

The pedagogical contract and the the basis for the teacher authority in Jean-Jacques Rousseau

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Resumo: A discussão acerca das bases do exercício legítimo da autoridade pelos que educam sobre os que são educados faz recurso algumas vezes à idéia de ‘contrato’. Seguindo essa direção, alguns pesquisadores em educação falam num ‘contrato pedagógico’. Nosso texto mergulha na história da filosofia para resgatar uma tentativa de sistematizar teoricamente a ideia de um contrato regulando as relações entre educadores e educandos, qual seja, o pensamento filosófico-pedagógico de Jean-Jacques Rousseau. Da mesma forma que, o casamento e a própria sociedade são concebida sob o modelo do contrato, o autor faz uso desse rico e fértil conceito para pensar a relação pedagógica. Assim, se referirá às ‘cláusulas’, aos ‘direitos’, aos ‘deveres’ e às ‘partes’, entre outras expressões da terminologia da rica e democratizante figura jurídica do contrato.

Palavras Chave: contrato, educador, educando, autoridade legítima, poder consentido.

Abstract: The discussion about the basis for the legitimate exercise of authority by those who educate upon those being educated sometimes makes use of the idea of a ‘contract’. Along these lines, some researchers in education go as far as speaking of a ‘pedagogical contract’. Our article delves into the history of philosophy to bring back an early attempt to systematize theoretically the idea of a contract regulating the relations between educators and educated, namely the thinking of Jean-Jacques Rousseau. Just as that author pictured marriage and society itself under the model of a contract, he makes use of this concept to think the pedagogical relation. Thus, he refers to ‘clauses’, ‘rights’, ‘duties’, and ‘parts’, amongst other phrases from the terminology of contracts.

Keywords: contract, educator, student, legitimate authority, consented power.

One of the questions which constitutes the greatest concern and challenge to educators these days is the crisis in teachers’ authority. One of the points on which there is generally a consensus here is that it is one of the most difficult to deal with, to clarify by finding theoretical approaches, not to mention the even greater difficulty of finding practical solutions to the problem.

To this end we believe that a return to the classics could possibly provide us with some perspective that we have perhaps not considered enough, and in this way throw some light on a matter which concerns us. It is with this intention that we propose to return to the philosophical and pedagogical thought of the eighteenth century and more precisely to that of Jean-Jacques Rousseau. Following the trail of Hannah Arendt’s beliefs (1978), we will argue that it is essential to recover the tradition’s thread, which establishes a link with the past, notably when we deal with crises in the sphere of human relations. For it is likely that we face problems and questions with which our ancestors were also confronted and to which they might have found solutions and methods for understanding which, even if we cannot reproduce them, could at least show us a way to deal with the problems from which we can form our own solutions and methods of understanding.

Preliminary remark

Before considering the subject matter itself, it would be appropriate to make a preliminary remark. To say that we are going back to Rousseau in order to find leads concerning the question of teachers’ authority could seem nonsensical. For this very

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author has been stigmatised throughout the history of education as the unconditional defender of the child's freedom. According to this view, this writer was the originator of a new pedagogy which placed unprecedented value on childhood and which centred the action of education on the child's freedom. In this sense Rousseau was presented as one of the forerunners of non-directivism. He is even associated with the harmful practical consequences which child centred pedagogy has brought us,ⁱ one of which is precisely this crisis in the teacher's authority. This is in view of the fact that the cult of the child and his freedom is incompatible with the idea of a master endowed with authority. These two things seem contradictory: where there is freedom it is not possible for there to be power, authority or direction as well. That is to say, it is either one or the other: either one is directed by oneself (freedom/autonomy) or one is directed by another (authority). It is impossible to have both these things at the same time. This is the complex equation which Rousseau set himself and tried to resolve.

It must be stated therefore that the Rousseau who will serve us as a basis is not the one we have just described, the unconditional defender of the child's freedom and of a non-directive pedagogy, with no place for the teacher and his authority. We will try to recapture another Rousseau.

