

THE CONTRIBUTION OF DIDEROT'S POLITICAL THOUGHT: AN INFLUENCE IN TWO FORMS

The contribution that was made by Diderot toward the publication of the Encyclopédie is widely acclaimed to be the greatest of his achievements.¹ For twenty years of his life he was engaged in the task of editing that most important literary enterprise of the eighteenth century, and there has never been any doubt but that he was an editor of enormous skill and energy. He personally selected many of the plates which together form twelve of the thirty-five volumes that were printed,² he revised and corrected a vast number of essays which were submitted by his colleagues, and after the chevalier de Jaucourt he may well have been, in any case, its most prolific single contributor.³ Yet the

1. See, for instance, Franco Venturi, Jeunesse de Diderot (1713-1753), traduit de l'italien par J. Bertrand (Paris 1939), p. 8: "Le chef-d'oeuvre de Diderot existe...son titre a donné son nom à une école et à une époque: l'Encyclopédie." Cf. Jacques Proust, Diderot et l'Encyclopédie, second edition (Paris 1967), p. 508: "L'Encyclopédie... a été le lieu décisif de son enrichissement et de son affermissement."

2. Réamur in fact charged that his own plates for the Académie royale des sciences had been stolen by Diderot, but an official enquiry conducted by the Academy did not confirm this. See Arthur Wilson, Diderot: The Testing Years, 1713-1759 (New York 1957), pp. 241-243, and Proust, pp. 54, 69, and 203.

3. On Jaucourt, whose 17,000 articles comprise more than one-fourth of the entire text, see Richard N. Schwab, 'The Extent of the Chevalier de Jaucourt's contribution to Diderot's Encyclopédie', Modern Language Notes, LXXII (1957), pp. 507-508, and Schwab and W. E. Rex, 'Inventory of Diderot's Encyclopédie', VI, SVEC, XCIII (1972), pp. 108-191. The full extent of Diderot's own contribution, however, even putting aside all problems about his debt to other writers, cannot be established with any accuracy. For we have only fragmentary evidence as to which of the unsigned articles that have been ascribed to him by his editors are actually his own, and it is certainly a mistake to suppose that they were all composed by him. At the same time, while it is clear that Diderot did revise many of the articles which his colleagues submitted to him (see, for instance, Proust, p. 151), it is not possible to ascertain how often or how much he did so. It has been possible in some cases, however, to prove that essays which were once supposed to be by Diderot were, in fact, composed by others. The articles 'Prêtre' and 'Représentans', for example, both of which are included in the standard (Assézat-Tourneux)

articles of the Encyclopédie that have been credited to Diderot should not, I think, be counted among his best work. For while they bear the mark of his ecumenical breadth of learning they show little trace of his original and creative thought, and the intellectual debt to other writers which is displayed in them is very commonly their most striking feature.

Il ne faut pas surestimer l'originalité de la pensée qui s'exprime dans...[ses] articles de l'Encyclopédie. Dans le domaine de l'histoire des idées comme dans le domaine de la technologie l'Encyclopédie est d'abord un inventaire des connaissances acquises.⁴

In the Encyclopédie Diderot borrowed freely from the writings of both Bayle and Fontenelle,⁵ for instance, and he incorporated into his own compositions many passages that he took from the abbé Gabriel Girard.⁶

edition of Diderot's complete writings, have been shown to be the work of d'Holbach. See Herbert Dieckmann, 'L'Encyclopédie et le fonds Vandeul', RHLF, LI (1951), p. 332; Proust, pp. 120, 432, and 540; and Lough, Essays on the 'Encyclopédie' of Diderot and d'Alembert (London 1968), pp. 121, 135-137, and 226. Paul Vernière would, I think, have been well-advised to take some note of this research since, as recently as 1963, in his edition of Diderot's Oeuvres politiques, he included the essay 'Représentans' among his selections. For the best list published to date of the articles which were composed, or may have been composed, by Diderot, see Lough, 'The Problem of the unsigned articles in the Encyclopédie', SVEC, XXXII (1965), pp. 327-390; Proust, annexe II, pp. 532-540; and Schwab and Rex, pp. 64-96.

4. Proust, p. 238.

5. The articles 'Brachmanes' and 'Machiavélisme', for instance, contain passages which were drawn directly from Bayle's Dictionnaire (see *ibid.*, pp. 238-239, 550, and 554-555), while the articles 'Acier', 'Antédiluviennne', 'Leibnizianisme', and 'Malebranchisme' all show the direct influence of Fontenelle (see *ibid.*, pp. 217, note 102, 550, 554, and 555). Diderot's debts, moreover, to Louis Le Comte (see *ibid.*, p. 551), Ephraim Chambers (see R. Loyalty Cru, Diderot as a Disciple of English Thought [New York 1913], pp. 257-270), and Claude Buffier (see Pierre Hermand, Les idées morales de Diderot [Paris 1923], pp. 231-232), among others, have also been noted.

6. More than forty of Diderot's articles in the first three volumes of the Encyclopédie alone are either identical with, or alternatively based upon, the definitions which had appeared in Girard's Synonymes françois (first published in Paris in 1736). Diderot often cited his source, but not always. The articles 'Augmenter, aggrandir' and 'Bornes, termes, limites', for instance, were copied from Girard without acknowledgement. See Dieckmann, Inventaire du fonds Vandeul et inédits de Diderot (Genève and Lille 1951), pp. 43-45, and Proust, pp. 152 and 557-565.

Most important of all, perhaps, the philosophical essays which he supplied, and which were later to be published separately, were very largely drawn directly from the Historia critica philosophiae of Jacob Brucker.⁷ Diderot's writings for the Encyclopédie are, in short, the work of a publicist and annotator, so much so, indeed, that even the article 'Eclectisme' which bears his signature is not his own.⁸

Now what is true of Diderot's contribution as a whole is also true of his political essays in particular, for they too were drawn, and were in fact always said to be drawn, from the work of other thinkers. With respect to his most widely known article, the 'Autorité politique', Father Guillaume-François Berthier first charged that it was taken from a seditious work on the power of British kings,⁹

7. The Historia critica philosophiae a mundi incunabulis ad nostram usque aetatem deducta was published in Leipzig in five volumes from 1742 to 1744, and a supplementary volume appeared in 1767. Diderot first came across this work which "il devait si bien piller" in 1750 when he borrowed it from the Bibliothèque du roi (Proust, p. 154). As early as 1760, in L'Année littéraire, Elie Fréron pointed to this source of so many of Diderot's philosophical essays for the Encyclopédie (see *ibid.*, p. 255), but in 1769 all of these articles, together with some others by different contributors, were republished in London under Diderot's name as the Histoire générale des dogmes et opinions philosophiques depuis les plus anciens temps jusqu'à nos jours. See Cru, pp. 257, 270-278 and 282, note 26, and Proust, pp. 122, 244-258, 264-267, 273-281, 297-300, and 550-557.

8. Most of it is taken from Brucker's Historia (see Proust, pp. 551-552). At the beginning of the article (Encyclopédie, V (1755), p. 270), however, Diderot did at least make one contribution of his own: "L'éclectique", he wrote, "est un philosophe qui foulant aux piés le préjugé...ose penser de lui-même".

9. See the Journal de Trévoux of March 1752, p. 458, note: "Ces principes paroissent empruntés d'un livre intitulé: Traité du pouvoir des Rois de la Grande-Bretagne, traduit de l'anglois en 1714. & réfuté en Angleterre même, comme autorisant la révolte & la trahison." In the errata (p. xvi) to the third volume of the Encyclopédie (published in 1753), however, the editors replied that "l'ouvrage anglois d'où on a prétendu que cet article avoit été tiré, n'a jamais été ni lu, ni vû, ni connu par l'auteur". Cf. Proust, p. 345; Vernière, pp. 5-6 and 10, note 1; and Lough, Essays, pp. 429-433.

d'Alembert (or perhaps Diderot himself) replied that it was actually taken from an innocuous work about the rights of Spanish queens,¹⁰ and recently it has been identified as yet another article which was drawn from Girard's Synonymes françois.¹¹ But according to many of his interpreters the principal sources upon which Diderot relied in his

10. See the Encyclopédie, III, p. xvi (errata): "Nous n'avons prétendu dans notre article AUTORITÉ que commenter & développer ce passage, tiré d'un ouvrage imprimé par ordre de Louis XIV. & qui a pour titre, traité des droits de la reine sur différens états de la monarchie d'Espagne, part. I., p. 169, édit. de 1667 in-12. 'Que la loi fondamentale de l'état forme une liaison réciproque & éternelle entre le prince & ses descendans, d'une part, & les sujets & leurs descendans, de l'autre, par une espece de contrat.'" There is, however, no mention of this passage in the 'Autorité politique' itself, and in any event it was probably known to the editors of the Encyclopédie only through a secondary and much more contemporary source, the 'Remontrances' of the Paris Parlement of 9 April 1753, in which it is noted, together with its original source, in exactly the same terms as appear in the errata (see Lough, p. 436). I half suspect that Diderot and d'Alembert intended this reference, in connection with that of Berthier, to be something of a pun on the 'coin du roi' and the 'coin de la reine' which had already come to be distinguished in the Querelle des Bouffons.

