be considered a pedagogue, but he might seek to please his perverse desires in return for his expert advice. Further, the commonplace pederasty mentorship is actually a form of a personalized education. Except it is the destructive type which we need to eradicate in order to promote a healthy education of the youth. *The Symposium* offers us a great example how the pederast intrigues the young to follow his lead by the means of flattering. Pausanias claims to educate his beloved in truth and liberty, and chooses him because of the goodness of his character (Plato, *Symposium*, 183d-e). In truth, Pausanias actually ends up endorsing the opposite, since he bases the acceptable conditions of a boy appreciating the love of an older man, solely on increasing his wisdom (Plato, *Symposium*, 184d-c). The boy is in no position to truly estimate the value of the wisdom he is being given, and reversely, the pederast can deliberately feed him with knowledge that is perverse, or flatter him in order for the boy to gratify him. If it was normal for the pedagogues to deceive boys to gain pleasure, and for the boys to be deceived in love, how could the education that the pedagogue provides come close to revealing truth or to teaching young men to be wise (Plato, *Republic*, 385d)?

“However, when you see that fathers stop lovers talking to their boyfriends by putting attendants in charge of their sons with specific instruction to that effect...” (Plato, *Symposium*, 183c) Being subjected to damaging poetry, for example, could result from such an attendant deciding to offer his pupil a treat by taking him to a play. In a play by Aristophanes, the corruptions of the traditional ways went as far as depicting children refusing to listen to their parents, and in some cases even beating them (Aristophanes, *The Clouds*, 1432-1446). This is further discussed in *the Republic*, when Socrates illuminates how dialectic philosophy can lead children to disrespect their parents. If the child is to learn the truth from elsewhere, he is prone to prefer respecting the person who has offered it to him, rather than his family. That is only a step away from actually inheriting the way of life of another, diverting him from the path prescribed by the parent (Plato, *Republic*, 538b-e). In *Nicomachean Ethics*, Aristotle proposes that there is no man who commits injustice on his own self and that since children are an extension of the parent, they too are safeguarded against any injustice from the side of the parent (Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, 1134b). This might have been the general view among the Greeks, but definitely not shared by Socrates. Throughout the *Republic*, he explains how one commits injustice against his own soul (Plato, *Republic*, 548b e.g.). This underlies the fact, that since it is in the powers of the parent to be unjust to himself, he can then be unjust to his child as well. Reversely, the child too can commit injustice to his parent if the shame and fear of doing so are not rooted by his upbringing (Plato, *Republic*, 465a-b). Such can only be done by allowing the child to observe the just act of the parents, provided that the parents know well enough how to act justly in the first place. This would also enable them to guard their offspring from the spoiled love of their pedagogues, because they have the innate inclination to love their child in a natural way.

Socrates defines two types of procreation: in bodies and in souls. The problem with the mentors is that they confuse these two: they think that they are offering their pupils a proper education for the good in itself, but in truth they are doing it for the pleasing of their own desires (Plato, *Republic*, 485c). Further, it seems that the pedagogues *themselves* do not know what virtue is: because then they would be able to distinguish an interest of the body from an interest of the soul. A healthy soul is able to identify virtue through its love of truth and being. The Eros turned to becoming is concerned with pleasure and physical procreation. On the opposite, the

Eros turned to being is concerned with the right order of the soul, which directs it towards virtue and truth. For Socrates, the educator needs to be someone who can be a role model to his pupils, neglecting all desires, which could damage the way people look at him: he needs to be able to turn his Eros towards being. “They must be without falsehood – they must refuse to accept what is false, hate it, and have a love for the truth.” (Plato, *Republic*, 485c)

We are starting to gain momentum on the development of the idea that personalized education by the parent would be most practical. It's more practical to leave such education to the parent, since he naturally knows his child better than anyone else, and he does not typically see his child as an object which could please a perverted desire. The problem with the parents educating their children is the fact that Socrates insists on an education that would incorporate the subject of philosophy, which requires a teacher with sufficient talent and specialization to be capable of giving one (Plato, *Theaetetus*, 151b). Still, since the parents spend the longest time with their children, there is a vital education which *is* in the powers of the parent to give to their children: the psychological, moral education, which is the primary pillar of the child's understanding of the importance of a philosophical education. By being guided by the reasoning offered in his teachings he would bring himself closer to experiencing procreation as coming closer to immortality.

“Because procreation is as close as a mortal can get to being immortal and undying... First all they want is sex with one another, then all they want is to nurture their offspring... what causes animals to behave this way under the influence of love?” (Plato, *Symposium*, 207b) Socrates' claim is that animals, as well as humans, behave this way because all living creatures naturally aim to achieve some level of immortality. This can easily be translated into a biological phenomenon. All animals are biologically devised to maintain their species; hence the reasons for defense mechanisms and self-preservation instincts. Diotima's philosophical claim is that the best mechanism for humans to achieve immortality would be to procreate. The love for a sexual partner, an erotic desire, and the upholding of justice, cannot be confused in order to turn oneself to being. People need to know the right combination of these loves and have to be able to harmonize the Eros so that it aims at its highest motive. That is when they will be able to recognize true beauty, unchanging, one worth living

(Plato, *Symposium*, 211c). For Socrates, the ability to turn oneself to being is necessarily tied with being able to live in accordance with virtue, and for virtue. In summary, it is important that one be able to give the education, which is tailored to the pupil. The biological parent has both the time and the natural affection for the child, which is necessary for such education to arise. The only problem that Socrates sees in the parents educating their children is that they lack the knowledge of virtue, which is a precondition to giving a proper education. Nevertheless, the fact that the parents lack a philosophical education does not mean that they have bad morals. Once the possible parent recognizes virtue and lives in accordance with it he will know that he is ready to take on the responsibility of educating a child. He will then dedicate his soul and spread it across his child like a blotting paper, patiently outlining his knowledge to leave a perfect image. From my own experience, once the image is complete, the thankfulness of the child for the education he received would reach the highest point, and thus the *generational debt* would see the light of day.

CHAPTER II

Jean-Jacques Rousseau, in his work *Émile* or on Education, offers us a genealogical description of a progressing mind. He creates an imaginary pupil, names him Émile, and uses all his efforts to raise him to be a model citizen. Rousseau did not give his young student the name Émile by any accident. It is derived from a Roman family name Aemilius, from the latin ‘*aemulus*’ which stands for imitator, or imitate and is cognate with the English verb, ‘to emulate’ (Lewis & Short, *Latin Dictionary*, 1879). Rousseau has taken great inspiration from Plato and incorporated a substantial amount of its aspects into *Émile* (Grant & Stuart, *Rousseau and the Ancients*, p. 140). Émile's governor stresses the importance of a “natural education” which, in his view, leads to a life of virtue. Rousseau describes two sentiments: self-love [amour propre], and love of self [amour de soi-même], and stresses that the natural education needs to balance these two sentiments. The first section will employ itself to providing a short overview of the entire book with an ambition to bring up its substance. The following part will describe the rising of the social awareness in children, as this leads to the first dangers of corruption of their personality. The third section of my paper will describe the two opposing sentiments. This part will identify how they came about, their influence on the society, and lastly how they can be balanced. Institutionalized education endorses the development of self-love by the teachers, and the pupils who attend to it. The balance of these two loves will be further explained in the details of the personalized education. The governor directs Émile to first understand the use of the knowledge before he provides him with the information, so that he does not give self-love a possibility to arise. The problem that will arise from the discussion is whether the pupil's biological parents can give such education or if it would be best to leave to a governor. The chapter will conclude with the differences between the educating of the sexes. It is necessary to have a varying education of the sexes in correspondence with the balancing of the two loves, so that the partners do not exploit each other, and see their relationship instrumentally. In order for the individual to reach this final stage, the mind and the body need to have a balance between the moral, psychological, and physical education. My claim is that such balance can only be achieved by the means of a personalized education.