According to a recent researcher, Yves Vargas, Rousseau's thought has unfortunately suffered from being only partially understood in the field of educational studies. That is to say, it has been usual to take passages or episodes from here and there in *Emile* without considering their context or the whole of his philosophical and pedagogical theory.ⁱⁱ To take this whole theory into account, Rousseau's political philosophy, which was always his principal preoccupation, must be drawn upon, beyond his philosophy of education. Or *Emile* must be read alongside, and in the light of, other texts of this philosophy. We propose to carry out this reading and, in our opinion, this thinker should be rediscovered once more by educational specialists.

Contract versus naturalisation

We have said that Rousseau himself struggled with the question of how to preserve the child's freedom without sacrificing the master's authority in the process. Let us see how he tried to safeguard the two things which he judged to be essential to the pedagogical relationship, without which it would necessarily be incomplete and deformed. To understand this relationship his solution was to formulate the theory of the contract. It should be kept in mind that this notion, which occupied a central place in Rousseau's thought, produced a text entitled *The Social Contract*. Just as for him the institution of society was based upon the signed contract between the parties who make up the institution, so the pedagogical relationship was also based on a contract,ⁱⁱⁱ the pedagogical contract, signed by the two sides of this relationship, teacher and pupil, or to put it more generally, the educator and the one who is educated (which encompasses the father/son binomial).

Before examining the pedagogical contract in detail, it should be emphasised that when Rousseau reflected upon the relationship between the educator and the one who is educated within the paradigm of the contract, he immediately rejected all *naturalisation* of this relationship. It is true that education only exists because as a natural, biological fact, new members of the human race arrive continually in the world. And because, being weak and dependant, they need care, and must be instructed and orientated by older members. This natural fact of children being born can make the education of the young by the old seem equally natural. Moreover, it can make the authority of those who educate over those who are educated seem equally natural in view of their relative superiority and inferiority.

If this naturalisation of the teacher's authority is taken for a *natural right* there can be a risk of it becoming unlimited and lead to possible abuses.^{iv} To avoid this, Rousseau proposes that the pedagogical relationship must not be taken as natural but, on the contrary, as something *artificial* – i.e. as the result of a convention, as an act of will and an act of freedom, in brief as a contract between the two interested parties. Although the relationship between the educator and the one who is educated is based on natural facts – as we have seen, the fact of the superiority of adults and the inferiority of children and adolescents, and also the fact of the dependence of the latter on the former in order to survive until they know how to manage in a world they do not know – Rousseau emphasizes that it should not be naturalised at all. On the contrary, the rules of this relationship must be seen as the object of a contract, as the object of a mutual and free agreement between the parties concerned. It is only thus that obligations and benefits, or obligations and rights, consciously and freely agreed to, can exist for the parties, whereby they know in advance what they can and cannot expect of the other, and what they can or cannot do with respect to the other. It is only thus that clearly defined roles can be created for each of the two parties, so that it is possible to envisage attaining the right amount of authority for the educator, without abuse of or hesitation in the exercise of this authority, as well as attaining the right amount of freedom on the part of the child, equally without this being abused. For as the philosopher insists tirelessly in book II of *Emile*, it is true that if tyrannical masters exist on the one hand, then so do despotic children on the other, and both must be combated in order to achieve a true pedagogical relationship.^v

The first clause

It can be seen that Rousseau views the master endowed with authority and the tyrannical master, or rather the master endowed with authority and the authoritarian master, as two very different things, indeed as opposites. Authority is without doubt *a form of power* and consequently supposes command and obedience. But, although it is a form of power, it has nothing to do with the tyranny. Its main characteristic is that it is a consensual and legitimate power, while tyranny, on the contrary, is an imposed power, independent of the subordinate's assent, usurpatory and not recognised as legitimate by those who obey. But what makes the master's power legitimate and transforms it into authority? Or rather, under what conditions is the master's power considered legitimate and thus consented to and respected by the pupil? Thus, given that we seek to know under which *conditions* this power is legitimate and becomes authority, we are beginning to consider the clauses of the contract.^{vi}