11. See note 6 above. The first six paragraphs of the 'Autorité politique' are generally drawn from Girard's article 'Autorité, pouvoir, puissance', and they include, though with some textual variations, Girard's own account of Romans xiii.1. Indeed, one of Diderot's other articles on authority ('Autorité, pouvoir, puissance, empire') opens with three sentences which are more or less copied, with acknowledgements, from a second article by Girard ('Autorité, pouvoir, empire') and ends with a shortened but uncredited account of the first article (a confusion of terms which was to catch the attention of Nicolas Beauzée in his own edition ([Paris 1769], I, p. 363) of the Synonymes françois). As to the rest of the 'Autorité politique' itself, nearly a third is taken up by two lengthy quotations from the Mémoires of the duc de Sully (first published in 1638), the seventh paragraph, on hereditary monarchy, may have been inspired by Barbeyrac (according to Derathé, p. 259, note 5), and several passages have been attributed to the influence of Grotius, Locke, and Pufendorf. See Derathé, p. 81 and note 4; Proust, p. 345; and Lough, pp. 437-439. Vernière (pp. 10-14), on the other hand, appears to have overlooked the connection between Diderot and Girard, and, taking the accusation by Berthier quite seriously, points instead to certain passages in the Traité du pouvoir des rois. This, I think, is a mistake, as are the references to a 'refutation' of Bossuet and a 'recollection' of Pascal which Vernière also locates in the article. See too Proust, p. 560, and Lough, pp. 427-429.

political essays for the Encyclopédie were the ideas of the same philosophers of natural law that have come to be so frequently cited as the precursors of Rousseau. Diderot's 'Autorité politique', together with Rousseau's Discours sur l'inégalité, show just how much "subissent tous deux l'influence de Pufendorf", wrote Jean Morel in 1909. In other works, he continued

ils s'inspirent l'un et l'autre de Locke ou de Barbeyrac, éditeur de Pufendorf. Ces auteurs sont la source des idées politiques de l'Encyclopédie, (puisque Diderot les défend comme telles).¹²

More recently, Robert Derathé has also pointed to such a connection between Diderot and the theorists of natural law, for certainly, he remarks,

les articles de Diderot publiés dans les premiers volumes de l'Encyclopédie sont en partie inspirés par Pufendorf et Barbeyrac.¹³

And if, for the most learned of Diderot's interpreters today, there may be no decisive proof that he ever came across the writings of the natural law philosophers first-hand, this is not a matter of any consequence, Jacques Proust tells us, since he certainly knew enough of Pufendorf to refer to him directly in his article 'Citoyen', and he would have been quite familiar with Burlamaqui, too, through an article ('Droit de la nature') by Boucher d'Argis which was faithfully copied from Burlamaqui's major works.¹⁴ On the principle of natural sociability, especially, Proust writes,

12. 'Recherches sur les sources du Discours de l'inégalité', pp. 142-143. Morel refers to a page from the Apologie de l'abbé de Prades on which, however, Diderot makes no reference to any of these writers.

13. Derathé, p. 81 and note 4. Cf. pp. 32-33, 259, note 5, and 383, and Havens, 'Diderot, Rousseau, and the Discours sur l'inégalité', p. 250.

14. See Proust, pp. 345-347, 384-386, and 422-424. Cf. note 40 below.

Diderot a pu l'emprunter à Aristote aussi bien qu'à Grotius, Pufendorf, Locke, Burlamaqui, Montesquieu.¹⁵

Clearly the references to the 'droit naturel', the state of nature, and the social contract which are included in Diderot's articles for the Encyclopédie will be entirely familiar to readers of the natural law philosophers.¹⁶

15. Ibid., p. 408. But in this list Montesquieu does not really count for much, according to Proust, since (ibid., p. 349) "on ne peut...dire que Montesquieu a été pour Diderot un véritable initiateur, en ce qui concerne les principes de la philosophie politique". On the connection, however slight, between the works of Montesquieu and the articles of Diderot for the Encyclopédie, see ibid., pp. 347-350, 463-465; and 469-474.

16. Compare, for example, the following passages:

"Qu'on examine bien, & on la fera toujours remonter à l'une de ces deux sources: ou la force & la violence de celui qui s'en est emparé, ou le consentement de ceux qui s'y sont soumis par un contrat."

"Modum adquirendi imperii violentum vocare solent occupationem....Igitur talis demum occupatio ad comparandum imperium facit, quae justam prae-supponit invasionis causam, & consensu subjectorum, pactoque subsequente firmatur."

Diderot, 'Autorité politique', Encyclopédie, I (1751), p. 898.

Pufendorf, De jure naturae et gentium, VII, c. vii, §3, pp. 742-743.

"Le prince tient de ses sujets mêmes l'autorité qu'il a sur eux...Les lois de la nature & de l'état sont les conditions sous lesquelles ils se sont soumis, ou sont censés s'être soumis à son gouvernement. L'une de ces conditions est que n'ayant de pouvoir & d'autorité sur eux que par leur choix & de leur consentement, il ne peut jamais employer cette autorité pour casser l'acte ou le contrat par lequel elle lui a été déférée."

"Where-ever Law ends, Tyranny begins, if the Law be transgressed to another's harm. And whosoever in Authority exceeds the Power given him by the Law, and makes use of the Force he has under his Command, to compass that upon the Subject, which the Law allows not, ceases in that to be a Magistrate, and acting without Authority, may be opposed, as any other Man, who by force invades the Right of another."

Ibid.

Locke, Second Treatise of Government, c. xviii, §202, pp. 418-419.

"La puissance qui vient du consentement des peuples, suppose nécessairement des conditions qui en rendent l'usage légitime, utile

"Jamais aucun peuple n'a eu intention de se soumettre à un Souverain, jusqu'à ne pouvoir jamais lui résister....Si donc un peuple a toujours le droit de

Indeed, we have only to turn to the Neveu de Rameau to find Diderot himself pointing to his precursors:

J'ai étudié les loix, et je suis versé dans le droit.
—Si Puffendorf et Grotius revenoient au monde, ils mourroient de faim, contre une borne.¹⁷

If it is true, therefore, that the writings of Grotius and Pufendorf were, in the mid-eighteenth century, the classics of the natural law tradition,¹⁸ then it was Diderot, far more than Rousseau, who was "le débiteur et le disciple"¹⁹ of that school. For while Rousseau was almost always critical of the philosophers of natural law²⁰ Diderot provided little more than a gloss upon their works, and in the Encyclopédie, at any rate, he did not make a contribution of great significance to the history of political and social thought.²¹

à la société... & qui la fixent & la restraignent entre des limites: car l'homme ne doit ni ne peut se donner entièrement & sans réserve à un autre homme."

résister à la tyrannie manifeste d'un Prince, même absolu, à plus forte raison aura-t-il le même pouvoir à l'égard d'un Prince qui n'a qu'une Souveraineté restreinte & limitée."

Ibid.

Burlamaqui, Principes du droit politique (Genève 1751), I, Seconde Partie, c. vi., §§24 and 27, pp. 175 and 176-177.

The similarity between the texts of Diderot and Pufendorf is noted by Lough (p. 438), though Lough joins with Proust and differs from Derathé in supposing (p. 439) that Diderot's debt to the natural law philosophers was only second-hand, since "a careful comparison of the text of his article with the writings of Locke, Grotius, and Pufendorf... does not reveal a single passage which he could be said to owe directly to any one of these writers". Cf. note 11 above.

17. Le Neveu de Rameau, ed. Jean Fabre (Genève and Lille 1950), p. 91.

18. See Morel, 'Sources du Discours de l'inégalité', p. 160.

19. Derathé, p. 379. Some of Diderot's interpreters (see, for instance, Anthony Strugnell, Diderot's Politics [The Hague 1973], p. 189) maintain that he adhered to a theory of natural law in his later as well as in his early writings.

20. See ch. I, pp. 18-21.

21. Diderot's articles for the Encyclopédie do not, of course, constitute the whole of his work in political and social thought. His Principes de politique des souverains, as well as his two commentaries upon Russian institutions, the Entretiens avec Catherine II and the Observations sur le Nakaz, all of which

Some of Diderot's work for the Encyclopédie did, nevertheless, make a contribution of considerable importance to the political writings of Rousseau, and there are certain elements of Rousseau's politics which I think cannot be properly understood except as an interpretation and development of that work. For while the intellectual standard of their political ideas may well have been quite different a number of their writings were in fact linked very closely, and it is this connection between their political concepts that I should like to examine here. If we wish to scale the most prominent peaks in the history of our political and social thought we must not always attempt our ascent from other peaks at a great distance. Sometimes, rather, we should descend to the valleys that actually hold the peaks together and to the foothills that lead up to each of them, and in this case we shall find, I mean to show, that it was Diderot who engraved many of the slopes and caverns which have made even the foothills of Rousseau's own theory often seem so treacherous. Before I turn directly, however, to the works which, in my view, establish the connection between Rousseau and Diderot most clearly, I should like to pass a very brief glance over some of the elements of their backgrounds and personalities which might help to explain the nature of their intellectual relationship. For although I am concerned here with the political thought of Diderot and Rousseau, it were written in 1773 and 1774, are proof of the importance that he attached to political theory even in his later years. See Vernière's edition of these works in his Diderot: Oeuvres politiques. In my view, however, the most significant of Diderot's writings in social theory are, on the one hand, his Supplément au Voyage de Bougainville, written between 1771 and 1773, and, on the other, his contribution, made principally between 1765 and 1780, to the abbé Raynal's Histoire philosophique et politique des Deux Indes. The best edition of the Supplément is by Dieckmann (Genève and Lille 1951). See also ch. III, pp. 113-117 below. With regard to the Histoire des Deux Indes, see especially Michèle Duchet, 'Diderot collaborateur de Raynal: A propos des "Fragments imprimés" du Fonds Vandeul', RHLF, LX (1960), pp. 531-556, and Yves Benot, Diderot, de l'athéisme à l'anticolonialisme (Paris 1970), chs. x-xii.

was not their writings on politics which initially brought them together.²²

Diderot and Rousseau were both born and educated at some distance from Paris and were therefore by origin men of the provinces in an age when the dominance of Parisian culture was entirely undisputed.²³ Both were sons of artisans and as a consequence none too secure financially - this at a time when enlightenment was still largely an aristocratic, or at best bourgeois, prerogative.²⁴ Both had come to Paris while still relatively young to acquire a more worldly education and to embark upon literary careers, and both, nonetheless, spent their early days there in some poverty, earning their incomes either through translations or from private tuition.

22. If it was their political ideas which, in some sense, drew Marx and Engels to both Paris and each other, then perhaps it could be said that it was Paris which drew Diderot and Rousseau both to each other and to their respective political ideas.

23. Denis Diderot was born in Langres in 1713. His father was a master cutler, his mother the daughter of a merchant tanner. Rousseau was born in Geneva in 1712, and his father was a third-generation watchmaker, his mother the daughter of a watchmaker too. The best account of Diderot's early life and works is still, in my opinion, Venturi's Jeunesse de Diderot. Wilson's Diderot: The Testing Years is also very useful and provides even more biographical information, though its treatment of Diderot's writings is less substantial. I have also consulted the following works: Morley, Diderot and the Encyclopaedists, 2 vols. (London 1878); André Billy, Vie de Diderot (Paris 1932); and Crocker, Diderot: The Embattled Philosopher, second edition (New York 1966). The study of Rousseau's early life should always begin with the Confessions and end with the excellent notes to the same work by Bernard Gagnebin and Marcel Raymond in O.C.I. The notes and appendices to the first few volumes of the Correspondance complète are equally important, while the most widely available general biographies are those of Jean Guéhenno (originally published under the title Jean-Jacques 3 vols. [Paris 1948-52]) and Crocker (Jean-Jacques Rousseau, 2 vols. [New York 1968 and 1973]).