1.4 *Émile or on Education: A man longing for his nature*

Rousseau divides his book into five sections each dedicated to a different stage of human development. Let me offer you a short overview of each of them. The first stage deals with infancy. Rousseau invests a great deal of attention to details concerning the way an infant should be handled, what he should be allowed, and what shall be kept away from him. Rousseau defends the view that children should be left as free as possible so that their body and their constitution can flourish in a natural way. He goes as far as claiming that newborn babies should not be tightly wrapped in blankets so that their limbs can move without constraint. “Could not so cruel a constraint have an influence on their disposition as well as their constitution? Their first sentiment is one of pain and suffering.” (Rousseau, *Émile*, p. 168) The next stage deals with the upbringing of a child from the age of two to about twelve. “The age of nature” as Rousseau calls it, advocates that the child should once again be left to make its own decisions about how it wants to spend its time. The child should not be overwhelmed by moral doctrines or with the things it has no use for: its mind should be left to naturally evolve its faculties. Our senses, which ignite the lust desires, have to be soothed only to the degree where they become the means for teaching the child the moderation needed in order for the desires to not become destructive. The disproportion between our faculties and our desires necessarily create privations, which are painful. “A being endowed with senses whose faculties equaled his desires would be an absolutely happy being.” (Rousseau, *Émile*, p. 211) Stage number three begins by supporting the claim that at the age of twelve to thirteen a child's strength develops far more than he actually needs. Thus he invests this energy to start developing his mental powers (Rousseau, *Émile*, p. 309). The pupil's body still demands scrupulous training. Only through devoting *Émile*'s curiosity to reason and invention can the governor please his mind (Rousseau, *Émile*, p. 336). The fourth stage, or the age of puberty, is concerned with the moral education since it expects the pupil to have a fully developed ability to reason. “So long as his sensibility remains limited to his own individuality, there is nothing moral in his actions. It is only when it begins to extend outside of himself that it takes on, first, sentiments and, then, the notions of good and evil which truly constitute him as a man and an integral part of

his species.” (Rousseau, *Émile*, p. 371) Although the governor trusts his pupil to think for himself, he still needs to protect him from indulging in potentially destructive desires. By leaving the young man to nurture his emotions towards strangers, he enables him to spontaneously feel the inclination towards women. The love for the opposite sex, the ability to channel such emotion, and the differences between the education of the male and the female bringing them to mutual happiness is the theme of stage five, or the last stage of life when the governor still accompanies the pupil. “But, before marrying, you must know what kind of man you want to be, what you want to spend your life doing, and what measures you want to take to assure yourself and your family of bread.” (Rousseau, *Émile*, p. 646) The governor is there to help his pupil get through the initial pains of being in love, and to not make a fatal mistake in the way he treats his beloved by being taken over by the common influence of lightheadedness.

Education comes to us either from nature, men, or things. The development of our body and its processes is an education of nature; the one over which we have no power. The different uses we can find for our body is an education provided by men. And lastly, the education of things is the teaching of our own experience in relation with different objects about the affect they have on us (Rousseau, *Émile*, p. 162). The conjunction of these three educations would bring them to perfection, and it is their harmony which Rousseau sees as the main objective of his work, *Émile* (Rousseau, *Émile*, p. 163) “When, instead of raising a man for himself, one wants to raise him for others? Then their harmony is impossible. Forced to combat nature or the social institutions, one must choose between making a man or a citizen, for one cannot make both at the same time.” (Rousseau, *Émile*, p. 163) Making a man requires a handling which directs the two previously mentioned educations to the one over which he has no control over; the one following nature. By making him more capable of using his senses, and not constraining him by habits, which benefit others more than him. By drawing his attention to his unique existence, not from it, and by refusing to subject him to being an integral part of a society over which he has no control, but instead showing him the best ways of adaption (Rousseau, *Émile*, p. 164).

“And after having made him learn this and that – that is, after having burdened his memory either with words he cannot understand or with things that are good for nothing to him; after having stifled his nature by passions that one has caused to be born in him – this fictitious being

is put in the hands of a preceptor who completes the development of the artificial seeds that he finds already all formed and teaches him everything, except to know himself, except to take advantage of himself, except to know how to live and to make himself happy.” (Rousseau, *Émile*, p. 174)

How can we raise a man to be aware of his freedom if we ourselves have never been free? The ability to reconcile a new member of the society, with the complexity of the environment he has been brought to, is not a simple task. It takes time for a child to realize that the world is not a grand playground that is here for his pleasant adventures. The life, which lacks the stain of restraint, learns easily since it feels no pressure to do so, but as soon as the child is forced to spend time sitting in a set place to learn a given thing, he knows that the only thing left under his control is the amount of effort he chooses to expend. Here, the first signs of revolt against an unjustified authority might surface. Before, he was used to learn the things that were necessary for him to master by the act of trying to accomplish them, but now a stranger stands over him to compel him to knowledge without being aware of its actual use. Could this be the first revelation a child receives from the society, which is incompatible with the ways of nature? The society's intervention into the education of the child is deemed necessary, as is the knowledge, which is offered in schools. A long, treacherous journey of education with which the only way a child can come to terms with is by creating a variety of ambitions for himself: a *promise* to a successful life. Although there is no doubt that we have to prepare the youngest for the working life ahead, we have absolutely no guarantee that a rigorous, dedicated student that excels in all his subjects will achieve happiness after the last of his schools sends him off to adulthood. The way we choose to deal with such effort is conditionally determined by what the society wants to achieve by it. We have no choice but to surrender to the reality of spending most of our time working for a community which seems ignorant to seeing us as a unique being, each with a different formula to achieve the balance, which constitutes happiness. How then can the teacher expect the birth of the motivation needed for pushing the brain into understanding such abstract dimension of the human world without offering an adequate inspiration? “But as soon as one leaves the natural order, to do anything well has its complications.” (Rousseau, *Émile*, p. 185) The child can then face his first failure, humiliation by his classmates, and the time it needs to digest such unnecessary sentiment to his young life. Further, some teachers exploit their students for the lack of their knowledge, which leads to

the awaking of self-love. The student starts to compare himself with others to be able to recognize his deficiencies, but unaware that he is feeding his self-love, he resorts to exploiting his classmates the same way his teacher exploited him.

All of us that have been around children of an innocent age know what pleasure they take in imitation. Even the meaning of *Émile*'s name suggests that Rousseau saw imitation, as one of the greatest tools a child has, to be able to learn. This relates to Plato's discussion of imitation, as well. He attributes a high meaning to imitation, which is why he dedicates a long discussion to the censure of art. In a similar vein, we cannot grant imitation the noble deed of *consciously* doing well, because the child does not understand whether it is truly good. Forbidding children to imitate each other would be nearly impossible and equally unreasonable; the guardian should rather make use of it by habituating children to only imitate the actions which their developed reason will later justify continuing with (Rousseau, *Émile*, p. 239). Children's attention can be aroused easily, and they change the objects of their attention rapidly. The ADHD syndrome which is connected with hyper-activity, unable to be attentive, and the inability to obey authorities are "illnesses" that are usually first noticed in the school age of a child. This defect influences many families, which need to overcome its causes since it is a major setback for the children's education. Even though, there is no direct scientific evidence that it is caused by a brain deficiency, the kids are fed various drugs to get them calmed down (Paltin, 1993, p. 73). One might even wonder, if making children stay put in school would not provoke anxiety and other related symptoms of ADHD, precisely because their natural inclinations are being suppressed. The following will attempt to offer a diverse approach to bringing up citizens capable of handling the responsibilities associated with living among the society by making them capable of the hindsight needed to conquer their ills.

1.5 The emergence of social awareness: individual in union with others

Imagine when the early age of sleep, games, and pleasure slowly comes to a halt, a child finds himself standing against an inexorable life epoch about to commence. The parent, likely as torn as the child is, sees him off to the first day of school. She realizes that the prologue of the care she has consigned to the child is now over. She goes over the things she taught him as if to make sure that she has not missed something significant. The responsibility she has as a parent was hers to keep, but now she has to be willing to share it with an institution where she hardly knows any of the caregivers. The two of them share one last look of irresolvable anxiety before having to split, to take on the new challenges life has prepared for them. The child now finds himself dividing his time between the knowledge that is expected of him, and the comfort of the people he is close with. The parent on the other hand, needs to find a new activity that would fill up the hours when the child is absent. In *Émile*, the governor dedicates the whole of his time to educating his pupil; the parent in the contemporary society typically cannot hope to do such thing.

As such the law actually takes away the sense of guilt that a parent can experience upon sending a child away to school even though he is very well aware that the child is not yet ready. As a result, the child soon finds the first barriers of adapting to the school environment (which they were never given a choice to enter in the first place) and start seeking possible remedies, which would keep them from “standing out from the crowd.” The problem is that only a few children find the every-day school attendance as something that is easy getting used to, they are perceived as passive, inert recipients of the education they are subjected to (Edwards, 2002, p. 3). The child is often embarrassed to confide to the parent about having problems conforming to school, trying to find consolation elsewhere. The easiest and most obvious way is to turn to a classmate and this is where the child finds his first bonds, as well as new influences.

“As soon as there is no more intimacy between the parents, as soon as the society of the family no longer constitutes the sweetness of life, it is of course necessary to turn to bad morals to find a substitute.” (Rousseau, *Émile*, p. 175) The new bonds formed throughout school become strengthened by the mutual respect the

friends have for each other, and as such they become a new role model for one another. Apart from sharing conversations and confidantships they soon become accustomed to the way the other acts either by toleration, or by the conscious or unconscious way of imitation. This is what constitutes the roots for bad habits allowing them to survive by being passed on, just like parasites. Once rooted deeply enough, the child will have to face a lifelong struggle with the undesirable caprices he gathered in youth. “A child will bear changes that a man would not bear; the fibers of the former, soft and flexible, take without effort the turn that they are given; those of the man, more hardened, change only with violence the turn they have received.” (Rousseau, *Émile*, p. 173) The pain associated with the reforming of one self is far greater than the one stemming from the discipline the parents could have imposed before it became too late (Rousseau, *Émile*, p. 323). *Émile*'s governor does not leave him struggling against the inexorable list of malicious tendencies on his own. Knowing that it is too early for his pupil to estimate the desirability of various pleasures, he limits him to only the ones he deems natural (Rousseau, *Émile*, p. 174). “Natural man is entirely for himself. He is numerical unity, the absolute whole that is relative only to itself or its kind. Civil man is only a fractional unity dependent on the denominator; his value is determined by his relation to the whole, which is the social body.” (Rousseau, *Émile*, p. 164). The institutionalized method of education which focuses more on the quantity of children being educated, rather than the quality of the education offered, is detrimental to its supposed objective. By subjecting every member of the society to a given set of information we are depriving the whole society of its necessary counterparts; we are forbidding our citizens to develop in accordance with nature. The moment children become accustomed to turning to their peers to become socially accepted, they become subjected to self-love and love of self. It is now necessary to explain these two sentiments, and the education, which would bring them to harmony. To moderate the bad effects of self-love it needs to be balanced by love of self.