The pedagogical contract is based upon the fundamental difference, already referred to, which exists between the two contracting parties. One is the master,^{vii} being superior in strength, knowledge and experience, and the other is the pupil (a child or adolescent), who is inferior in these same ways. Equally, this contract is based upon the fact that the latter, to different extents according to his age, needs to be directed by the former in the process of development, that is to say, in the acquisition of strength, knowledge and experience. The first and central clause of the contract will therefore be one which prescribes that within the pedagogical relationship, one must direct, that is to say, command, and the other must be directed, that is to say, must obey.^{viii}

The terms command and obedience are correlative and define the two essential roles in the pedagogical relationship. There can be no relationship called such without one side commanding and the other obeying, one directing and one being directed, for this relationship has as its basis the existing difference between the two

parties, and the dependency of the inferior on the superior. The exercise of power is intrinsic to the pedagogical relationship. Although words as strong as *command* and *obedience* unsettle us and even provoke a sense of horror, this must not prevent us from examining the pedagogical relationship carefully and admitting that it necessarily involves these two components, which are in truth its reason for existence, its essence and what gives it its purpose.

These words should not be feared because, as it has been noted, command does not necessarily mean authoritarian, arbitrary, tyrannical command, and obedience does not necessarily mean blind, submissive obedience, ignorant of its rights. On the contrary, denying these words could prevent us from capturing the more profound meaning of this relationship, one which exists only because there is on the one hand someone who is not capable of directing himself unaided,^{ix} and on the other hand someone who is well capable of directing himself and who is therefore able to teach this ability to the other. This will only be possible if he temporarily assumes the role of director.

This last point must be stressed, as it is essential to a good understanding of the philosopher's point of view: the direction and command effected by the master are only temporary and only permissible in order to build the capacity for self-direction in the pupil. In fact, the prime objective of the teacher's authority is to turn the pupil into an autonomous, free being, a subject endowed with auto-determination, capable of getting by with no outside direction. And thus, we are anticipating a second clause of the contract, for it would surely be incomplete if it were reduced only to this first clause, defining the roles of command and obedience. And this is because in this case there would be no contract, which always presupposes *reciprocity*, that is to say, obligations and rights on both sides, so that, all things considered, both parties are on an equal footing, neither having more rights or obligations than the other. If the contract only had this first clause, it would define no more than the master's right to command and the pupil's obligation to obey. There is no equality in this case, since the pupil has no rights or benefits. A pedagogical relationship based only on master's superiority over the pupil does not constitute a true or fair contract. A teacher who claims and justifies his authority uniquely on the grounds of having more knowledge, experience and possibly strength than his pupil effectively proposes a false contract. Any power which he may have could not be seen as authority since, in order to exist, this demands other bases than the master's superiority. The second clause of the contract better characterises the other bases of this authority and indicates the rights and benefits for the pupil. This establishes an equality between the two parties, master and pupil, where their obligations and benefits are concerned.

The second clause

The second clause affirms that the master can only exercise his command *in the interest and to the profit of the pupil*. This is something which must be properly understood, for an incorrect interpretation of this clause can result in distorted teaching practices. This does not mean, in a narrow sense, that the master can only exercise his power to order the child to do what pleases him. For this would mean abandon the pupil, leaving him with no direction, since, as we have seen, he does not have the same capacity for discernment or for judgement as his master has for directing himself.^x The master who acts solely to please the pupil may believe himself to be easy-going; he may also believe himself to be helping the pupil and may justify his actions in many ways. However, to return to Hannah Arendt,^{xi} such a master just abandons the pupil and takes the only possibility of developing and progressing away from him.