24. With respect to the class origins of the Encyclopédistes in particular, see Hubert, Les sciences sociales dans l'Encyclopédie, pp. 15-22; Albert Soboul, 'L'Encyclopédie et le mouvement encyclopédique', La Pensée, XXXIX (1951), pp. 41-51; Proust, pp. 9-43; Daniel Roche 'Encyclopédistes et académiciens', in Livre et société dans la France du XVIII^e siècle, II (Paris and The Hague 1970), pp. 73-92; and Eric Walter, 'Sur l'intelligentsia des lumières', Dix-huitième siècle, V (1973), pp. 173-201.

Similarities of this sort are, of course, highly superficial, and they do not, on their own, provide any insights at all into the possible connection between their respective political ideas. But these points of resemblance between Diderot and Rousseau are important, I think, just insofar as the two thinkers were both so very different in background from their almost equally prominent contemporaries - from d'Alembert, say, or Condillac, Turgot, Mably, Helvétius, and d'Holbach.²⁵ For coupled with their close birthdates and their common, quite lachrymose, sentimentality,²⁶ and coupled, too, with their mutual delight in conversation, and intimate friendship,²⁷ and, for that matter, penurious women²⁸ - to say nothing as yet of the remarkably similar intellectual interests which they shared even before their first meeting - these elements help to explain why they should have become such constant companions in the late 1740s and early 1750s.²⁹

25. D'Alembert was the illegitimate son of the celebrated Mme de Tencin, Condillac and Mably were both sons of the vicomte de Mably, Turgot was a son of the prévôt des marchands of Paris, Helvétius was a son of the chief physician to Queen Marie Leczinska, and baron d'Holbach was the most prosperous philosophe of all. Of course these differences must not be exaggerated, since d'Alembert, for instance, drew few advantages in his lifetime from the circumstances of his birth. Reference to the artisan occupations of Rousseau's and Diderot's fathers, moreover, should never obscure the fact that the latter was a man of much more substantial property.

26. See Rousseau, Confessions, O.C.I, p. 350.

27. See *ibid.*, p. 369.

28. Anne-Toinette Champion was perhaps not quite so poor as Thérèse Levasseur, but she too had no property of her own, and Diderot, fearing that a small annuity might be lost if his father discovered that he had married beneath his station, kept the marriage a secret from his parents. In his Confessions (pp. 346-347), Rousseau drew the following comparison between their wives: "Il avoit une Nannette ainsi que j'avois une Therese; c'étoit entre nous une conformité de plus. Mais la différence étoit que ma Therese aussi bien de figure que sa Nannette, avoit une humeur douce et un caractère aimable, fait pour attacher un honnête homme, au lieu que la sienne, pigrièche et harangère, ne montrait rien aux yeux des autres qui put rachetter la mauvaise éducation."

29. See *ibid.*, pp. 287-288: "Il me parloit...de ses projets d'ouvrages. Cela forma bientôt entre nous des liaisons plus intimes qui ont duré quinze ans, et qui probablement dureroient encore si malheureusement, et bien par sa faute, je n'eusse été jetté dans son même métier." Cf. Fabre, 'Deux frères ennemis: Diderot et Jean-Jacques', Diderot Studies, III (1961), pp. 158-159.

For a time, indeed, they were the best of friends. When Diderot was imprisoned at Vincennes in 1749 after the publication of his Lettre sur les aveugles, Rousseau visited him almost daily, even, so he claimed later, asking that he be interned together with Diderot so that he should not have to endure the separation.³⁰ It was just a few years earlier, too - that is, in the mid-1740s - that Rousseau introduced Condillac to Diderot, who in turn introduced d'Alembert to Rousseau, the four men making up the most important group of Enlightenment figures during this period.³¹ They dined and caroused together and confided their most intimate secrets to each other - a practice for which Rousseau was to have considerable regret when it later became widely known that he had abandoned all his children to the rolls of public relief.³²

Of course theirs was not an everlasting friendship. With the possible exception of Duclos,³³ Rousseau really had no lifelong friends among the philosophes. His paranoia and unbearable self-righteousness easily saw to that,³⁴ and in this case a certain facile urbanity, a rather too clever cosmopolitan manner, on the part of Diderot, was perhaps

30. See the Confessions, O.C.I., p. 348: "J'écrivis à Mad^e de Pompadour pour la conjurer de le faire relâcher ou d'obtenir qu'on m'enfermât avec lui." If such a letter was ever sent to Mme de Pompadour, it has since been lost.

31. See *ibid.*, p. 347.

32. See *ibid.*, pp. 344-345. Diderot, however, did not refer anywhere to Rousseau's abandoned children. It was Voltaire who, in his 'Sentiment des citoyens', wounded Rousseau most deeply on this point. See *ibid.*, pp. 632, 1416-1422, and 1595, note 4.

33. See ch. IV, note 344.

34. How, indeed, could anyone have suffered the company, for more than ten years, of the author of these lines (Confessions, O.C.I., p. 5)?: "Je forme une entreprise qui n'eut jamais d'exemple, et dont l'exécution n'aura point d'imitateur. Je veux montrer à mes semblables un homme dans toute la vérité de la nature; et cet homme, ce sera moi. Moi seul. Je sens mon coeur et je connois les hommes. Je ne suis fait comme aucun de ceux que j'ai vus; j'ose croire n'être fait comme aucun de ceux qui existent."

also to blame.³⁵ In any event their mutual disenchantment hardened quickly, and after the mid-1750s their affection died and their careers diverged. Nonetheless, for more than ten years the two were intimate friends, and this not only as companions but also as colleagues. Both had a serious interest during that period in the natural sciences,³⁶ both then began to write what later proved to be highly successful novels,³⁷ and both were then deeply interested in contemporary music

35. Guéhenno (see Jean-Jacques, I, pp. 227-229) provides a fine account of this feature of Diderot's character. His exasperation with Rousseau is best described, perhaps, in a note which is appended to his Essai sur les règnes de Claude et de Néron (see Assézat-Tourneux, III, pp. 196-198), in the Mémoires of Jean-François Marmontel (see the 1818-20 Paris edition of his Oeuvres complètes, II, pp. 1-11), and in Les pseudo-mémoires de Mme d'Épinay. Histoire de Madame de Montbrillant (ed. Georges Roth, 3 vols. [Paris 1951], III, pp. 257-258 and 585-593). Cf. Frederika MacDonald, Jean-Jacques Rousseau: a new criticism, 2 vols. (London 1906); Fabre, 'Deux frères ennemis', pp. 155-213; and John Pappas and Roth, 'Les "Tablettes" de Diderot', Diderot Studies, III (1961), pp. 309-320.

36. See the Confessions, O.C.I, p. 342, and the following passage from Rousseau juge de Jean Jaques, in ibid., p. 834: "Il a suivi jadis un cours de chymie, rien n'est plus certain. Or vous comprenez bien ce que c'est...qu'un homme qui n'est ni Medecin ni Apothicaire et qui neanmoins suit des cours de chymie et cultive la botanique!" In 1747 Rousseau attended a course of lectures given by the distinguished chemist, Guillaume-François Rouelle, and from his notes produced a manuscript, which was never finished, of twelve hundred pages entitled the Institutions chymiques. This was first published with a commentary by Maurice Gautier in the Annales, XII (1918-19) and XIII (1920-21), and Starobinski (see Jean-Jacques Rousseau: La transparence et l'obstacle [Paris 1957], pp. 317-325) has considered its place among Rousseau's other writings in a most imaginative and suggestive manner. Rousseau's letters on botanical subjects to Antoine Gouan and Mmes de la Tour and Delessert (see his Lettres sur la botanique in the edition by Gagnebin [Paris 1962]), however, date from a later period. Diderot also attended the lectures given by Rouelle, and many of his early writings were devoted, at least in part, to ideas both in and about the natural sciences. See, for example, his Lettre sur les aveugles of 1749 (the best edition is by Robert Niklaus [Genève and Lille 1951]) and his Interprétation de la nature of 1753 (in Diderot: Oeuvres philosophiques, edited by Vernière [Paris 1956]). The most extensive account of Diderot's ideas on the natural sciences is provided by Jacques Roger in his Sciences de la vie dans la pensée française du XVIII^e siècle (Paris 1963), pp. 585-682.

37. Diderot's Bijoux indiscrets, completed apparently in a fortnight, appeared in 1748. Rousseau at least began his work for La Nouvelle Héloïse in 1756.

and especially opera.³⁸ Finally, and for my purposes most significantly, both were then engaged in writing political articles for the Encyclopédie.

Now the general effect of a writer so ebullient and incisive as was Diderot upon one so easily moved from veneration to distrust as was Rousseau, should not be underestimated. When Rousseau loved his friend, he incorporated, as he himself acknowledges, many of Diderot's critical suggestions into his own writing.³⁹ Yet when he later disavowed that friendship he came retrospectively to see these very insertions as cunning and deliberate attempts to discredit him. Arguments and propositions which Rousseau adopted out of devotion and fidelity came, I hope to show, to be contradicted with great determination when the affection which had once occasioned their appearance in his work jaded and grew bitter. We should never attempt, of course, to deduce the substance of a theory from the motives of its author, but it is occasionally of the utmost importance that we take notice of those sentiments and dispositions of a writer which may animate his particular theoretical emphases. And it seems to me beyond doubt that Rousseau sometimes came to focus even his most abstract and esoteric interests upon certain problems which real and imagined intimacies or antagonisms brought to his attention. Diderot may not have been a political theorist of great originality, but he quite effectively stimulated one who was. With a delight for the novel and pungent phrase, and for dramatic emphasis in even his philosophical arguments, he made a profound, but not constant,

38. See the Confessions, O.C.I., p. 287: "Il aimoit la musique; il en savoit la théorie; nous en parlions ensemble." Diderot's Mémoires sur différens sujets de mathématiques, which have to do, in some measure, with matters of acoustics, were published in 1748. There is to my knowledge, however, no evidence to suggest that Diderot played any part, as Wilson claims (Diderot: The Testing Years, p. 89), in the composition of d'Alembert's Elémens de musique suivant les principes de M. Rameau. I shall be turning to Rousseau's writings about music in ch. IV.