1.6 Self-love vs. Love of self: Finding a balance in competition

The following will outline the two sentiments Rousseau describes, and which he deems as major building blocks of his philosophy: Self-love [*amour propre*], and love

of self [*amour de soi-même*]. The last part of this section will outline how these sentiments work together, and how they can be balanced into being productive. The combination of pity, love of self, and reason is the ideal combination, which brings a person closer to achieving happiness.

“It is reason which gives rise to *amour propre* [self-love], and it is reflection that strengthens it.” (Rousseau, *The second discourse*, p. 25) “Through philosophy he says in secret at the sight of a man suffering: Perish if you wish; I am safe.” (Rousseau, *The second discourse*, p. 25) The *self-love* undermines an honest attempt by which a man tries to achieve happiness in a society. Self-love is a relative feeling, which was born in a society. Under its influence people think of themselves as being more important than everyone else. All their actions are aimed to create an image that invents their identity in the minds of others. The effect of *self-love* causes people to confuse the true values of life from the ones, which the society subjected them to (Rousseau, *The second discourse*, p. 25).

The second sentiment, which is the reversal of *self-love*, is *amour de soi-même* [love of self]. *Love of self* is a natural feeling which inclines us to watch out for our own preservation. When it is directed by reason, and modified by pity² it can produce humane conduct toward others and a virtuous soul generally (Rousseau, *The second discourse*, p. 65). We might reflect on this sentiment by reassessing our feelings when we are in an exceptionally good mood. This is what inspires in all men the maxim for being good without seeking anything back. The critical responsibility of *love of self* is that it maintains the survival of our entire race. “Therefore, we have to love ourselves to preserve ourselves; and it follows immediately from the same sentiment that we love what preserves us.” (Rousseau, *Émile*, p. 363)

The ability to cooperate and feel for each other is why we have survived to this day. One of the many outcomes of the governor's upbringing is that Émile will be prone to feel compassion for the human beings that are in pain. This is how Émile can use his *self-love* for identifying a possibility of doing good deeds. In a society which is corrupt and where he will shine in the crowd due to his diverse education, the ability to be sensitive when it comes to other people's lives could turn out to be a

² Pity understood as a definition of Rousseau's. It is different to explaining pity as an emotion, which inherently brings one to comparing himself with others, and subsequently looking down on them

course, rather than an advantage. He will be overburdened when he observes the pain around him, struggling with the impossibility to cure all. Despite the fact that the governor guarded him against the evil desires one inherits from the society, he can tell which of his passions in the past led him to experience suffering when reversely he expected pleasure. Émile recognizes that he had the luck of having the proper care, which prevented him from continuing to pursue such exercises later on in life, but he is also aware that not everyone had the benefit of being born into the right hands, and does not judge until he finds out what brought his fellow citizens to act the way they do. “Since he takes so much interest in his fellows, it is impossible that he not learn early to weight and appraise their actions, their tastes, and their pleasures and to evaluate what can contribute to or detract from men's happiness more accurately than can those who are interested in no one and never do anything for others”. (Rousseau, *Émile*, p. 409) Émile learns that self-love cannot be eradicated, and he finds its use in comparing his behavior with the one he discovers in others so that his conscience would have the necessary input to provide him with proper judgment. The *self-love* cannot be eradicated because it is triggered by our interactions with others: so as long as we live in a society, there is no possible way of removing our self-love (Rousseau, *2nd discourse*, p. 52). He knows that he needs to keep his *self-love* under strict vigilance. He does not giving in to this sentiment and let it compare himself with others, so that he could feel better about himself, he uses it as an indicator of what needs to be done for them, and uses his *love of self* to pursue such endeavors with eagerness (Rousseau, *Émile*, p. 432). In order for Émile to be able to aid others without seeing his own profit in return he cannot let himself be governed by the purity of *self-love*; it needs to be balanced by its opposite. *Self-love* needs others to value us more than they value themselves, which is impossible: it leads to misery. As Rousseau explains, a part of us dislikes exploiting or harming others as *self-love* inevitably bids us to do (Rousseau, *2nd discourse*, p. 26).

In order to be capable of finding the balance between these two sentiments we need to have the proper education, which Rousseau tries to depict as one of the primary goals of his work. One could argue that the occupation we choose to pursue is the one, which brings us the greatest economical benefit, and as such this would be

in accordance with *love of self*. This notion is a misconception, which Rousseau further explains in *Émile*. The preference of our professional career should rather be conditioned by what bring us the most profound self-fulfillment, disregards the amount of money the job brings us. “Let him always produce his masterpiece and never pass for a master; he should prove himself a worker not by his title but by his work.” (Rousseau, *Émile*, p. 352) *Émile*'s governor knows about the influence that *self-love* can have on his pupil once he is subjected to the impact of the society. If all of our actions are aimed to please the society by being in conformity with it, the *love of self* is only experienced in very small amounts, if at all (Rousseau, *2nd discourse*, p.25). Since *love of self* is a sentiment described by Rousseau as inciting the most important intuition of preserving oneself, its pursuit can easily be misunderstood as an accumulation of material excesses. In a perverse society, where the main factors of achieving high social merit and popularity are the person's possessions, we can hardly be surprised with people attributing the wrong meaning to such a noble doctrine. “But *amour-propre* [self-love], which makes comparisons, is never content and never could be, because this sentiment, preferring ourselves to others, also demands others to prefer us to themselves, which is impossible.” (Rousseau, *Émile*, p. 364) We compare ourselves to others in order to find out our social value. Hardly can we imagine surviving within the society without such a stimulant for our egos. It helps us create an identity which can be manipulated, and with which we can compete with others. A simple natural necessity for all men is to find a partner, but the conditions for being able to do so are often set on very questionable grounds. The social identity described can play a more important role than the actual essence of a man. “Extend these ideas, and you will see where *amour-propre* gets the form we believe natural to it, and how *self-love*, ceasing to be an absolute sentiment, becomes pride in great souls, vanity in small ones, and feeds itself constantly in all at the expense of their neighbors.” (Rousseau, *Émile*, p. 365) *Self-love* has destructed the true conditions for the possibility of grasping what is good for us. It has replaced them with the artificial techniques of forming our identity within the society. *Love of self* should help us understand that our happiness is dependent on the value we grant to ourselves, rather than what the others think of us.

The inequality of men is further reinforced by the differentiation of the value of different professions. This is how society insinuates the rise of *self-love* and aids

the deepening of the gap, which makes man grow apart. All of this only contributes to the weakening of mutual understanding and the fellowship of men. The unhappiness one can recognize in the cities is evidence to this. We see this problem in the common stereotypes concerning our empty way of life today. Helplessly seeking some sort of meaning to life, one turns to more secure and more easily attainable sources of contentment. Drugs, purchasable coitus lacking feeling, overcrowded parties with music so loud that it takes away any chance to communicate, the pursuit of phony beauty dictated by fashion, preference of cinematography made to amaze, shock, and excite rather than to inspire creation, compassion, or an innovative angle on life. The easiest and yet the most shallow way of strangers finding a bond these days is by talking behind others back in a negative way. They feel like they now have a common secret, which brings them closer because it emanates mutual trust. Women paint their faces as if they could not find agreement with the natural artist. They commit to high heels, which ruin and hurt their feet in the name of the fashion, which gives them the shaky *promise* of impressing the other sex. Men flaunt themselves by their wealth since they believe it is attractive for the women. They flatter the females by compliments, which they do not mean, instead of leaving the mutual attraction to nature.

“In order to love the peaceful and domestic life, we must know it. We must have sensed its sweetness from childhood. It is only in the paternal home that one gets the taste for one's own home, and any woman whose mother has not raised her will not like raising her own children.” (Rousseau, *Émile*, p. 567) The education, which Rousseau defends, is one that would be able to preserve the core of *love of self* in order to reform the reason, which directs *self-love*. The artificial nature, which we gradually accumulate from the society, is an unavoidable consequence of living within it. The outcome is what we *can* influence; by carefully preparing our offspring to face the evils lurking on him with courage accompanied with the pride of knowing the value of his life. Rousseau sees the forming of this shield in the hands of a skilled, attentive governor. “His obligations towards others are not dictated to him exclusively by belated lessons in wisdom, and so long as he does not resist the internal impulse of compassion, he will never do harm to another man, nor even to any other sentient being, except in the legitimate case where, because his preservation is involved, he is obliged to give preference to himself.” (Rousseau, *The second discourse*, p. 9) The

combination of pity, *love of self*, and reason are the three pillars of a humane individual, which cannot walk away from a situation where it is in his power to help.