Direction which focuses only on the pupils' desires, what the philosopher calls the child's whims and fantasies, would not truly be direction and neither would there be, in a strict sense, a pedagogical relationship in this case. The second clause of the contract, which determines that the master should exercise his command in the interest and to the profit of the pupil, means ordering only the things which are good for the pupil from the point of view of his development and the construction of his autonomy, in brief, for his advancement.^{xiii} This clause reduces the power of the master to a direction which will lead the pupil to future self-direction and autonomy.

Authority is therefore a peculiar form of power. It represents a power exerted not to the profit of the one who exerts it, but to the profit of the one who submits to it. By exercising his power and his command, the master does not display his personal wishes; he does not exercise this power for his own interest and profit. If this were to be the case, his power would no longer be authority but tyranny. Authority is a power exercised to the profit of the pupil and it is precisely for this reason that it is a power consented to by him. In the contract, the pupil only gives up the power of self-direction, of satisfying his own desires – things which are most precious to him – to do what the master orders because he sees an advantage in it, because the master does not exercise this power in his own interest but in the interest of the pupil. In this case, even if he is being directed, he is not submitting to a strange desire – which would be the case if he obeyed the personal wishes of the master – but to a command which is in his interest, even if this command does not correspond to his immediate will.

We can see that obeying an authority does not necessarily harm or take away the pupil's freedom and autonomy. For in obeying, he is moving towards his own interest and profit. In other words, he is moving towards his true and deep desire. In a certain sense, it would be solved the problem of incompatibility between the master's authority and the child's freedom. For if the master's governing of the child is good, it does not harm the latter's autonomy, the autonomy of the one who is governed.

It is important to see that in this theory of the pedagogical contract, the master, as Rousseau presents him, is so to speak a special man. This is because he not only has an undeniable superiority over the pupil but he also exercises a power not for his own profit but for the profit of another. It must be recognised that directing another is an extremely tiring and difficult task, demanding that one 'forgets oneself' in order to devote oneself to another.^{xiii} And this not in order to obtain the personal advantages of this power, but only to exercise a power devoid of all interest, whose recompense, if it comes at all, will only do so in a distant future. It is in this sense that Rousseau describes the educator in those terms: 'what a sublime soul...one must be either a father or more than a man oneself'. He is said a 'rare' and 'elusive' man, almost a superhuman, a god. For he is endowed with such sublime qualities – superiority, capacity for selfless direction, ability to forget himself to do what is good for others, only receiving his recompense in the future etc.^{xiv}

The usefulness of the theory of the contract

Is Rousseau claiming that we, in our practice as teachers, should be this superhuman?

That would doubtless be impossible as we are just human ourselves. We can therefore take this question further and ask what the aim of this theory of a contract would be. Does Rousseau think that we can present this contract to our pupils openly and put it into practice to the letter? Is this how we must understand this *philosophical* theory about the pedagogical relationship and the teacher's authority? We believe not. The author's intention was to capture the *essence* of the pedagogical relationship and the teacher's authority. For this reason, he proposes a philosophical theory on this

which, unlike a scientific theory, does not aim at being immediately applicable and useful. This theory cannot give us direct instructions as to our concrete and empirical problem with the teacher's authority. But then, we can justifiably ask, what is the use of knowing the essence of the pedagogical relationship and the teacher's authority? In fact this is of the utmost importance, for we will not find concrete and specific solutions to the problem of the teacher's authority if we do not have a clear idea of what the abstract and general essence^{xv} of this authority and of the pedagogical relationship itself means; if we do not know what this relationship and the teacher's authority should be, we will not know what we can do in the concrete situations of our daily lives; in other words, if we do not have a clear idea of these principles, we will not be able to draw up plans of action.