39. See ch. III, note 6.

impression on his sometime friend.

In the Encyclopédie the most notable of Diderot's contributions to political thought is probably the article, which he produced for the fifth volume, entitled 'Droit naturel'.⁴⁰ Its importance historically stems rather more, I think, from the impression that it made upon Rousseau's writings than from any remarkable features of its own, but in the context of Diderot's political theory alone it ought still to

40. The article appears on pp. 115-116 of the fifth volume, which was published in 1755. It was reprinted in Assézat-Tourneux, XIV, pp. 296-301 and is most readily available today in Vaughan, I, pp. 429-433, and Vernière, pp. 29-35. The text is included by Vaughan, and indeed is the only work not by Rousseau which is reprinted in his study, for the same reason that I am concerned with it here, that is, because it undoubtedly had a great influence upon Rousseau's own writings. Some scholars (see note 114 below), impressed by the marked similarity between certain passages in the 'Droit naturel' and Rousseau's Manuscrit de Genève, have even suggested that Rousseau could have been the author of at least those sections of the article as well, but this claim, I hope to show, rests upon a misreading of both works. There is, in my view, no reason whatever to doubt that Diderot was the author of the 'Droit naturel', particularly since the work is marked by the asterisk which he himself employed to designate certain articles as his own. It has been shown that other articles which do not bear his mark, including, for example, the 'Autorité politique', must also have been written by him, and no evidence has ever been uncovered which might suggest that any article which was signed by him was in fact put together by someone else. This fact should not, of course, obscure the real debt that Diderot may have owed to other writers in his composition of the 'Droit naturel'. Both Frances Montgomery and Leland Thielemann, for instance, have claimed that the article was inspired by a chapter in Buffier's Cours de sciences sur des principes nouveaux & simples. Thus, writes Thielemann ('Diderot and Hobbes', Diderot Studies, II (1952), p. 249), "Its central theme of the 'volonté générale' was the same as Buffier's concept of the 'inclination générale', which was manifest in the judgments that were common to all men". (Cf. ibid., p. 272, note 153; Montgomery, La vie et l'oeuvre du père Buffier [Paris 1930], p. 193; and Proust, p. 159, note 180. Buffier's Cours de sciences was first published in Paris in 1732, and the relevant passages appear in columns 1087-1088 and 1555-1560.) There is some truth in this suggestion, and it is certainly clear that in the Encyclopédie Diderot borrowed frequently from Buffier's work, though in this case he does not seem to have followed the text with anything like the fidelity he showed to Girard, Brucker, and Buffier himself elsewhere. Some questions have also been raised about the possible connection between Diderot's essay and another article by Boucher d'Argis, entitled 'Droit de la nature, ou droit naturel', which also appeared in the fifth volume of the Encyclopédie. Both Hubert (Rousseau et l'Encyclopédie, p. 28) and

rank as his most thoughtful and significant achievement. And this is so, in my view, largely because it is Diderot's most highly abstract treatment of the subject, having to do with some central problems, not so much about the institutions of government as about the nature of man and society in general. In the last generation or two, many political theorists have expressed doubts as to whether such overriding matters are at all relevant to questions about the character of political systems,⁴¹ but Diderot, certainly, was never so discriminating. No less than his more celebrated colleagues both before and after him, he attempted to establish a political theory that would rest upon a coherent metaphysic of man. Thus it is in his article 'Droit naturel' that one finds his account of obligation, will, and duty, of human liberty, and of the moral sense of man - in essence, his discussion of

Derathé (p. 58, note 4) have suggested that Diderot must have been dissatisfied with Boucher's article and thus conceived his own 'Droit naturel' to be a reply. But this is not entirely clear, since Boucher's 'Droit de la nature' was based upon the work of Burlamaqui (see note 14 above) with whom Diderot, according to both Hubert and Derathé, should have been in agreement. For Proust (p. 386), "C'est...surtout comme philosophe, et non comme politique ou comme juriste, que Diderot trouve à redire à l'article de Boucher d'Argis". See also *ibid.*, pp. 384-386.

41. Doubts of this kind have been expressed more often in Oxford, I think, than anywhere else. T. D. Weldon, for instance, remarks that "to claim for a statement that it asserts a political principle is to claim for it exemption from questioning in a particular context. Linguistically such claims are often made by employing such words as 'intuition', 'self-evident', 'obviously', etc. These function as stop signs, in the same sort of way as 'Keep off the grass' notices" ('Political Principles', in Laslett, ed., *Philosophy, Politics and Society*, First Series [Oxford 1963], p. 34). Cf. Brian Barry, *Political Argument* (London 1965), p. 36: "To ask of someone, 'What are his political principles?' is not to ask for the irreducible, ultimate considerations that weigh with him; but to ask for indications of the line he would take on any of a great number of possible issues." Barry, to be fair, has his own reservations about Weldon (see *ibid.*, p. 290, note 2), but both are concerned with principles of a quite different kind from those which are expressed in the political theories of Diderot and Rousseau. 'Keep off the grass' notices, in particular, serve nothing like the same purpose as the political concepts of either the philosophes or their critics were intended to do, and even Weldon's mockery of Rousseau's principles ('Political Principles', p. 32) is conceived in a language with peculiarities of its own: "Recalcitrants either conceal their preferences or end by being forced to be free in Wormwood Scrubbs or Broadmoor."

the nature of mankind, let us say, rather than of men.⁴² And the most significant of the concepts which Diderot ascribes to mankind in his essay is expressed by the phrase 'volonté générale'.

C'est à la volonté générale que l'individu doit s'adresser pour savoir jusqu'où il doit être homme, citoyen, sujet, pere, enfant, & quand il lui convient de vivre ou de mourir. C'est à elle à fixer les limites de tous les devoirs.⁴³

42. In the 'Droit naturel' Diderot frequently employs such terms as 'l'humanité', 'l'espece humaine', and especially 'le genre humain'. Hence when Rousseau devotes a chapter of his Manuscrit de Genève to a refutation of the 'Droit naturel' he gives as its title, 'De la société générale du genre humain' (see note 109 below).

43. Encyclopédie, V, p. 116. The importance of the 'volonté générale' as a concept in Diderot's political thought should not be underestimated. He invokes it at least a half-dozen times in the 'Droit naturel', and he refers to it again in the articles 'Grecs (philosophie des)' and 'Législateur'. In 'Grecs' (Encyclopédie, VII (1757), p. 908) he proclaims, "Les lois, les lois; voilà la seule barriere qu'on puisse élever contre les passions des hommes: c'est la volonté générale qu'il faut opposer aux volontés particulieres; & sans un glaive qui se meuve également sur la surface d'un peuple, & qui tranche ou fasse baisser les têtes audacieuses qui s'élevent, le foible demeure exposé à l'injure du plus fort". (Cf. ibid., p. 909: "On s'adressa d'une voix générale à Solon, & il fut chargé d'arrêter l'état sur le penchant de sa ruine.") In the 'Législateur' (Encyclopédie, IX (1765), p. 358) he remarks, "Si le peuple où regne cet esprit de communauté ne regrette point d'avoir soumis sa volonté à la volonté générale, voyez DROIT NATUREL; s'il ne sent point le poids de la loi, il sent encore moins celui des impôts; il paie peu, il paie avec joie". And again (ibid., p. 361): "Si le législateur ne respecte ni ne consulte la volonté générale; s'il fait sentir son pouvoir plus que celui de la loi...alors l'esprit de communauté disparaît." Diderot's use of the expression in 'Grecs' is particularly striking, since he took so much of that work directly from Brucker's Historia critica philosophiae. But while the paragraph in which the 'volonté générale' appears is opened with a sentence that is adapted from Brucker's text, and while Diderot returns at the end of the same paragraph to the commentary of the Historia (I, p. 434), the section on primitive Greece which incorporates his reference to the 'volonté générale' has no counterpart at all in Brucker. (It should be noted here that some eighteenth-century scholars have ascribed the article 'Législateur' to Saint-Lambert, since it is reproduced in his collected works. See, in particular, Dieckmann, 'The sixth volume of Saint-Lambert's works', Romanic Review, XLII (1951), p. 112, note 7; Proust, p. 538; and Lough, The 'Encyclopédie' (London 1971), pp. 304-309. In the light of these references to the 'volonté générale', however, I think it is more likely that the article was produced by Diderot than by Saint-Lambert, particularly since the first passage includes a note which refers the reader to the 'Droit naturel'. Certainly the appearance of the 'Législateur' among the published writings of Saint-Lambert cannot be accepted as sufficient proof that the essay was composed by him. The

Now the term 'volonté générale' does not make its first appearance in the article which Diderot prepared for the Encyclopédie. It can be found in the writings of both Malebranche and Montesquieu,⁴⁴ and before the publication of the 'Droit naturel' it may well have been employed by other writers too. Latin expressions of a quite similar kind had certainly been developed by Suárez, Hobbes, and Pufendorf,⁴⁵ and there has been wide speculation and much disagreement among scholars as to the original source of the concept that was to figure so prominently in the

article 'Philosophe' (see note 96 below) has appeared in various editions of the complete works of Chevrier, Voltaire, Helvétius, and Diderot, as well as with the writings of its true author, Dumarsais, and, in my view, the other articles of Saint-Lambert, most of which pertain to morals and manners rather than to politics, do not provide any convincing reasons for supposing that he was responsible for the 'Législateur' too. If I am mistaken here, and Saint-Lambert's authorship is finally confirmed, then it should at least remain apparent that the references to the 'volonté générale' in the 'Législateur' are drawn from Diderot.)