1.7 Personalized education: or nature's intent

“Prior to the calling of his parents is nature's call to human life. Living is the job I want to teach him. On leaving my hands, he will, I admit, be neither magistrate nor soldier nor priest. He will, in the first place, be a man.” (Rousseau, *Émile*, p. 166) By gradually adapting *Émile's* mind to reason, he can then proceed to teach his pupil the basics of the environment in which he will live his whole life. He teaches him the basics of physics, geometry, and astronomy without the means of theorems or textbook exercises, but rather through observation of and experience with nature. The practical unity of these studies is always concretely present to young *Émile's* mind (Rousseau, *Émile*, p. 287-301). The pupil needs to only be given a simple instruction to scribe a certain shape, leaving the rest to his cognitive skill and observations. The governor only needs to strain *Émile's* mind with knowledge he sees as indispensable for his further development, leaving him free to pursue further knowledge of any of the subjects he inclines to feel interested in. As such, he leaves *Émile* to be a master of himself while keeping a careful watch on him. One of the main issues at stake is how the governor shapes the development of *Émile's* reason so as to accomplish his goal of balancing *self-love* and *love of self*, with the latter exercising the decisive influence.

Rousseau sees the education of the children as a two-fold process, which affects both the subject of the education and the one giving it. That way, the method of raising a citizen that is by his acts both conducive to himself and others will be passed on through generations. “O what a sublime soul. . .in truth, to make a man, one must be either a father or more than a man oneself.” (Rousseau, *Émile*, p. 176) The governor described in the Rousseau's work is such man, and by illustrating how he behaves Rousseau actually provides a method of becoming one. As much as his work is about raising an adolescent, it suggests being about becoming a true parent. In order to do so, the parent's behavior must form the main role model for *Émile*. Such can be

accomplished by refusing him any books, which could replace his governor by fictional heroes.

The governor refuses to allow Émile any books that would stifle his imagination with unnecessary musings about characters and places that do not exist and only contribute to seeing a distorted life (Rousseau, *Émile*, p. 331). The governor has a different idea in mind, he allows Émile a single book, which is not intended to only provide him an amusement, but it further enhances his teachings. This book is *Robinson Crusoe* by Daniel Defoe. The governor grants Émile with this adventure to instill in him a standard of judgment by which he can grasp the value of both things and men (Rousseau, *Émile*, p. 334). As any well-read person knows, *Robinson Crusoe* is a book about a solitary man left alone in nature; his wit being the only means of survival he displays. The sole use of his time is dedicated to his preservation and exploration of the land, which accommodates him. The reader of his escapades uses his imagination to put himself in the place of Crusoe. He can therefore imagine the experiences, which are critical to his existence, if he was to live outside of the comfort provided by the society (Rousseau, *Émile*, p. 332). One might think that Rousseau had the same idea when he wrote *Émile*: he wanted the reader to imagine the life his pupil had, in order to inspire him to raise a child in a similar way. The arts he learns with the governor such as astronomy, geography, and geometry are ones he can find in this book and understand that these can have a highly instrumental usage even outside of the society. They will free him from ignorance, but on the other hand they will make him more aware of the ignorance of others: his self-love is directed to seeing the other's pain as a demand for his action, rather than to be ignorant of it, since it does not concern him. "My imagination, strengthening sensation, makes me identify with the suffering being and often causes me more anguish than even he feels." (Rousseau, *Reveries of the Solitary Walker*, p. 131)

The sadness that will gather in his mind from the instances he will observe in society will compel him to seek a possible remedy. In Rousseau opinion it is simply a fact that: "It is not in the human heart to put ourselves in the place of people who are happier than we, but only in that of those who are more pitiable." (Rousseau, *Émile*, p. 375) Clever Émile will always feel that he needs to know himself fully in order to find which employment suits him best; because by being a master of his craft he will

be able to benefit the greatest amount of people. Likewise, by exploring his own personality he will be more capable of choosing the right people to share his immediate presence. “To become sensitive and pitying, the child must know that there are beings like him who suffer what he has suffered, who feel the pain he has felt, and that there are others whom he ought to conceive of as able to feel them too.” (Rousseau, *Émile*, p. 374) Even though *Émile* is very well prepared for all kinds of corrupted personalities to whom he can present his pure morals, he will still find individuals, that have for so long been exposed to suffering and pains that they have become an addiction which even he cannot remove. He will then understand that there are forces he cannot compare himself with, and will seek a possible way of reconciling with this reality. Religion will become the new center of his attention.

On the topic of religion, the governor tells a story of how he one day met a priest which declared that he found lasting happiness and decides to confide to him how he acquired such sentiment (Rousseau, *Émile*, p. 425 ff). Even though the narrator of the story is the priest, named Savoyard Vicar, the passage actually presents Rousseau's own judgments of religion. The first and foremost claim that the priest presents, is that god cannot be known through reason or the senses, it can only be reached by our nature: our conscience, our inner voice (Rousseau, *Émile*, p. 441). The temptations of the senses are to be restrained by conscience, that is the agency God provided us with to be able to refrain from being wicked (Rousseau, *Émile*, p. 443). Savoyard therefore defends religious pluralism, where an individual's relationship with god is the significant part, averse to claiming to be a part of a certain religion and letting yourself be defined by it (Rousseau, *Émile*, p. 451). “I adore the supreme power, and I am moved by its benefactions. I do not need to be taught this worship; it is dictated to me by nature itself.” (Rousseau, *Émile*, p. 439) The benefactions stemming from nearing to the unchanging, the good in itself, is a reward that comes from our own efforts not from strict compliance with one religion or another. We become grateful because we see the reason behind the donor giving us his gifts, rather than because of the advantage the gift brings us.

“If, therefore, gratitude is a natural sentiment, and you do not destroy its effect by your errors, rest assured that your pupil, as he begins to see the value of your care, will be appreciate of it...” (Rousseau, *Émile*, p. 388) Gratitude is a natural sentiment,

which does not stem from a material benefaction; rather it is caused by the will and the sentiment behind the endowments. “But until you are quite sure you have gained this advantage, take care not to lose it by insisting on what you deserve from him.” (Rousseau, *Émile*, p. 388) If gratitude gets imbedded into the child's mind he will become a citizen who will stay loyal to his country and his teaching, even in a case of a conflict, or an age where the state will not be capable of providing for him any longer. He will remember the times when his country prospered, and out of gratitude for providing a pleasurable life for him, he will defend it with all his strength. Rousseau refuses the claim that a true benefaction can ever produce an ingrate (Rousseau, *Émile*, p. 388). If that condition is met, the beneficiary, through his trust, will be grateful even for things, which bring him pain, and which use he does not yet understand. He will be grateful to the same degree as he was benefited throughout his life.

In Book I, Rousseau pushes the infant *Émile* to get accustomed to fears by gradually habituating him to scarier masks (Rousseau, *Émile*, p. 192). To be immune against the bad habits of society one must know what aftermath they bring, and for what sentiment or out of which lack do people pursue them. This precisely needs a considerable amount of courage, just as being able to refuse such faulty pleasures even if one feels in the poorest condition. The society is full of self-destructive methods, which bring the ones exercising them a short-term relief but a long-term deficiency of full-fledged freedom. In many cases these activities stem from low self-esteem. The sentiment of being insufficient is rooted in the early age and can possibly follow the offspring throughout the course of his whole life. “An indiscreet outburst of laughter can ruin the work of six months and do irreparable harm to the whole of life. I cannot repeat often enough that to be the child's master one must be one's own master.” (Rousseau, *Émile*, p. 230) The parent needs to be aware of the stage of his child's faculties: stop himself from humiliating him in order to reinforce his authority.

As early as the parent can, he needs to familiarize the child to being a master to himself, to be self-sufficient in whatever his agencies permit him to (Rousseau, *Émile*, p. 256). This way, *Émile* develops a natural love for wisdom through thinking that his education is his own achievement. The child needs to feel the consequences of his actions on his own skin, even if they are painful. The more painful they are the more they will engrave in his mind and stop him from ever returning to them. When

the governor manifests to the child that he never takes care of him for his own gain, the child, if raised properly, will find the sentiment to repay the attention given to him despite the fact that no one asked him for it.

The best activity that the governor can think of, where Émile can really taste the consequence of being for himself, is hunting. Even though, Émile is already skilled in a trade, that is agriculture, the governor sees the exercise of this job as insufficient for Émile since it is too much of a stereotypical job done by strength, rather than the mind. As the place for hunting has to conditionally be nature, Émile explores it from a very different perspective than one who only goes there to appreciate the spectacles. “The hunt hardens the heart as well as the body. It accustoms one to blood, cruelty” (Rousseau, *Émile*, p. 489) Hunting in the forests is an activity that calls for a variety of skills, which need to be brought together in order to succeed. Patience, stealth, precision, and perseverance are the characteristics which will not only help Émile to bring down a deer in case of need, but these will also be of help to him in the society. Émile cannot get sickened by the cruel attitudes one stumbles upon amongst the society in order to stand as recourse for the most deviant from nature (Rousseau, *Émile*, p. 490). The point of introducing Émile to hunting is likewise because the activity brings reason together with the passion of the heart. Émile will give himself to hunting completely, and in learning the art through being intensely occupied with it, and by learning as much from his experience as from the instruction of the governor; the boy will remember the procedure for the rest of his life. This will inspire him to learn other things in the same manner (Rousseau, *Émile*, p. 490). The governor takes care not to introduce hunting as an instance of awaking self-love: hunting is not a means to declare human superiority over animals, but rather a means of a natural necessity: gathering food in wilderness, which is grounded in love of self. As long as he will keep Émile busy with things that will arouse his attention he will be able to keep his mind from dreaming away, and coming up with pleasurable activities he observes in the society.