This essence may serve as a model to check whether we are performing our function correctly and whether we are capturing the meaning of our authority as masters properly. It is not really a question of an ideal, which by definition could never be achieved. Rather we need a scale against which to judge what we do.^{xvi} To mention Hannah Arendt (1978) once more, it could be said that what characterizes a crisis situation, such as that of the teacher's authority, is the lack of parameters or of a common consensual understanding. There is no agreement any more about the essence of things – in this case the definition of what education is, of the pedagogical relationship and the master's authority – which is the reason for this crisis. The first step to solve the crisis should be to try to ask basic questions and to respond with what constitutes the essence of the phenomenon where the crisis is taking place. One advantage of the crisis situation would be to make us see this question in its purest and clearest form and consequently we would be able to capture its essence.

The affective clause

Let us look at one more of the principal clauses of the pedagogical contract. Beyond its so to speak 'judicial' aspect, with its obligations, advantages, conditions and interests, and beyond the relationship of an exchange, that is, its 'economic' aspect, the pedagogical contract must of necessity include an 'affective' dimension, an affective link between the two parties.^{xvii} We should beware here however of interpreting this badly. This does not mean that, in a simplistic and caricatural manner, the teacher must be affectionate towards his pupils or that they must be affectionate to their master, for the form which this affection should take must be clearly distinct from stereotype. Neither of the two roles defined by the contract can become concrete without presupposing this link. The pupil could not put his direction into the hands of someone else, taking away his most precious gift, if he did not have confidence in his master and if he was not convinced that that person would direct keeping his welfare in mind^{xviii}. On the other hand, the master would not be able to obey the heavy demands of the contract if did not have some kind of respect or esteem for his pupil. Let us look at some implications of these demands. Direction and command – the condition which gives the master his prerogative of power over the pupil – demand that he be competent in the subject matter which is to be transmitted and the method which is to be used. This implies hours devoted to studying and to preparing lessons, or hours devoted to the pupil. This is why Rousseau says that the master is someone who, to a certain extent, forgets himself to devote himself to another, and this is only possible when there is a relationship based on mutual esteem and respect.

This affective aspect of the contract is at once both the cause and the effect of the 'equalisation' which it implies. When the pedagogical relationship is seen as a tacit contract between master and pupil, the latter ceases, as it were, to be just the inferior one, simply destined to obey and to resign himself to a narrow role. On the one hand

he assumes the status of a person with rights, of a juridical person, in fact of a *person*. On the other hand, he also assumes the status of an equal, since contracts are signed between people equal in the eyes of the law. If it is true that the contract has as its starting point the inferiority and dependence of the pupil on the master, which is the justification for the latter's direction, it is also true that on the other hand, the contract can only continue to exist by presupposing equality between the parties. A true pedagogical relationship must bring the two aspects together simultaneously: hierarchy and equality. The pupil is not obliged in principle to enter into the pedagogical relationship, nor to obey; in a word, he is not obliged to adhere to the contract with the master. If he does, it is by free will and because he believes he will gain by adhering to it. He is free to adhere or not to the contract, and so is the master. The two are equal at the moment the contract is signed and, it should be noted, remain so throughout its duration. If the pupil signs it, it is because by so doing, he knows he will gain equality with his master: that the latter has as many obligations and advantages as he does. This equalisation, which is brought about by the contract, realises the 'promotion' of the pupil to the status of the master. He is no longer simply an inferior, but an equal. And we treat with respect, or as a person, someone who is our equal.^{xix} The affective – or ethical - clause is therefore a consequence of equalisation. But, on the other hand, it engenders it too: because the master has 'affection' for his pupil, he is able to promote him to his equal.

If the teacher treats his pupil as a person and as an equal, this does not mean that he does not hold power or command.^{xx} The pupil is well able to understand this equality and does not confuse it with a lack of command. It is for this reason that Rousseau affirms that once the contract is 'signed' - as if this took time - there is no need for the master to be strict or for him to wield a severe and intolerant power. From this point on, the terms 'command' and 'obedience' could even be abolished, for they would now be superfluous. Once the contract is put in place, the rules established, the roles defined, and once the rights and obligations have been noted, the master's authority can become invisible, and obeying will be as natural as is imaginable for the pupil.^{xxi} Explaining^{xxii} and justifying the commands will not therefore be unthinkable. On the contrary, the pupil will have a right to this. It will reaffirm his status as a person with rights and reinforce the affective/ethical link with his master as well as his adherence to the contract.