44. For Malebranche, see De la Recherche de la vérité (first published in 1674-75), V.i. In the Paris 1958-70 edition of his Oeuvres complètes the following passage appears in II, p. 131: "La volonté de Dieu qui fait l'ordre de la grace, est donc ajoutée à la volonté qui fait l'ordre de la nature pour la réparer, & non pas pour la changer. Il n'y a dans Dieu que ces deux volontés générales; & tout ce qu'il y a dans la terre de réglé dépend de l'une ou de l'autre de ces volontés." For Montesquieu, see De l'Esprit des loix (first published in 1748), XI.vi. In André Masson's edition of his Oeuvres complètes, 3 vols. (Paris 1950-55), the most important of Montesquieu's references to the 'volonté générale' appears in I.i, p. 210: "Les deux autres pouvoirs pourroient plutôt être donnés à des magistrats ou à des corps permanens; parce qu'ils ne s'exercent sur aucun particulier; n'étant, l'un, que la volonté générale de l'état; & l'autre, que l'exécution de cette volonté générale." In the same chapter (p. 209) Montesquieu also refers to the "volontés générales" of the legislative "corps de magistrature", and in XIX.iv (p. 412), and again in the Considérations sur les causes de la grandeur des Romains (see, for example, I.iii, pp. 507 and 519) he comments upon the "esprit général" of a nation.

45. For Suárez, see De legibus, ac Deo legislatore of 1612, reprinted from the original edition as Selections from Three Works of Francisco Suárez (Oxford 1944), III, c. ii, §4, p. 202: "Alio ergo modo consideranda est hominum multitudo, quatenus speciali voluntate, seu communi consensu in unum corpus politicum congregantur uno societatis vinculo, & ut mutuo se iuvent in ordine ad unum finem politicum, quomodo efficiunt unum corpus mysticum, quod moraliter dici potest per se unum." For Hobbes, see De cive in the Molesworth edition of his Latin Opera (London, 1839-45), II, p. 213: "Quoniam igitur conspiratio plurium voluntatem ad eundem finem non sufficit ad conservationem pacis et defensionem stabilem, requiritur ut circa ea, quae ad pacem et defensionem sunt necessaria, una omnium sit voluntas." Cf. Hobbes's Philosophical Rudiments in the Molesworth edition

fifth volume of the Encyclopédie.⁴⁶ But there is, however, no evidence to suggest that either Diderot or Rousseau took any notice of the expression in one of its earlier formulations, and it is not my aim here to provide an exhaustive account of the emergence of a phrase. What I

of his English Works, II, p. 69: "Union thus made, is called a city or civil society; and also a civil person. For when there is one will of all men, it is to be esteemed for one person; and by the word one, it is to be known and distinguished from all particular men, as having its own rights and properties....A city therefore...is one person, whose will, by the compact of many men, is to be received for the will of them all." See also Human Nature (English Works, IV), p. 70, and De corpore politico (in ibid.), p. 122. Howard Warrender (The Political Philosophy of Hobbes: His Theory of Obligation [Oxford 1957], p. 130) writes that "Hobbes is led to make statements which give to the sovereign the aspect of a General Will", but for F. C. Hood (The Divine Politics of Thomas Hobbes [Oxford 1964], p. 136) the "will of a civil person which is to be held to be the will of all", according to Hobbes, "is clearly a fiction". For Pufendorf, see De jure naturae et gentium, VII, c.ii, §11, p. 669: "Equidem qui inter se convenerunt de conferendo in aliquem imperio, intelliguntur quoque in id consensisse, ut omnes suam voluntatem isti subijciant, seu ut istius voluntas voluntatem omnium in gerenda republ. repraesentet." Cf. ibid., VII, c.ii, §4, p. 662.

46. The most comprehensive historical accounts of the concept are those of Charles W. Hendel, Jean-Jacques Rousseau: Moralists, 2 vols. (London 1934), I, pp. 92-122, and Léon, 'L'Idée de volonté générale chez Jean-Jacques Rousseau et ses antécédents historiques', Archives, III-IV (1936), pp. 148-200. Yet while both Hendel and Léon make scholarly contributions of some importance, they each tend to draw connections between Rousseau and his precursors which are not warranted by the evidence they provide. Hendel, in particular, seems to believe that almost every idea of sovereignty which was expressed before the time of Rousseau may be translated as a concept of the 'general will', and his claim (p. 100), for instance, that "the genealogy of the general will begins with Jean Bodin" is in no way substantiated by his references to the Six livres de la République. Hendel also states (p. 102) that the concept "was taken up by ...J. V. Gravina", but the two chapters which he cites from Gravina's Opera seu originum juris civilis include no mention of anything like the 'volonté générale'. The closest approximation to an idea of the 'volonté générale' that I have been able to find in Gravina is, in fact, printed in a chapter (II.xviii of the 1737 Leipzig edition, p. 160) to which Hendel does not refer: "Hinc ex placida, & inermi, armata prodiit, & imperiosa sapientia: cujus vi libertas nostra minime praeceiditur; quoniam eo potestas extitit e confusis omnium viribus: & lex universorum complexa voluntates, rationem singulorum, & potestatem in se conditas perpetuo conservat." In any event we have no proof that either Diderot or Rousseau had ever read this work. Léon, on the other hand, claims that Hendel even makes too much of Montesquieu's debt to Gravina (see p. 174, note 4), though in this case it is at least clear that Montesquieu knew something of Gravina's thought. Yet Léon, at the same time, traces the 'volonté générale' to Plato, St. Augustine, Duns Scotus, and almost everyone else as well, and his account remains superior to Hendel's only because he does not, as Hendel has done, re-name all the ideas which must allegedly have led up to Rousseau as concepts of the 'volonté générale' itself.

think is quite clear, on the other hand, is that the expression appeared in Rousseau's work for the first time in an article which he also contributed to the fifth volume of the Encyclopédie and in which he pointed to Diderot as its author.

Le corps politique est...un être moral qui a une volonté; et cette volonté générale, qui tend toujours à la conservation et au bien-être du tout et de chaque partie, et qui est la source des lois, est pour tous les membres de l'état...la règle du juste et de l'injuste...Voy. au mot DROIT, la source de ce grand et lumineux principe, dont cet article est le développement.⁴⁷

If the phrase, therefore, which Diderot employed in his article cannot be traced clearly to any other writer, the debt that Rousseau owed when he first used the expression is one which he publicly acknowledged.⁴⁸

47. Rousseau, Discours sur l'économie politique, O.C.III, p. 245. In the Encyclopédie the 'Economie politique' appears on pp. 337-349 of vol. V under the title 'ECONOMIE ou OECONOMIE'. It was first published separately in Geneva in 1758 as the Discours sur l'Oeconomie politique, though in a letter to Rousseau of 7 September 1756 (see the Correspondance complète, IV, p. 99) Condillac gives the impression that it had already then been reprinted.

48. Rousseau refers to the 'Droit naturel' in a second passage of this article as well (O.C.III, p. 247): "C'est ainsi que les hommes les plus corrompus rendent toujours quelque sorte d'hommage à la foi publique: c'est ainsi (comme on l'a remarqué à l'article DROIT) que les brigands mêmes, qui sont les ennemis de la vertu dans la grande société, en adorent le simulacre dans leurs cavernes." He does, however, also refer to two other articles, the 'Politique' (which is probably by Diderot) and the 'Souveraineté' (which is by Jaucourt), and it may seem unlikely that by 1755 Rousseau should have known the substance of some articles by other authors that were only to appear in print much later. On the other hand, Diderot's scheme of cross-references had already been applied to articles which were to be published in the later volumes of the Encyclopédie, and it might be supposed, therefore, that the references to other essays which are included in Rousseau's 'Economie politique' could perhaps have been added by the editor himself. Both Vaughan (I, pp. 425-426) and Derathé (O.C.III, pp. 1394-1395, note 2) are, indeed, led to wonder why Diderot should never have claimed the 'volonté générale' as his own idea, and because of his neglect of this matter they regard it as at least conceivable that Rousseau, rather than Diderot, introduced the concept to the other. Now it might be that this suggestion is correct, even though there is no evidence at all, so far as I know, that lends any support to it. But certainly it is a mistake to suppose that it must be true on the grounds that Diderot, with respect to the 'volonté générale',

In this chapter I shall be concerned with some problems about the nature and extent of that particular debt, and I shall try to show how Rousseau repaid it in more than one way.

In the 'Droit naturel' the expression 'volonté générale' refers, firstly, to a principle of morality which is inherent in the natural as well as in the social world. It is not a specifically political concept.

simply remained silent about Rousseau's debt to him. In the eighteenth century, after all, no great importance was attached to this concept in Rousseau's thought, and Diderot could not have had much occasion to claim an insignificant idea as his own. It is, in any case, perfectly clear that Rousseau did acknowledge his debt to Diderot, since his reference to the 'Droit naturel' on the occasion of his first use of the expression is already to be found in the rough draft of the article which he later submitted to the Encyclopédie. This version appears on p. 74.ii of a notebook which is presently in the Rousseau archives at Neuchâtel (Ms R 16). The text reads as follows, with the final version, of course, being that cited on p. 60 above: "<Le corps politique> <[Un peuple entier]> <n'est pas seulement un corps organique et vivant> Le corps politique est <encore> donc aussi un Etre moral qui a une volonté, et cette volonté <collective ou générale est> [générale] qui tend toujours [au bien être] à la conservation <de tout individu collectif> [du tout et de chaque partie] est <par rapport> pour tous ses membres par rapport à eux <mêmes> et à lui la règle du juste et de l'injuste (voyez droit) ce qui pour le dire en passant montre avec combien de lumières tous nos écrivains ont traité de vol <1><a subtilité><[exercice]> [la subtilité] prescrite aux enfans de Lacedemone pour <avoir de quoi se nourrir> [gagner leur <propre> [frugal] repas] comme si <l'on pouvoit jamais qual> tout ce <que les (?) permis(?) pou> qu'ordonnent les Loix <qui> pouvoient ne pas être légitime <entre les Citoyens>." The passage is particularly significant, not only because it shows that Rousseau had the article 'Droit naturel' in mind already at this time, but also because it suggests that he hesitated to employ the concept on the first occasion that he refers to it. Thus the expression 'volonté générale' only appears in Rousseau's text after he deletes a reference to the 'volonté collective ou générale'. The notebook in which this passage figures contains several other important manuscript fragments from the 'Economie politique' and Rousseau's political writings generally, and many of these fragments have been printed several times elsewhere (see especially the Edmond Dreyfus-Brisac edition of the Contrat social [Paris 1896], pp. 316-320; J.-L. Windenberger, La République confédérative des petits états [Paris 1900], pp. 274-287; Vaughan, I, pp. 274-280, 308-322, 514-516; Dufour, II, pp. 119-127; and O.C.III, pp. 474-492, 507, 525-549, and 555-560). But this particular, and in my view quite central, passage was published for the first time only in 1971 (see the Paris edition of Rousseau's Oeuvres complètes edited by Launay, II, pp. 294-295) in a transcription which, however, is neither complete nor exact. (I should, nevertheless, like to express my apologies here to Messieurs Launay and Jacques Mayor for having overlooked their work in an earlier version of this chapter which appeared under the title 'The Influence of Diderot on the political theory of Rousseau: two aspects of a relationship', in SVEC, CXXXII (1975), pp. 55-112.)