1.8 *Émile and Sophie: Love through the varying Educations*

“I do not conceive how someone who needs nothing can love anything. I do not conceive how someone who loves nothing can be happy.” (Rousseau, *Émile*, p. 372) When *Émile* finally reaches the stage of his life described in the last book of Rousseau's *Émile*, he should be prepared to handle the one last natural desire which fruits he will bear for the rest of his life. When both the genders reach the age when they have everything which suits their constitution, they are qualified to fill their place in the physical and moral order (Rousseau, *Émile*, p. 531). Rousseau views the intimate relationship between the two sexes as a force, which connects the two personalities, and offers them a hold on life which they would not be able to experience otherwise. What the man naturally lacks he finds in the woman, and what the women cannot handle herself is what the man aids her with. Nature has tweaked the constitutions of the genders under the intention of bringing them together; without ever needing the other sex, men and women would be contended by themselves (Rousseau, *Émile*, p. 554).

Rousseau invents Sophie, a woman destined for *Émile*, and dedicates the start of Book V to describing how the natural education of the women differs from that of man (Rousseau, *Émile*, p. 538). Women are the bearers of children, and as such the constitution of their children depend on theirs (Rousseau, *Émile*, p. 540). Rousseau sees that the roles of the genders are different, and the role of the parent is to prepare them for the responsibilities of their later life. For example, the body, which develops before the soul, should be busied with different activities depending on the gender. “Not that these qualities ought to exclude one another; their rank order is merely reversed in each sex: women need enough strength to do everything with grace; men need enough adroitness to do everything they do with facility.” (Rousseau, *Émile*, p. 541). To avoid a possible misconception, Rousseau never intended to oppress women or depict them as inferior to males. He claims that nature made women to think, love, judge and cultivate their minds (Rousseau, *Émile*, p. 539). I can see how someone might think, when reading Rousseau, that he was a misogynist. This is, in fact, the very opposite of his intent. He does not exploit women in correspondence with *amour propre*, he does not exploit them to glorify the male. He rather tries to explain their

nature so that they would understand how to achieve happiness without depending on other people's opinions, grounded more in *amour de soi-même*. Since women's intelligence is precocious to the one's in boys, their governor needs to explain them the utility of everything they learn from an earlier age (Rousseau, *Émile*, p. 544). The word "*sophia*" literally means wisdom in Greek, could that mean he held women in low regard (Liddell, H. & Scott R., *Sophia*, A Greek English Lexicon)?

Rousseau sees girls as more prone to getting addicted to their pleasant activities, and stresses that they should always be imposed with cares. They should be equally enthusiastic about their work as they are about their entertainment, and such can be achieved by the governor clever guiding: explanations of the pleasant side of a job, accustoming her to the responsibilities, and refraining from doing anything to make himself hated (Rousseau, *Émile*, p. 545). "For the same reason that they have – or ought to have – little freedom, they tend to excess in the freedom that is left to them. Extreme in everything, they indulge themselves in their games with even more intensity than boys do." (Rousseau, *Émile*, p. 545 ff) Rousseau does not see good in depriving girls of laughter, noise, and frolicsome games, but rather constraining these activities so that they do not get out of hand. "Destined to be a mother of family herself one day, she learns to govern her own household by governing her parents'. She can substitute for the domestics in the performance of their functions, and she always does so gladly." (Rousseau, *Émile*, p. 575) Women do their tasks gladly not because of some submissive nature they inherited from being oppressed by the male, but because they understand that the workload of a family needs to be fairly distributed. The women's attention to details makes her more sensitive to the environment she lives in, proving to be more effective in the care for her husband and the child. Such skill comes from witnessing the thriving of the family which she is a member of, and by her desire to one day inherit the authority of her mother; she hopes that the time will come when she will be learned, and prepared enough for being able to leave her home with someone worthy of her: *Émile*.

We must keep in mind, that through-out the time when *Émile* falls in love with Sophie, the governor remains present for his pupil. When *Émile* reaches the height of his feelings towards Sophie, which is witnessed by the governor due to *Émile*'s irrational, greater dependency on Sophie's presence, and the emotions she holds

towards him. In order to guard Émile from falling into the abyss of self-love, when he might exploit Sophie for sexual gratification, the governor explains to him that it would be best for the relationship if Émile was to leave Sophie for a duration of two years and spend that time exploring the world: traveling (Rousseau, *Émile*, p. 636). What paradox for Émile! He finally finds what his heart longs for the most and before enjoying the pleasures of love he needs to abandon them. He alone lacked the experience to understand why his governor subjects him to such misery. In order to secure the life-long happiness that Émile can enjoy with Sophie, he must not let himself be subjected to the unruly passions. He must not let his affection towards Sophie bring him to approach her physically: only when she herself clues him to do so (Rousseau, *Émile*, p. 612). When Émile gathers his ability to prove Sophie that his feelings are based upon her personality, which is her love of decent things, her sensitivity, and her being virtuous, then can he really reach far enough to conquer her heart. This could be compared to the philosophy introduced in Plato's *Symposium* where Eros cannot be focused on both satisfying sexual desire and virtue, though Rousseau, of course, does not develop his account the same way.³

A young mind, which has no experience with the state of being possessed by love, has a high possibility of ruining the relationship with the one person with whom it could last (Rousseau, *Émile*, p. 632). By attaching itself too tightly to its newly found desire it can fall into the mistake of chaining it, and thus taking away its natural freedom which needs to be left alone in order for the heart to develop the feeling which the partner seeks. "You now have your first passion. It is perhaps the only one worthy of you. If you know how to rule it like a man, it will be the last." (Rousseau, *Émile*, p. 634) Only the passions which are under our own control can result in pleasure, when we start being their slaves and get subjected to them they become destructive. We have to find the strength to reduce the desires, which lead to reinforcing *amour-propre* because they cannot be pleased, and lead to misery. On the other hand, we should find the pleasure in the desires concerned with love of self because they are the one's which are not destructive. One could even see how Rousseau's pertains to the three parts of the soul in the *Republic*: calculation,

³ This is discussed later in the chapter. Some might argue that Socrates in the *Symposium* doesn't favor women, but rather boys. This is a notable difference, but it's important to remember that he learned of the correct love of boys, which is focused on educating virtue not satisfying sexual desire from a woman, namely Diotima.

spiritedness, and desire. The governor balances the two loves whether he's teaching Émile calculative pursuits like geometry, spirited pursuits like hunting or those relationships concerned with desire, such as his engagement to Sophie. Rousseau and Plato, both argue, that these three parts of our soul need to be balanced in order to achieve the happiness stemming from the harmony of different kinds of love. If Émile were to refuse himself the company of Sophie for a long enough time, he would teach his heart to control the strongest desire a man can have. He will also subject their relationship to an experiment, which can only have positive results. Either Sophie abandons her feelings towards Émile, not being the one he thought she was, or reversely the longing of their hearts for their other half's will have a profound impact on the interval through-out which they will feel each others affection upon Émile's return (Rousseau, *Émile*, p. 633).

1.9 A governor or the parent: who can give the education?

“No mother, no child. Between them the duties are reciprocal, and if they are ill fulfilled on one side, they will be neglected on the other.” (Rousseau, *Émile*, p. 172) The parent has a primordial duty to the child: to raise him and love him. Such emotion is usually natural for the parent and Rousseau views it as a great advantage for the future of the child. The only catch he sees is the fact that the parent's knowledge of education is insufficient to raise his child properly. Rousseau chooses to have Émile brought up by a governor rather than his biological father, but he remains to be in defense of a personalized education. Plato is very clear that the parent does not have the ability to give the proper education, but suggests that it would be the most practical. In opposition, Rousseau, who seems to be offering us a plan of giving a complete education, is rather depicting a mere framework of the moral education. *Émile or on Education*, is not a precise manual for giving a proper education, rather it depicts the proper attitude one needs to incite in a child. Everything about the way he raises Émile is tailor made to his age, personality traits, and his sentiments. There are two reasons why Rousseau chooses to have Émile raised by a governor. Firstly, he sees many parents as inadequate for raising the children, due to having no grounds for accumulating the necessary knowledge themselves. “How is it possible that a child be

well raised by one who was not well raised himself?” (Rousseau, *Émile*, p. 176) Secondly, a reason that is a more of a problem of the society rather than the individual, the society does not give enough attention to the parent who suddenly needs to care for his newly born child, and does not provide him with sufficient resources to be free in doing so. Generally, the father continues to work to be able to provide for his now extended family, leaving him no time to actually spend time with the offspring. “ 'Who then will raise my child?' I already told you: you, yourself. 'I cannot!' You cannot!. . . Find yourself a friend then. I have no other solution.” (Rousseau, *Émile*, p. 175) The last reason why Rousseau sets out to choose the harder way to raise *Émile*, through a governor, is because he wants to prove that if one has enough strength he can provide the natural education even to someone other than his own child. The initial bond of the father, which subjects him to an automatic affection for his offspring, is not the only condition for an ideal upbringing. In either way, the mutual bond forms gradually by the act of observing the child develop before our eyes.