The notion of commitment and the right to break the contract

In its turn, *commitment* is a major dimension of the contract because it concerns the future and represents a promise to continue to participate in the pact, to maintain the obligations with regard to the other party, and not to give up suddenly for no reason. If the adult already understands the notion of commitment, the child, who does not, must learn it through his participation in this contract. It is the master, superior in this way as well, who must initiate this commitment. For this reason, when the child signs a contract, he does not have a clear understanding of the commitments and promises he is making, and can therefore possibly neglect his obligations. An example of this is when a child prefers to follow his 'fantasies' rather than obey the commands of his master. In this situation, the master may employ other methods to make himself be obeyed and, in extreme cases, may even use constraint.^{xxiii}

An important point in the functioning of the pedagogical contract - which is in truth more complex than our summary and linear presentation would have one believe - is that whenever the contract is shown to be disadvantageous for one of the parties, this person has the right to break it. In this way, the contract encompasses the idea of reciprocity, as when one of the parties ceases to fulfil their obligations, it deprives the

other of his advantages. The contract then becomes a burden for the second party, which gives them the right to abandon it and cease to carry out their responsibilities. If, for example, a master ceases to fulfil his side of the bargain, the pupil has the right to deprive him of his authority. This cannot be viewed as anomalous; on the contrary it is entirely within the spirit of the contract, which supposes permanent equality where the advantages of the parties are concerned. The situation just described could occur when the teacher wants only to maintain his authority and to be obeyed, without fulfilling the other side of the bargain - exerting just direction in the pupil's interest and respecting him as the person he is. A teacher who does not apply himself to mastering his subject or who does not worry about the method and preparation of his lessons, or who does not respect his pupil as a person, is obviously breaking the contract. In taking his authority away from him, the pupil is only exercising a right given to him by the contract in recognising that the master has abandoned the pact, since in order to earn the right to authority, he must not only occupy the post of teacher formally but also, even more importantly, he must behave as such. The superiority of the educator's behaviour is not a simple *theoretical* hypothesis or an *a priori* one, but, on the contrary, it should be an effective and continual *practical* one.

This so to speak juridical reading of the pedagogical relationship could provide us with points for reflection on the subject of the crisis in teachers' authority which we find ourselves in. From the different possible hypotheses which could explain the origin of this crisis, we could take one at random, since the question is certainly complex and demands much effort of reflection on the part of researchers as well as of those concerned. It is about wondering whether, instead of looking at the pupil's disobedience to find the origin of the crisis in authority, we should not turn our attention to the teacher by asking ourselves whether perhaps he was the first to break the contract and if so, why he did this. Perhaps this hypothesis could provide us with some clues for understanding the crisis we are experiencing.

NOTES

ⁱ See for example the Presentation to *Emile* by Henri Wallon (1958, pp. 7-60).

ⁱⁱ 'If Rousseau never ceases to be famous for his views on education, a paradox must be acknowledged. Nobody has ever taken into account the whole of his theory only quotations, comments, and examples have been given out of context, either in the German pedagogic phalenteries of the 19th century or by non-directivist theories or by psychology of the 'stages' of the child. *Emile* has however produced an epistemological break in the thought about childhood by proposing the idea of complete and successive structures, which make the child into a system of resistance to adult thought. It is probable that the development of the secular school, divided into classes and separated by social influences, has been a favourable environment for the welcoming this compartmentalised and natural vision, but the theories of application differ widely from Rousseauist anthropology' (Vargas, 1995, p. 313).