Mais, me direz-vous, où est le dépôt de cette volonté générale? Où pourrai-je la consulter?... Dans les principes du droit écrit de toutes les nations policées; dans les actions sociales des peuples sauvages & barbares... & même dans l'indignation & le ressentiment, ces deux passions que la nature semble avoir placées jusque dans les animaux pour suppléer au défaut des lois sociales.⁴⁹

Since the task of the philosopher, writes Diderot, is to establish the principle of right and justice in the natural society of mankind,⁵⁰ and since the 'volonté générale' in fact supplies this principle,⁵¹ it follows that at least one proper context for a consideration of the 'volonté générale' must be the state of nature. For the true virtues of men can only be attained when their conventional moral standards approximate their natural dispositions,⁵² and, indeed, if it were possible for animals to communicate their sentiments to men, then

49. Encyclopédie, V, p. 116. Cf. the Supplément au Voyage de Bougainville (Dieckmann edition), p. 28: "Veux-tu savoir en tout temps et en tout lieu ce qui est bon et mauvais? attache toi à la nature des choses et des actions.... Tu es en délire, si tu crois qu'il y ait rien, soit en haut soit en bas dans l'univers qui puisse ajouter ou retrancher aux loix de la nature." It should be noted, too, that the sentiments of men and animals which take the place of social laws are rather more benign according to Rousseau. For he points, not to "l'indignation et le ressentiment" of creatures in their original state, but rather to "l'amour de soi-même" and "la pitié", dispositions which are so natural "que les Bêtes mêmes en donnent...des signes sensibles" (Discours sur l'inégalité, O.C.III, p. 154).

50. See the Encyclopédie, V, pp. 115-116: "Le philosophe interrogé dit, le droit est le fondement ou la raison première de la justice. Mais qu'est-ce que la justice?... si nous ôtons à l'individu le droit de décider de la nature du juste & de l'injuste, où porterons-nous cette grande question? où? devant le genre humain: c'est à lui seul qu'il appartient de la décider, parce que le bien de tous est la seule passion qu'il ait." See also Norman Suckling, 'Diderot's Politics', Diderot Studies, XVI (1973), pp. 278-279.

51. See the Encyclopédie, V, p. 116: "La volonté générale est dans chaque individu un acte pur de l'entendement qui raisonne dans le silence des passions sur ce que l'homme peut exiger de son semblable, & sur ce que son semblable est en droit d'exiger de lui."

52. The connection between men's moral standards and their natural dispositions provides a recurrent theme in Diderot's work, particularly in the Supplément au Voyage de Bougainville about which I shall have more to say in the next chapter. It is discussed in the Neveu de Rameau too, as for example in the following passage (p. 90): "S'il est destiné à devenir un homme de bien, je n'y nuirai pas. Mais si la molécule vouloit qu'il fut un vaurien comme son pere, les peines que j'aurois prises, pour en faire un homme honnête lui seroient tres nuisibles; l'éducation croissant sans cesse

la cause du droit naturel ne se plaideroit plus par-devant l'humanité, mais par-devant l'animalité.⁵³

Following from this, secondly, Diderot proposes a conception of a 'volonté générale' which is at once realized in a number of distinct forms and expressed in a variety of different ways. Such disparate evidence as the natural inclinations of men, the tacit conventions of thieves and barbarians,⁵⁴ and the legal codes of complex states, is all thus introduced under the rubric of the new expression. For the concept, as Diderot construes it, refers both to principles that are presupposed in the patterns of our behaviour and to other principles that are prescribed according to the statutes which governments enact. It applies equally, that is, to our habits and our obligations, to what men do as a rule, and to what they ought to do as their duty.

Now the different formulations of the concept, finally, do not ever need to be distinguished in Diderot's account, so that no single one of its meanings can strictly be held to exclude any of the others.

Cette considération de la volonté générale de l'espece & du desir commun, est la regle de la conduite relative d'un particulier à un particulier dans la même société; d'un particulier envers la société dont il est membre, & de la société dont il est membre, envers les autres sociétés...la soumission à la volonté générale est le lien de toutes les sociétés, sans en excepter celles qui sont formées par le crime.⁵⁵

la pente de la moleculle, il seroit tiré comme par deux forces contraires, et marcheroit tout de guingois, dans le chemin de la vie."

53. Encyclopédie, V, p. 116. See also Hendel, Rousseau: Moralist, I, p. 107, and Léon, 'Rousseau et les fondements de l'Etat moderne', p. 215.

54. With respect to thieves, see the Encyclopédie, V, p. 116: "Hélas, la vertu est si belle, que les voleurs en respectent l'image dans le fond même de leurs cavernes!" It is in fact to this sentence that Rousseau points in his second reference to the 'Droit naturel' (see note 48 above). With respect to barbarians, see the passage cited for note 49 above. Diderot also writes (*ibid.*) that the 'volonté générale' may be expressed "dans les conventions tacites des ennemis du genre humain entr'eux".

55. *Ibid.*

The significance of this point, in connection with Rousseau's account of the idea, is that Diderot's 'volonté générale' may come to be consistent, in due course, with a properly realized 'volonté particulière'.⁵⁶ On the whole, Diderot supposes that the 'volonté générale' will be attained correctly when individual men, as members of any group whatever, come to recognise their separate interests not as conflicting but as reciprocal. As a rule of conduct it is thus accessible to each of us, and it requires no special assembly as a precondition for men to act in accordance with it. Any conception at all of private interest as achieved through common enterprise will suffice. The 'volonté générale', in short, is presented not as a will which is categorically opposed to the group sentiments of men but rather as the correct mode of their expression, and it therefore follows that the will of all, conceived as the sum of particular wills, is at least potentially compatible in every case with the 'volonté générale'.

It is these features of the 'volonté générale' which are, in my view, central to Diderot's conception. And if such is the case, then I

56. The 'volonté générale' is not, of course, identical with the 'volonté particulière' in Diderot's account. For, as he remarks (*ibid.*), "Les volontés particulières sont suspectes; elles peuvent être bonnes ou méchantes, mais la volonté générale est toujours bonne", and he refers to this difference twice again in the 'Droit naturel' (see *ibid.*) and once more in the article 'Grecs' (see note 43 above). But the 'volonté générale' of a group, according to Diderot, is nothing more than the mutual bonds that tie each member to the rest. And while for Rousseau all those ties together form only the sum of particular interests with respect to the 'volonté générale' of a state (see the passage from the Contrat social cited in note 72 below), for Diderot it is the ties between the communities in a state which collectively form the interest of the whole: "Dans la législation tout est lié, tout dépend l'un de l'autre, l'effet d'une bonne loi s'étend sur mille objets étrangers à cette loi: un bien procure un bien, l'effet réagit sur la cause, l'ordre général maintient toutes les parties, & chacune influe sur l'autre & sur l'ordre général. L'esprit de communauté, répandu dans le tout, fortifie, lie & vivifie le tout" ('Législateur', Encyclopédie, IX, p. 358 - with regard to Diderot's authorship of this article, see note 43 above). Cf. Antoine Adam, 'Rousseau et Diderot', Revue des sciences humaines, LIII (1949), p. 30, and Proust, p. 389.

think there can be little doubt but that Rousseau proposes, at least in most of his political works, an interpretation of the idea which is quite unlike the account devised by Diderot. We have only to turn to the Manuscrit de Genève, or the fifth book of Emile, or the sixth Lettre de la montagne, or, indeed, the Contrat social to see the contrast between Rousseau's own theory and that of his precursor.⁵⁷

According to Rousseau, firstly, the 'volonté générale' can be realized only as a consequence of the social compact and not at all within the state of nature. It refers to the will of individuals in their corporate capacity, that is, to citizens constituted as members of a sovereign, and never, certainly, to the inhabitants of any natural society of mankind.

Il y a...dans l'Etat une force commune qui le soutient, une volonté générale qui dirige cette force et c'est l'application de l'une à l'autre qui constitue la souveraineté. Par où l'on voit que le souverain n'est par sa nature qu'une personne morale, qu'il n'a qu'une existence abstraite et collective, et que l'idée qu'on attache à ce mot ne peut être unie à celle d'un simple individu.⁵⁸

The distinction between what is natural and what is conventional in human behaviour, between what men pursue from impulse and what they

57. In the Manuscrit de Genève, Rousseau considers the 'volonté générale' at greatest length in Livre I, ch. iv and Livre II, ch. iv (O.C.III, pp. 294-297 and 326-330). For his discussion of the concept in Livre V of Emile, see especially O.C.IV, pp. 841-846. For the appropriate passage in the sixth Lettre de la montagne, see O.C.III, pp. 807-808. In the Contrat social itself (printed in ibid., pp. 347-470) the concept of course figures prominently throughout the text, but perhaps the most important passages appear in Livre I, ch. vii; Livre II, chs. i, iii, vi; and Livre IV, chs. i and ii. Among the interpretations of the 'volonté générale' in Rousseau which I have seen, perhaps that of Beaulavon in the introduction and notes to his edition of the Contrat social (see ch. I, note 32) is still my favourite. But I am also indebted, at least in part, to Hubert (Rousseau et l'Encyclopédie, pp. 27-52), Léon ('L'Idée de volonté générale'), and Plamenatz (Man and Society, I, pp. 391-418), and I am broadly in agreement, too, with the accounts of the connection between Rousseau's and Diderot's ideas which are provided by Proust (pp. 359-399) and Einaudi (The Early Rousseau, pp. 172-185).