“Remember that before daring to undertake the formation of a man, one must have made oneself a man.” (Rousseau, *Émile*, p. 228) Rousseau is known for abandoning all 5 of his children, does this mean Rousseau failed to make a man of himself? He is known to regret it later in life and defending himself by confessing that his life stage and wealth were in poor condition to raise a child properly. (Rousseau, *Confessions*, p. 437) One possible defense he offered in *Émile*, is that since he was not in a position where he could invest all his time to his children, he rather let them be raised by someone else. “He who cannot fulfill the duties of a father has no right to become one.” (Rousseau, *Émile*, p. 175) I can only guess what really went through his mind, but if he planned on writing such extensive work on the proper way of adapting a new life to our environment, he might have had in mind to influence a far greater number of pupils rather than the few of his own. Maybe, *Émile* was his desperate attempt to restore his once lost dignity.

The governor knew well not to send *Émile* to school if he himself had all the time in the world to teach him all that was necessary for his constitution. He brought him through the five stages, from infancy to adulthood, as diligently and sensitively as one could. He denied him nothing truly desirable: he allowed him nothing destructive.

He has spared him of the pains he would have experienced in the state's educational facilities. He has taught him to be patient, attentive, and curious about what surrounds him. To guard him against the corrupted life of the society, he has taught him the courage he needed to understand even the darkest of evils, bringing him to despise them. The governor has never insensitively ridiculed him for having a naïve notion, on the contrary, he has encouraged him to bring forth the ideas he finds in his mind in order to be able to challenge them. He has refrained from imposing his will on him if it was not necessarily, proving to not only be a guide for Émile but also a friend. He always remained a model for Émile, and he never betrayed his trust. He taught Émile the pains and pleasures that result from his actions, and thus he taught him to pity those whose passions get out of their control. He used Émile's natural skill of imitation to teach him his natural education. Knowing that he could commit to imitating people with destructive attitudes, he defended him from yielding to self-love and its desires. Through pity, he showed Émile that the only way of redeeming oneself from the pain of seeing the world degenerate, is by reaching out and offering a helping hand. He has shown Émile how to govern the two sensibilities men in a society have, *self-love* and *love of self*, showed him how one controls the other and identified how he can make the best use of them. The relationship between Émile and Sophie satisfied his balancing of the sentiments through guiding pity, *love of self*, and reason. Sophie was the inspiration Émile needed to continue his noble life of virtue, even once the governor will no longer be there for him. He has brought Émile to see that when he compares himself to others he starts to think too much of himself, through which he could proceed to humiliate men, rather than trying to aid them. He taught him to be brave and grateful, and how to not get deceived by religion. But most importantly, the feeling which Émile would never be able to recover if his governor was to neglect it: he has taught Émile how to love himself and share this love with others. By carefully examining his behavior and attitude the governor knew well what constitution he needs to help shape in him: he uncovered the education that was best suited to his individuality. Émile, receiving such an education is hardly ever deceived by his sensibilities. He leaves, returns, and there is Sophie prepared to be his women more than ever. "My master congratulate your child. He hopes soon to have the honor of being a father." (Rousseau, *Émile*, p. 675) At this moment, the most profound responsibility of the governor's life has been completed. He can now sit back and relax, and enjoy the outcomes of his two decades long sacrifice. The goal to make

Émile himself the parental governor, whom he could not have, has been accomplished.

CHAPTER III

Both Plato and Rousseau have invested a considerable amount of time into the discussion of the proper education, which the society should be able to offer to its citizens. Centuries have passed since Rousseau returned to the topic, which was proposed by Plato's *Republic*. The behavior of an individual, and the search for a moral way of life that would also be able to include contentment within the frame of the society, is a problem, which has passed the test of time. The apparent contradiction between the fight for oneself, which is enforced by the arrangement of the society, and the emphatic investment of one's energy into the aid of others is the main objective both Plato and Rousseau tackle in their works. The reconciliation between these two maxims could bring a higher sense of belonging to the society, and likewise the spontaneous torrent of happiness, which Rousseau describes, in *Émile*. In this thesis, I have in a preliminary way discussed what these thinkers take as fundamental problems in the education of children, and their possible solutions. Both of the works I have analyzed have proved that the personalized education would be most practical in bringing children to love wisdom in itself, which does not mean that it could not be handled by someone outside of the family. Such education would help the children balance the two sentiments, which are in a constant struggle to gain dominance. The basis of mutual aid should not be mutual exploitation, but mutual compassion. For such situation to arise in the community, one would need to know how to balance *self-love* and *love of self*, and balance the Eros by turning it towards being. The ability to achieve harmony, between the conflict of our unnecessary desires and our devotion to virtue, is what enables the generational debt to arise.

1.10 Plato and Rousseau: common education or one that is personalized?

The most common misconception one makes when reading *Émile* is that it is a guidebook for future parents, which plan on educating a child in accordance with the premises of philosophy. Rousseau did not intent to dictate the ways of an ideal upbringing, rather, by his thorough descriptions of handling his imaginary child

Émile, he allowed the reader to easily emphasize with the pupil's character. By enabling the reader to know the pupil as well as his governor does, the reader is able to imagine what the life of such child would actually look like. The argument, that such a method of raising a child would be completely unsatisfactory in the contemporary society is more than valid, but an argument aimed at a place where Rousseau does not stand. *Émile* is more of an education of the reader; it does not wish solely to prepare a future parent or convince him to have children. What it does do is that it tries to direct individuals into a path of living, which can turn out for them to be more beneficial. Both *Émile* and the *Republic*, describe the way a citizen becomes constrained in the dictated way of life by the society and their books aim to propagate education as the means of achieving liberty within oneself. They count with the possibility that not all are able to understand the philosophy they suggest, but they believe that by gradual revelations of the concrete constraints that the society poses, the citizens would become more aware of the ills to which they are trying to find a cure. Émile is not brought up by his biological parent, but through a governor that does not try to impose rules on him but rather lets him find out the consequences of his actions on his own. Nevertheless, the governor is an expert in observing his pupil to a degree where he can tell what kind of a personalized education would suit him best. Moreover, Rousseau is clear that education in virtue, can be given by someone other than the parent, but he also gives us reasons to believe that it would be practical to leave it to the parent. This is the reason why he placed his bet on educating the reader to inspire him to pass it on to the subject of his education. The content of his education should not be taken as the only possible way of a proper education, the focus should be set on its outcome, exciting contemplations of ways to achieve the right attitude in a pupil, even in a completely different society to Rousseau's. The author could not have given us a greater indication of this than the meaning of Émile's name (emulate).

Likewise, Plato's possible intention was not offering an education of the city in speech, but rather an education for his debaters. He lets Glaucon construct a city in which luxuries are a necessity (Plato, *Republic*, 372e). In Book III, Socrates and Glaucon discuss the musical modes that would be best for the education of the guardians. Socrates claims that he does not know which would be best suited, and he

leaves Glaucon to continue his forming of the city in speech (Plato, *Republic*, 399a). Socrates' claim that poetry should not imitate unjust behavior that brings profit is an opinion, which Rousseau shares. Glaucon himself claims that too much of inadequate music could support idleness and softness in the guardians (Plato, *Republic*, 389e). "And, by the dog, without being aware of it, we've been purging the city we recently said was luxurious." (Plato, *Republic*, 399e) With this ironic remark, Socrates tries to teach Glaucon about the city they are constructing by helping him identify his own conflicting inclinations. As was depicted in Chapter I, Glaucon is a type that fits none of the classes Socrates devised and it is evident that Socrates is trying to offer him a personalized education.

1.11 Eros turned to being or becoming: the balance of love of self and self-love

In Book IX of the *Republic*, Socrates explains the difference between Eros turned towards being and becoming. The realm of being is focused on the unchanging idea of the good, which we are trying to reach by having our actions in correspondence with it. Contrary to turning our Eros towards becoming, which is focused on the modifications we can achieve by our impact. In spite the common belief that Socrates' is against turning to becoming, he clearly indicates that this direction of the Eros is equally important. "Our dreams make it clear that there is a dangerous, wild, and lawless form of desire in everyone, even in those of us who seem to be entirely moderate or measured." (Plato, *Republic*, 572b) As we sink in to our consciousness the rational, gentle, and ruling part of our soul abandons us and as such we are more prone to indulge in our ill desires. Socrates seems to imply that it is important to observe our dreams because they might lead to our inclinations in reality. A healthy and a moderate person, on the contrary, should arouse his rational part before he goes to sleep, as well as keeping his appetites in check and the spirited part calmed (Plato, *Republic*, 571d). That way, he is prone to behaving in a moderate way outside of the dreams. His way of depicting the two sides of Eros has a similar effect to Rousseau's restriction of Émile's dependence on Sophie. Émile cannot let his

appetitive part of the soul prevail over the rational ruling part, or else he could lose Sophie forever.