ⁱⁱⁱ According to Michel Launay (1971) the notion of the pedagogical contract is the most important in *Emile*, around which the whole text is structured, although it often appears implicitly. 'One must reread *Emile* in the light of the hypothesis that the main pedagogical motivation that Rousseau proposes is the idea of a 'pedagogical contract' between Emile and his master...what marks a clear progress in Rousseau's thought is the same concept, the concept of the contract which served as motivation for Rousseau to transform the pedagogy and the politics of his time' (1971, p. 372). This commentator and his method have been the departure point for the present article.

^{iv} This idea of avoiding the abuse of the educator's authority, which could be a risk if it is taken as a natural authority, not subject to rules and limitations, appears in several passages of the text, among them: 'no-one has the right, not even the father, to order the child to do something which is not good for him' (1966, p.100).

^v See on this point *Émile* p. 58 and the following.

^{vi} An entire juridical vocabulary concerning the area of the contract emerges in the text. According to M. Launay: 'the vocabulary itself (condition, consent, clause, treaty, contract) shows that Rousseau was

aware of the concepts which underlie his pedagogic message, even if mostly it is in an implicit way that one sees the contract played out' (1971, p. 373). We could add the terms 'guarantee', 'obligation', 'mutual promises' and 'signature' of the contract.

^{vii} Although Rousseau calls the interlocutor of *Emile* a 'tutor', he thinks throughout his treaty, as has been said, of the wider relationship between the educator and the one who is educated, which includes that of the teacher and the pupil just as that of the father and the son. For the modern vision of the relationship between generations, and particularly that between parents and children, see the discussion between Sophie and her parents (2001, p. 436). There is equally a contract between them.

^{viii} 'My dear young man, do you not see that when you undertake to obey me, you compel me to promise to be your guide, to forget myself in my devotion to you...?' (2001, p. 347-348).

^{ix} Rousseau distinguishes neatly between the child and the adolescent where the capacity for directing themselves unaided is concerned. This distinction engenders, for its part, a difference in the master's authority with regard to each of them. On this difference see *Emile*, pages 250 and 347.

^x 'I know very well that if one is easy-going one may be tolerated, and one may keep up a show of authority. But I fail to see the use of authority over the pupil which is only maintained by fomenting the vices it ought to repress' (2001, p. 233).

^{xi} See *The Crisis in Education* (1978).

^{xii} 'You promise to follow my teaching, and I promise only to use your obedience to make you the happiest of men' (2001, p. 348).

^{xiii} 'My dear young man, do you not see that when you undertake to obey me, you compel me to promise to be your guide, to forget myself in my devotion to you ...? You are imposing a harsher yoke on me than on yourself. Before we either of us undertake such a task, let us count our resources' (2001, pp. 347-348). 'Young man, you readily make promises which are hard to keep; you must understand what they mean before you have a right to make them' (2001, p. 347). 'You are my wealth, my child, my handiwork; my happiness is bound up in yours; if you frustrate my hopes you rob me of twenty years of my life, and you bring my grey hairs with sorrow to the grave' (2001, p. 344).

^{xiv} 'A tutor! What a noble soul! Indeed for the training of a man one must either be a father or more than a man ... can such a one be found? I know not ... but let us assume that this prodige has been discovered' (2001, p. 19).

^{xv} On the complex question of the statute of the text of *Émile* for Rousseau, we will limit ourselves to mentioning two central passages: "this is what I have tried to do. Lest my book should be unduly bulky, I have been content to state those principles the truth of which is self-evident. But as to the rules which call for proof, I have applied them to *Emile* or to others, and I have shown, in very great detail, how my theories may be put into practice. Such at least is my plan' (2001, p. 21). 'The second consideration depends upon certain given conditions in particular cases; these conditions are accidental and therefore variable; they may vary indefinitely. Thus one kind of education would be possible in Switzerland and not in France; another would be adapted to the middle classes but not to the nobility. The scheme can be carried out, with more or less success, according to a multitude of circumstances, and its results can only be determined by its special application to one country or another, to this class or that. Now all this particular applications are not essential to my subject, and they form no part of my scheme. It is enough for me that, wherever men are born into the world, my suggestions with regard to them may be carried out...' (2001, p. 3). See on this point M. M. Nascimento (1988).