58. Manuscrit de Genève, I.iv, O.C.III, pp. 294-295. Cf. Contrat social, I.vi and II.i (ibid., pp. 361-362 and 368).

perform from duty, is drawn no less sharply by Rousseau than by Kant,⁵⁹ and it is clear that for Rousseau the concept of the 'volonté générale' refers exclusively to the sphere of moral conduct as it applies to men in their political associations.

Ce passage de l'état de nature à l'état social produit dans l'homme un changement très remarquable, en substituant dans sa conduite la justice à l'instinct, et donnant à ses actions des rapports moraux qu'elles n'avoient point auparavant. C'est alors seulement que la voix du devoir succédant à l'impulsion physique et le droit à l'appetit, l'homme qui jusques là n'avoit regardé que lui même se voit forcé d'agir sur d'autres principes et de consulter sa raison avant d'écouter ses penchans.⁶⁰

Hence the 'volonté générale', construed as the voice of a popular sovereign, can only arise in a properly established civil state. It will therefore, of course, have no place whatever in the animal realm, for all creatures in the state of nature, Rousseau remarks, "n'ayant entre eux aucune sorte de relation morale, ni de devoirs connus",⁶¹ are unable to enter into those relations of agreement and consent through which the 'volonté générale' must be expressed.

Secondly, while Rousseau may often be imprecise in his own account of what the concept means, he nonetheless holds firmly, in the Contrat social, Emile, and Lettre de la montagne, to the view that for every political situation there is always an appropriate and unique 'volonté générale', however difficult in practice it might be for men to act according to its rules.⁶² Rousseau sometimes suggests that we grasp its

59. See, for example, §§43-46 of Das öffentliche Recht, in Kant's gesammelte Schriften, VI, pp. 311-315.

60. Manuscrit de Genève, I.iii, O.C.III, p. 292. The two paragraphs of the Manuscrit which are opened by this passage also form most of Livre I, ch. viii of the Contrat social (ibid., pp. 364-365).

61. Discours sur l'inégalité, ibid., p. 152.

62. See the Contrat social, II.vi, ibid., p. 380: "De lui-même le peuple veut toujours le bien, mais de lui-même il ne le voit pas toujours. La volonté générale est toujours droite, mais le jugement qui la guide n'est

meaning only through the content of the laws which it enacts,⁶³ and sometimes he implies that we know it rather through the public deliberations which give rise to those laws,⁶⁴ as if to recognise its accomplishments, on the one hand, and to perceive how these are achieved, on the other, were to understand the 'volonté générale' in the same way. And this confusion of what might be called the political effects with the moral character of the 'volonté générale'⁶⁵ stems, I think, from Rousseau's belief that a proper system of legislation will always, and at the same time can only, yield laws of a right kind.

Il s'ensuit de ce qui précède que la volonté générale est toujours droite et tend toujours à l'utilité publique.⁶⁶

pas toujours éclairé." Cf. Manuscrit de Genève, I.vii (ibid., p. 311), and also the following passage from the Contrat social, IV.i, ibid., p. 438: "Quand l'Etat près de sa ruine ne subsiste plus que par une forme illusoire et vaine...la volonté générale devient muette....S'ensuit-il de-là que la volonté générale soit anéantie ou corrompue? Non, elle est toujours constante, inaltérable et pure; mais elle est subordonnée à d'autres qui l'emportent sur elle."

63. See, for instance, the following passage from Emile, Livre V, O.C.IV, p. 842: "Puisque rien n'oblige les sujets que la volonté générale, nous rechercherons comment se manifeste cette volonté, à quels signes on est sur de la reconnoître, ce que c'est qu'une loi, et quels sont les vrais caractères de la loi?" Cf. Contrat social, II.vi (O.C.III, p. 379).

64. See the Contrat social, II.iii, ibid., p. 371: "Si, quand le peuple suffisamment informé délibère, les Citoyens n'avoient aucune communication entre eux, du grand nombre de petites différences résulteroit toujours la volonté générale, et la délibération seroit toujours bonne."

65. In the Manuscrit de Genève, II.iv (ibid., p. 327) Rousseau writes, "La matière et la forme des Loix sont ce qui constitue leur nature; la forme est dans l'autorité qui statue; la matière est dans la chose statuée".

66. Contrat social, II.iii, ibid., p. 371. G. D. H. Cole was of course mistaken when, in his edition of The Social Contract and Discourses (first published in London in 1913), he translated 'droite' in this passage as 'right', particularly since Rousseau continues immediately with "il ne s'ensuit pas que les délibérations du peuple aient toujours la même rectitude". Thus the editors of the latest version of Cole's text (London 1973) have replaced 'right' with 'upright', while Maurice Cranston, in his own recent edition of The Social Contract (London 1968) translates 'droite' as 'rightful'. Cf. Contrat social, II.iv (O.C.III, p. 373), and the passages cited in note 62 above.

The 'volonté générale' cannot ever be arbitrary, cannot ever harm even a single member of the sovereign, because in such a case it would cease to be a proper 'volonté générale'.

La puissance Souveraine n'a nul besoin de garant envers les sujets, parce qu'il est impossible que le corps veuille nuire à tous ses membres....Le Souverain, par cela seul qu'il est, est toujours tout ce qu'il doit être.⁶⁷

There is, to be sure, much that may appear tautological about such a concept, but it is just for this reason, I think, that the meanings attributed to the expression by Diderot are excluded by Rousseau. For while Diderot finds proof almost everywhere of the practical reality of the 'volonté générale', Rousseau finds that we can never be sure when we have it at all. And whereas for Diderot it is already presupposed in every one of our institutions, in Rousseau's view none of those institutions could in fact secure it for long.⁶⁸

Rousseau's 'volonté générale', thirdly, does not assimilate or conjoin but rather excludes particular wills.

Chaque individu peut comme homme avoir une volonté particulière contraire ou dissemblable à la volonté générale qu'il a comme Citoyen. Son intérêt particulier peut lui parler tout autrement que l'intérêt commun.⁶⁹

67. Contrat social, I.vii, *ibid.*, p. 363. Cf. Emile, Livre V, O.C.IV, p. 841: "Un particulier ne sauroit être lésé directement par le souverain qu'ils ne le soient tous, ce qui ne se peut, puisque ce seroit vouloir se faire du mal à soi-même. Ainsi le contract social n'a jamais besoin d'autre garant que la force publique." The same point is made by Kant in Das öffentliche Recht, §46, p. 313: "Die gesetzgebende Gewalt kann nur dem vereinigten Willen des Volkes zukommen. Denn da von ihr alles Recht ausgehen soll, so muß sie durch ihr Gesetz schlechterdings niemand unrecht thun können."

68. See the Contrat social, III.xi, O.C.III, p. 424: "Le corps politique, aussi-bien que le corps de l'homme, commence à mourir dès sa naissance et porte en lui-même les causes de sa destruction."

69. Contrat social, I.vii, *ibid.*, p. 363. Cf. Contrat social, II.i, *ibid.*, p. 368: "S'il n'est pas impossible qu'une volonté particulière s'accorde sur

Thus while a collection of particular wills may produce a sum which Rousseau calls the 'volonté de tous', only a consideration and acceptance by each citizen of what is truly in the common interest could engender the 'volonté générale' itself.

Il y a souvent bien de la différence entre la volonté de tous et la volonté générale; celle-ci ne regarde qu'à l'intérêt commun, l'autre regarde à l'intérêt privé, et n'est qu'une somme de volontés particulières.⁷⁰

quelque point avec la volonté générale; il est impossible au moins que cet accord soit durable et constant; car la volonté particulière tend par sa nature aux préférences, et la volonté générale à l'égalité." In the Contrat social Rousseau develops this theme again in Livre II, ch. vi and especially in Livre III, ch. ii (*ibid.*, pp. 380 and 400-402). In Emile, Livre V (O.C.IV, p. 843), he writes, "L'essence de la souveraineté consistant dans la volonté générale, on ne voit point non plus comment on peut s'assurer qu'une volonté particulière sera toujours d'accord avec cette volonté générale. On doit bien plutôt présumer qu'elle y sera souvent contraire; car l'intérêt privé tend toujours aux préférences et l'intérêt public à l'égalité". See also the Manuscrit de Genève, I.iv (O.C.III, pp. 295-296) and the sixth Lettre de la montagne (*ibid.*, p. 808). An account of this theme in Rousseau's work is developed by Hans Barth in his 'Volonté générale et volonté particulière chez J.-J. Rousseau', in Rousseau et la philosophie politique, pp. 35-50.

70. Contrat social, II.iii, O.C.III, p. 371. Cf. Manuscrit de Genève, I.iv, *ibid.*, pp. 296-297: "La volonté générale est rarement celle de tous, et la force publique est toujours moindre que la somme des forcés particulières." It is true, however, that Rousseau does not maintain this distinction consistently even in those works which together, in my view, stand somewhat apart from his 'Economie politique'. For in the Contrat social, IV.i (*ibid.*, p. 438), he also writes, "Quand le noeud social commence à se relâcher et l'Etat à s'affaiblir...l'intérêt commun s'altère et trouve des opposans...la volonté générale n'est plus la volonté de tous...et le meilleur avis ne passe point sans disputes". In the sixth Lettre de la montagne (*ibid.*, p. 807), furthermore, he remarks that "la volonté de tous est...la règle suprême, et cette règle générale et personifiée est ce que j'appelle le Souverain". For Derathé (*ibid.*, p. 1456) it therefore follows that the 'volonté générale' must be the same, at least in principle, as the 'volonté de tous', "sans quoi on ne comprend plus comment, en obéissant à la volonté générale, les citoyens obéissent à leur propre volonté!". And the distinction between the 'volonté de tous' conceived as the sum of particular wills, on the one hand, and the 'volonté générale' as the sum of their differences, on the other, "if we take it literally", according to Plamenatz (Man and Society, I, p. 393), "is sheer nonsense". But if the 'volonté de tous' is meant to express the total of men's private interests as distinct from the collective interest which they all share, then the opposition between the 'volonté de tous' and the 'volonté générale' seems to me quite central to Rousseau's theory, and his failure to maintain that distinction throughout the Contrat social is, in my view, one of the more important defects of the work. Bosanquet, who accepts and in fact elaborates this distinction between two kinds of will,

Rousseau even suggests, from time to time, that a permanent opposition between the general and the particular wills of a community is necessary for the 'volonté générale' to be realized at all. For

l'accord de tous les intérêts se forme par opposition à celui de chacun. S'il n'y avoit point d'intérêts différens, à peine sentiroit-on l'intérêt commun qui ne trouveroit jamais d'obstacle.⁷¹

The will of all but one, so far from it being the closest approximation to the 'volonté générale' that could in practice be attained, is for Rousseau its most extreme perversion. For it establishes consensus only out of shared private interests, and it makes out of the state, not a political association, but a faction.⁷²

even suggests (quite incorrectly, I think) that Rousseau's suspicion of representative institutions and his preference for unanimity in legislation were based upon a neglect of the fundamental difference between the two concepts which he had himself introduced. For a 'real' general will, as Bosanquet understands it (see The Philosophical Theory of the State, first edition, ch. v, especially pp. 111-117), must always be in the common interest though it may not be perceived by everyone to be so, and a delegated authority aloof from prejudice and special pleading could be supposed to serve equally to the best advantage of all men. A useful interpretation of the 'volonté de tous' as compared to the 'volonté générale' in Rousseau's thought can be found in Beaulavon's thoroughly admirable edition of the Contrat social, on pp. 31-35 and 162-163, notes, in the 1914 text. Barry ('The Public Interest', Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society, supplementary volume XXXVIII (1964), pp. 1-18), moreover, argues that the distinction forms an important element in what we understand to be the meaning of a public interest.