Rousseau followed Plato in his footsteps, and inspected the two conflicting parts of the soul creating an extensive definition that was better suited to the society he lived amongst. Like Plato, he despised the destructive part of the soul, but knowing that the *self-love* cannot be eradicated, he rather suggested transforming it so that we could use it as an indicative tool of our standing in the society. Still, both thinkers claim that we are composed of the two conflicting loves, which the soul tries to bring in accord. For Plato it is the Eros turned to being or becoming, and for Rousseau the balancing of *self-love* and *love of self*. They both agree that either the city (for Plato), or the society (for Rousseau), is responsible for encouraging the destructive behavior to an extreme degree. The role of the education they offer in these two works aims to balance these sentiments to achieve an accord in the soul that would inspire it to remain on the path proscribed.

Plato's *Republic* perhaps offers us an ethical code, rules of moral conduct, but mostly a metaphysical theory enhanced by an educational treatise. It discusses an element that was born so long ago that it is impossible to prove how it came about. Its emergence has predestined man to have a possibility to live in mutual accord with each other. The origin, the impact, and the preservation of this force are the primary concern of the *Republic*. The force of which I am speaking is justice. He claims that justice is something of which we are aware by nature. He blames the society for perverting the individual's sensibility to see what the just is. In the *Republic*, the healthy city does without unnecessary pleasures, but as soon as Glaucon introduces various comforts, the city suddenly becomes concerned with honor (Plato, *Republic*, 372a-373e). Likewise, Rousseau claims that once *amour propre* started affecting the society, it gave rise to a competition for gaining honor in the eyes of others. For both of the thinkers, the problem is that people become obsessed with the value of their identity to a degree where they would do anything to gain it. This is why the city needs to have the guardians, this is why the society needs to have police. The *Republic* relieves us of our sometimes naïve conception that the question of whether we are good or bad is conditioned by simply following the laws dictated by the city. It is not enough to follow the external, prescribed rules of conduct in order to live

happily ever after. Our souls are composed of the need to follow virtue, and the desire to seek vice. It is completely up to us how we choose to balance these two and which we let take over. Over to Rousseau, the resemblance of his two loves with the Eros in Plato is striking. We need to learn how to use *self-love* to keep a check on our *love of self*. Without such harmony, we can descend into a selfish pursuit of our own happiness on the expense of others.

Socrates observes a reason behind people coming together to form societies. The maintenance one needs to preserve his life would have taken a majority of one's time if he were to be alone. Once people started living together, they witnessed that by helping others they also help themselves. When a person only concentrated on a single task, perhaps the one he knew best, he would be able to develop his skills even further to help him do his job better. Further, his life became more comfortable since he had all his needs taken care of by others with whom he exchanged the product of his work. The *Republic* describes the society as divided between various classes each pertaining to a specific occupation. Apart from the jobs, which concentrated on producing goods, there needed to be a distinct group, which would look after the order in the city, fair trade on the market, and the defense once the city would face danger. The representatives of this group are called the guardians (Plato, *Republic*, 414b). They should be capable and aspire towards an elevated level of a philosophical, physical, and musical education (Plato, *Republic*, 424c). Moreover, they are the only ones given such education and have to be educated by experts in the field: another proof of a personalized education. Since they are the ones who are given the best education from the regime, it makes sense that they have to be the one's passing it on from generation to generation. Just as Rousseau's governor should not seek anything in return for the care he gives *Émile*, so does Socrates insist that the guardians should not be given a wage at all, all their needs should be taken care off by the city (Plato, *Republic*, 416d-417b).

1.12 The Generational debt

In the last part of Book V, Socrates claims that without the knowledge of the standards which constitute the just and the unjust we are unable to distinguish

between them (Plato, *Republic*, 479e). Rousseau has understood the notion in between the lines of the *Republic*. “Do you want to get an idea of public education? Read Plato's *Republic*. It is not at all a political work, as think those who judge books only by their titles.” (Rousseau, *Émile*, p. 165) That is why it is insufficient for Plato to turn to the sentiments that Rousseau explains in *Émile*, it is necessary to rise up to the idea of the beautiful. But the idea of the good is a concept long gone in the times when Rousseau tried educating people through his philosophy. Plato sees turning to the sentiments as unstable and leading to bad desires, which is why he comes up with a stable idea of the good. Without the soul turning its Eros to being, you cannot possibly make a standard by which you can distinguish the good from the bad. Rousseau would have refused this argument because for him there are two types of sentiment and the independent intelligible realm of the good is non-existent. The discussion of which of these arguments is stronger would be well in place, but I leave this topic to a future work. Rousseau needed to convince his contemporary society that there is a high reward for all those who would try living in accordance with nature, and he does so by stimulating his readers imagination by explaining the happiness of his imaginary pupil. The love of the other sex, which many of us perceive as a significant influence of our happiness, is yet another topic which Rousseau has taken up to bring people to adopt his natural education. The part where *Émile* meets Sophie, should be taken as an example of how a well-natured young man meets the girl he has dreamed of due to his commitment to the education and his eagerness to advance his constitution. When their love produces a child, the governor deems his education to be completed and leaves *Émile* to go on with his life on his own. *Émile* is in ecstasy with the news that he is to become a father. “God forbid that so holy and so sweet a duty should ever be fulfilled by anyone but myself, even if I were to make as good a choice for my son as was made for me.” He expresses his governor eternal gratitude for what he helped him become and leaves him to rest (Rousseau, *Émile*, p. 675).

The generational debt is one that will forever constrain the heart, and the only way of repaying it is to return to the elderly parent once he is too weak to care for himself. “It makes a difference to you that you are where you can fulfill all your duties, and one of those duties is an attachment to the place of your birth.” (Rousseau, *Émile*, p. 667) Repaying the governor and the society itself, when one can recognize

the true benefits of that society (which is not to say it does not have its problems as well), would be a clear indication that the education of man has resulted in an education of a good citizen. The nurtured heart will by itself feel the urging to return to the source of its creation. Gratitude is the side effect of a properly executed education, which is in accordance with nature. It is a necessary element for the emergence of the *generational debt*. Socrates' classifying of justice into the third class is a description, which a child that takes care for its elderly parent can relate to. The work that is connected with the care might be a burden for the life of the child, keeping him away from his own life; the child also follows through with the care for the parent despite the effort because the deed is simply good in itself. By being committed to giving up a part of the freedom for a higher goal, the child does something that is choice worthy for itself and for what comes out of it. Likewise, the willingness of the parent to care for the child can also be taken as a prudent sacrifice for bringing the child to understanding his duties towards the parent later on. The failure of the parent to provide sufficient education later translates into children neglecting them, once they do not need them anymore. The *generational debt*, *children owing their parents care for raising them once they cannot take care of themselves*, does not surface and the cycle of happiness does not close for either of them. The parent does not get the care and love he needs to come to terms with life's end, and the child never realizes *the generational debt* which stops him from experiencing true happiness.

The personalized education, which is constructed to fit our characters, is the most practical in bringing out the love of wisdom, which both these authors inherently defend. Our ability to perceive our surroundings and make coherent discoveries, which affect our everyday lives, is the content of the education, these authors are promoting. Matter has composed bodies with a mind capable of sensing it and it would be a shame if we put such a miracle to waste. An education that is able to awake our curiosity is one that we can continue with on our own without the need of supervision. Curiosity is the ignition of life because it brings us closer to understanding why we are here and what we should do with the gift of life. Rousseau and Plato share their similarities, but it is also apparent that their opinions about the correct education would diverge in many ways. Yet, their endeavor remains the same: they are both trying to educate a person who will be happy by fostering virtues in

themselves which depend more on them than on the others. Obviously, no child is born to support and educate himself, however, both Plato and Rousseau offer us a better way for parents to educate children, who can eventually become more independent and self-reliant in a positive way. In short, they seek to help us transform children into adults, which is the heart of education itself. The arriving to the same end by a different road remains to be a certain mystery in the comparison of their work.

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SÚHRN

Táto práca sa zaoberá analýzou diel od Rousseau a Platóna. Obaja myslitelia sa zaoberali otázkou vzdelania a jeho dopadu na ľudské spolužitie. Mojou úlohou bolo obhájiť vzdelávanie šité na mieru a podmienky, za ktorých je možné také vzdelanie poskytnúť. Prostredníctvom výkladu knihy *Émil alebo o Výchove* od Rousseau, a *Štátu* od Platóna som sa pokúsil o ich porovnanie, ktoré odhalilo v čom sa rozchádzajú a v čom sú podobní. Moja téza vychádzala z predpokladu, že takúto výchovu ideálne poskytuje sám rodič. Generačný dlh je definícia opisujúca záväzok dieťaťa voči rodičovi za výchovu, ktorú mu poskytol.