^{xvi} On this other complex question of *Emile* as a scale, it is enough to mention two central passages: 'Yet he who would judge wisely in matters of actual government is forced to combine the two; he must know what ought to be in order to judge what is' (2001, p. 505) and 'Before beginning our observations we must lay down rules of procedure; we must find a scale with which to compare our measurements' (2001, p. 506). See also the commentaries of M. M. Nascimento (1988).

^{xvii} There are several passages which discuss the mutual attachment between master and pupil. Let us look at one: 'I must add that there is just one other point arising out of this; we must never be separated except by mutual consent. This clause is essential, and I would have tutor and scholar so inseparable that they should regard their fate as one. If once they perceive the time of their separation drawing near, the time which must make them strangers to one another, they become strangers then and there; each makes his own little world, and both of them being busy in thought with the time when they will no longer be together, they remain together against their will. The disciple regards the master as the badge and scourge of childhood, the master regards his scholar as a heavy burden which he longs to be rid of. Both are looking forward to the time when they will part, and as there is never any real affection between them, there will be scant vigilance on one hand, and on the other scant obedience. But when they consider they must always live together, they must need love one another, and in this way they really learn to love one another. The pupil is not ashamed to follow as a child the friend who will be with him in manhood; the tutor takes an interest in the efforts whose fruits he will enjoy, and the virtues he is cultivating in his pupil form a store laid up for his old age' (2001, p. 23).

^{xviii} The affective link follows from the love of self: 'We love those who have done us a kindness; what a natural feeling!' (2001, p. 234). From the gift received from the master comes the naturalness of his

authority: 'If gratitude is a natural feeling, and you do not destroy its effects by your blunders, be sure your pupil, as he begins to understand the value of your care for him, will be grateful for it, provided you have not put a price upon it; and this will give you an authority over his heart which nothing can overthrow' (2001, p. 235).

^{xxix} 'I cannot refrain at this point from drawing attention to the sham dignity of tutors, who foolishly pretend to be wise, who discourage their pupils by always professing to treat them as children, and by emphasising the difference between themselves and their scholars in everything they do. Far from damping their youthful spirits in this fashion, spare no efforts to stimulate their courage; that they may become your equals, treat them as such already, and if they cannot rise to your level, do not scruple to come down to theirs without being ashamed of it' (2001, p. 249).

^{xxx} Michel Launay, concerning this point, says: "These multiple contracts are only possible on one condition: the recognition of a certain equality between master and pupil, between parents and the child (...) this equality of right and nature does not in any way diminish the prerogatives and the 'empire' of the teacher worthy of the name, since he is the one who has and holds the initiative in the initiation on freedom." (1971, p. 374).

^{xxxi} 'When the time is come, when he has, so to say, signed the contract, then change your tone, and make your rule as gentle as you said it would be severe' (2001, p. 348).

^{xxxii} 'Say to him, 'My young friend, it is experience that you lack; but I have taken care that you do not lack reason. You are ready to see the motives of my conduct in every respect; to do this you need only to wait till you are free from excitement. Always obey me first, and then ask the reasons for my commands; I am always ready to give my reasons so soon you are ready to listen to them, and I shall never be afraid to make you the judge between us. You promise to follow my teaching, and I promise only to use your obedience to make you the happiest of men' (2001, p. 348).

^{xxxiii} Rousseau admits that sometimes a father may smack his child to get him to do what he has been told. The problem here would be in making use of constraint, an exceptional recourse, as the only basis of power. It is therefore clear that there would be no contract or authority in this case, but simply a tyrannical power without boundaries.

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