Prvá kapitola sa zaoberá Platónovým *Štátom*. V skratke opíše ústrednú tému knihy: spravodlivosť. Sokrates s Glauconom vytvoria abstraktné mesto, v ktorom má vládnuť spravodlivosť, a v ktorom by mali byť všetci občania šťastní odhladiac od ich okupácie. Pre Sokrata je vzdelávanie občanov nevyhnutné pre poriadok v takomto meste. Vzdelávanie v antických Aténach nebolo formalizované, ale Sokrates obhajuje myšlienku, že by malo byť zodpovednosťou strážcov. Problémom je, že v Aténach pedagógovia zneužívali svoje postavenie a tým pádom neposkytovali plnohodnotné vzdelanie. Strážcovia by ale museli byť vzdelaní od malička, aby dokázali učiť iných ľudí.

Sokrates navrhne vyhodiť z mesta ľudí starších ako desať rokov, pretože ich skazenosť by ovplyvnila mladých, ktorí ešte majú šancu žiť v súlade s výchovou, ktorú Sokrates navrhuje. To by ale bolo obtiažne a pritom existuje iné riešenie tohto problému. Prirodzená láska, ktorú rodič väčšinou cíti voči svojim potomkom by mu dokázala zabrániť zneužívať svoju autoritu. Ďalší problém, ktorý rieši *Republika* je otázka obsahu umenia a jeho vplyvu na ich mesto. Sokrates navrhuje cenzúru umenia, ktorá zobrazuje nespravodlivé postavy a ich zisk z takéhoto správania. Uvedomuje si, že umenie musí mať voľnosť, aby priblížili človeka k pravde, ale na druhej strane je proti imitácii ľudí, ktorí sú zlým príkladom pre spoločnosť. V antických Aténach mali básnici vysoké postavenie, pretože ich umenie sa pokladá za prenos správ medzi ľuďmi a bohmi. Pokiaľ je ale umenie iba imitácia určitého pohľadu na objekt, potom

nemá s pravdou nič spoločné. Hlavná časť tejto kapitoly je venovaná umeniu, ktoré je metódou vzdelávania v antickom Grécku. Sokrates so myslí, že by vzdelávanie nemalo byť nechané na rodiča, vzhľadom k tomu, že on sám nemá potrebné vedomosti, aby mohol dieťa plnohodnotne vzdelat'. Napriek tomu jeho dielo poskytuje implikáciu, že by to bola najpraktickejšia a najbezpečnejšia cesta k morálnej výchove.

Sokrates definuje dva typy lásky (Eros). Problém s pedagógmi je, že jeden z týchto pocitov zamieňajú s druhým: myslia si, že ponúkajú svojim žiakom riadne vzdelanie, ale v skutočnosti to robia pre ukojenie vlastných túžob. Okrem toho sa zdá, že samotní pedagógovia nevedia, čo je cnosť: inak by vedeli rozlíšiť záujem tela od záujmu duše. Zdravý duch je schopný identifikovať cnosť cez lásku k pravde. Eros sa obrátený k existencii, zaoberá uspokojovaním túžob a fyzickým plodením. Na protihľadnej strane, Eros obrátený k bytiu sa zaoberá správnym rozpoložením duše, ktorá sa potom zameriava na cnosť a pravdu. Pre Sokrata musí byť vychovávateľom niekto, kto dokáže byť vzorom pre svojich žiakov. Musí vedieť zavrhnúť všetky túžby, ktoré by mohli byť deštruktívne pre rozvoj jeho žiakov.

Nasledujúca kapitola sa obráti na Rousseaua a jeho knihu *Émil, alebo o Výchove*. V tejto knihe Rousseau pojednáva o význame vzdelania pre rozvoj dieťaťa. Vymyslí abstraktného žiaka, ktorého sa snaží vychovať v súlade s prírodou. Verí, že prirodzená výchova je pre deti ideálna: nemôžu byť nútené naberať vedomosti, kým nechápu ich praktický význam. Deti musia byť vedené tak, aby mohli nasledovať svoje prirodzené sklony. Émil je odvodené od latinského slova *aemulus*, čo znamená napodobniť. Pre Rousseaua je táto vlastnosť detí veľmi dôležitá a práve preto kladie dôraz, aby jeho Émil nemal za príklad vzory, ktoré neprispievajú k jeho vývoju. Výsledok takéhoto vzdelávania by mal byť schopný vyvážiť dva protichodné pocity, ktoré má každý, kto žije v spoločnosti. Prvý z nich sa nazýva *sebaláska*. Tento základný pocit nás núti vidieť svoju hodnotu v očiach druhých a privádza nás k neustálemu porovnávaniu. Sebaláska podkopáva ľudí, ktorí sa snažia dosiahnuť šťastie v spoločnosti. Pod jeho vplyvom si ľudia o sebe myslia, že sú dôležitejší ako ostatní. Všetky ich interakcie sú zamerané na vytvorenie obrazu, ktorý vytvára ich identitu v mysliach druhých. Vplyv sebalásky zahmlí pohľad ľudí rozlíšiť skutočné hodnoty života od tých, ktoré im spoločnosť nanútila. Druhý sentiment, ktorý je opakom sebalásky, je *láska k sebe*.

Láska k sebe je prirodzený pocit, ktorý nás núti sa starať o seba. Ak je doplnený o rozum a súcit, vedie k cnostnému životu. Tento cit nám umožňuje prehodnotiť svoje priority a môžeme ho rozpoznať, keď sa cítime mimoriadne šťastný. Inšpiruje v nás ku konaniu maximálneho dobra bez potreby získavať niečo späť. Kritická zodpovednosť sebalásky je dohliadať na prežitie celej našej rasy.

Aby sme boli schopní nájsť rovnováhu medzi týmito dvoma pocitmi, musíme mať náležité vzdelanie, ktoré sa Rousseau opisuje svojou prácou. Naša profesionálna kariéra by mala byť skôr podmienená tým, že nám prináša naplnenie prostredníctvom našej sebarealizácie. Nemali by sme naň brať ohľad len natoľko, koľko nám prináša peňazí. Émilov vychovávateľ vie o vplyve, ktorý môže mať sebaláska na jeho žiaka, keď je vystavený vplyvu spoločnosti. Ak majú všetky naše aktivity za cieľ správať sa v súlade so koncepciami spoločnosti, potom môžeme ťažko predpokladať, že budeme šťastní za akýchkoľvek okolností. Vzhľadom k tomu, že láska k sebe je sentiment popísaný Rousseauom ako snaha o zachovanie seba samého, jej vplyv môže ostať nepochopený. Nejde o hromadenie materiálnych excesov, ale o cit, ktorý nás podnecuje pomáhať druhým.

Posledná kapitola sa zaoberá porovnaním oboch týchto diel. Platón a Rousseau investovali značné množstvo času do diskusie riadneho vzdelávania, ktoré by mala byť spoločnosť schopná ponúknuť svojim občanom. Rousseau sa vrátil k téme, ktorá bola rozoberaná Platónom pred stáročiami. Správanie jednotlivca a jeho hľadanie morálneho spôsobu života je problém, ktorý prešiel skúškou času. Tieto diela sa snažia ponúknuť spôsob, ako riešiť zdanlivý rozpor medzi bojom za seba a investície svojej energie pomoci iným. Zmierenie medzi týmito dvoma záujmami by mohlo priniesť pocit spolupatričnosti a spontánny príval šťastia, ktorý nám Rousseau opisuje v *Émilovi*. V tejto práci som rozoberal, čo títo myslitelia videli ako zásadné problémy vo výchove detí a ich možným riešením. Rozklad týchto diel ukázal, že individuálne vzdelávanie by bolo najpraktickejšie, pretože by bolo schopné inšpirovať deti milovať múdrosť samu o sebe. Takisto by im takéto vzdelávanie mohlo vyrovnávať pocity, ktoré sú v neustálom rozpore a boji o získanie prevahy. Základom vzájomnej pomoci by nemalo byť vzájomné vykorisťovanie, ale vzájomný súcit.

Individuálne vzdelávanie, ktoré je šité na mieru, je najpraktickejšie pre vzkriesenie lásky k múdrosti, ktorú obaja títo autori patrične bránili. Naša schopnosť

vnímať svoje okolie spôsobom, ktorý ovplyvňuje náš každodenný život, je podporovaný vzdelávaním, ktoré sa v týchto knihách obhajuje. Vzdelávanie, ktoré je schopné vzbudiť našu zvedavosť, zaručuje, že v ňom budeme pokračovať aj na vlastnú päsť. Zvedavosť je základom života, pretože nás dostáva bližšie k pochopeniu, prečo tu sme a ako by sme mali stráviť svoj čas. Rousseau a Platón majú isté podobnosti, ale z ich diel je zrejmé, že ich názory o vzdelávaní sa rozchádzajú v mnohých ohľadoch. Napriek tomu, ich cieľ ostáva rovnaký: obaja sa snažia vzdelat' osobu, ktorá bude šťastná cez svoju lásku k cnosti. Žiadne dieťa sa nedokáže v ranom veku podporovať a vzdelávať, preto sa nám snažia Platón a Rousseau ponúknuť lepší spôsob ako ich vychovať. Ak by sa nám to podarilo, môžu sa stať nezávislé a sebestačné. Aby sme ale mohli premeniť deti v dospelých slušných ľudí, musíme najprv sami vedieť, ako má taký človek vyzerat'.