71. Contrat social, II.iii, O.C.III, p. 371, note. These lines appear in a note devoted to a commentary upon a passage from d'Argenson's Considérations sur le gouvernement ancien et présent de la France. D'Argenson's work was first published in Amsterdam in 1765, but copies of the manuscript (under the title Traité des intérêts de la France avec ses voisins) had been in circulation for several years before that and Rousseau probably added his note to the Contrat social at the beginning of 1762. The passage from which Rousseau quotes is to be found in the Considérations on pp. 26-27 of the published text: "Chaque intérêt a des principes différens; l'accord de deux intérêts particuliers se forme par une raison opposée à celui d'un tiers." In Rousseau's note "par une raison opposée" appears as "par opposition". Cf. O.C.III, pp. 1436 and 1456.

72. See the Contrat social, II.iii, *ibid.*, p. 371: "Quand il se fait des brigues, des associations partielles aux dépens de la grande, la volonté de chacune de ces associations devient générale par rapport à ses membres, et particuliere par rapport à l'Etat."

Now if this summary account of the phrase 'volonté générale' in the works of both Diderot and Rousseau is correct, it should be clear that the predominant features of Diderot's concept are certainly not recapitulated, are actually contradicted, rather, in Rousseau's most common use of the same expression. Nonetheless, one will find that in his article 'Economie politique' Rousseau employs a concept of the 'volonté générale' which at once differs sharply from all his subsequent accounts and at the same time resembles closely Diderot's own exposition in the 'Droit naturel'.⁷³ For in the 'Economie politique' Rousseau

73. The conceptual similarity between the articles of Diderot and Rousseau has often been described before, most notably by Hubert in Rousseau et l'Encyclopédie (see especially pp. 26-29). According to Hendel (Rousseau: Moraliste, I, p. 98), moreover, the two works are in fact "companion-pieces", while for Derathé (O.C.III, p. lxxiii) they are proof that "à l'époque de la préparation du tome V de l'Encyclopédie, pendant les années 1754-1755, la collaboration entre Rousseau et Diderot est très étroite et leur amitié sans nuages". But in the absence of any clear testimony as to when the 'Economie politique' was produced, and in the light of its apparent inconsistency with Rousseau's other work, there has been much speculation and wide disagreement about the possible dates of its composition. For Lanson ('L'Unité de la pensée de Rousseau', pp. 15-16), Rousseau must have begun to work on the article just before or around 1750, at the time, that is, when he was most under the influence of the Encyclopédistes, while Hubert (Rousseau et l'Encyclopédie, pp. 51-66), whose arguments are generally based securely upon the evidence of Rousseau's texts, supposes that the work was conceived in 1753 and written early in 1754, before the Discours sur l'inégalité (with which he agrees it is incompatible) was finished and even before Diderot had put together his 'Droit naturel'. Now the suggestion that an essay which stands apart from Rousseau's other writings should have been composed some time before them is of course quite tempting, but the conclusion, therefore, that Rousseau refers to a piece which Diderot had not yet drafted, is altogether an unhappy one. It may be the case that Diderot's ideas in his article were more largely drawn from Rousseau's work than they were adopted in it, though to suppose that the discrepancy between the 'Economie politique' and Rousseau's other writings must be explained in this fashion is certainly a mistake. For if our chronology of Rousseau's works is made to depend upon this or that conception of their logical coherence, then we shall have to rearrange our account of the dates on which they were all conceived. We shall have to suppose, for instance, that the 'Préface de Narcisse' of 1753 was also composed after the 'Economie politique' because it contains elements, missing from the article, that resemble certain features of Rousseau's later thought. And we shall be led to believe that those passages of the sixth Lettre de la montagne which would not have been out of place in the 'Economie politique' (see note 70 above) were in fact formulated more than ten years before the work in which they appeared was published (1764). The political thought of Rousseau does not develop as the unfolding of a single theme, nor even as the unfolding of two themes divided by a 'rupture épistémologique'. And until new

neglects to provide just those conceptual distinctions between nature and convention, impulse and duty, and hence 'volonté particulière' and 'volonté générale' that lie at the root of his subsequent revision of Diderot's account.

The 'volonté générale', as Rousseau describes it in the 'Economie politique', does not stand opposed to all particular wills but is, on the contrary, identical with the collective expression of these wills. Thus, he writes,

Voulez-vous que la volonté générale soit accomplie? faites que toutes les volontés particulières s'y rapportent; et comme la vertu n'est que cette conformité de la volonté particulière à la générale, pour dire la même chose en un mot, faites regner la vertu.⁷⁴

Every man, he continues, is virtuous only when "sa volonté particulière est conforme en tout à la volonté générale",⁷⁵ so that the rule of law, therefore, must be the "organe salutaire de la volonté de tous".⁷⁶

evidence about the 'Economie politique' is found it seems to me that our most reliable chronological guide should be the date of its publication. Some of its arguments may be incompatible in certain ways with ideas that Rousseau developed both earlier and later in his other works, but on the information that we do have it appears to have been composed by Rousseau around the end of 1754.

74. O.C.III, p. 252. It is true, however, that Rousseau's meaning in the 'Economie politique' is not entirely clear on this point, for he also writes (ibid., pp. 247-248) that "la première et la plus importante maxime du gouvernement légitime...est...de suivre en tout la volonté générale; mais pour la suivre il faut la connaître, et sur-tout la bien distinguer de la volonté particulière en commençant par soi-même; distinction toujours fort difficile à faire, et pour laquelle il n'appartient qu'à la plus sublime vertu de donner de suffisantes lumières".

75. Ibid., p. 254.

76. Ibid., p. 248. See also Hubert, *Rousseau et l'Encyclopédie*, p. 109. With respect to the 'Economie politique', Léon ('Rousseau et l'Etat moderne', p. 225) remarks that "le sens du terme de 'volonté générale'...est loin, à cette époque, d'être clair pour Rousseau lui-même: il se confond avec celui de 'volonté de tous' tout en s'opposant à la 'volonté particulière'. L'article Economie Politique a surtout l'importance de la découverte d'une véritable communauté spontanée et naturelle à la base de tout société".

It is only in the 'Economie politique', moreover, that he follows Diderot in ascribing a moral principle of the 'volonté générale' to the whole natural society of mankind. For in the paragraph which appears immediately after his first reference to the 'Droit naturel', Rousseau remarks that the 'volonté générale' pertains not only to the established laws of individual states but also to the relations between men in all states.

Car alors la grande ville du monde devient le corps politique dont la loi de nature est toujours la volonté générale, et dont les états et peuples divers ne sont que des membres individuels.⁷⁷

The 'genre humain', which in Diderot's cosmopolitan account serves as the ultimate judge of the 'volonté générale',⁷⁸ does not in fact have an exact counterpart in the 'Economie politique', but in his article Rousseau does draw a connection between the 'volonté générale' and the 'grande famille',⁷⁹ or alternatively the 'grande société',⁸⁰ of men

77. O.C.III, p. 245. With reference to this passage, Hubert (p. 59) remarks that "en 1756 il ne sera plus question de la grande ville du monde, cette dénomination métaphysique de la société générale du genre humain, non plus que d'une loi de nature qui serait de sa propre essence volonté générale.... Plus tard, Rousseau deviendra si complètement opposé à l'idée de société générale, que bien loin d'admettre que les besoins mutuels...unissent les hommes, il répétera à maintes reprises qu'ils les divisent plutôt qu'ils ne les rapprochent. En fait, à l'époque de l'Economie politique sa pensée n'est pas encore absolument dégagée de l'influence des encyclopédistes: l'article appartient à une phase de transition". Hubert's interpretation of this point seems to me entirely correct.

78. See the passage from the 'Droit naturel' cited in note 50 above.

79. See, for instance, O.C.III, pp. 241 and 242.

80. See *ibid.*, p. 248: "Cherchez les motifs qui ont porté les hommes unis par leurs besoins mutuels dans la grande société, à s'unir plus étroitement par des sociétés civiles; vous n'en trouverez point d'autre que celui d'assurer les biens, la vie, et la liberté de chaque membre par la protection de tous." Derathé (see *ibid.*, pp. 1395-1396) remarks upon the similarity of this passage to the theme of c. ix, §123 of Locke's Second Treatise. See also O.C.III, p. 246; Léon, 'Rousseau et l'Etat moderne', pp. 225-226; and Launay, Rousseau: Ecrivain politique, pp. 221-222. In the Manuscrit de Genève Rousseau frequently employs the term 'société générale' (see, for instance, O.C.III, p. 282, and the passages cited in note 141 below), but his references to the expression in that work are almost always introduced by way of objection to Diderot's concept.

throughout the world. And it is in this work, but not elsewhere in his writings, that he refers to the 'volonté générale' as a universal rule according to which the moral standards of every society may be assessed.

De ces mêmes distinctions appliquées à chaque société politique et à ses membres, découlent les règles les plus universelles et les plus sûres sur lesquelles on puisse juger d'un bon ou d'un mauvais gouvernement, et en général, de la moralité de toutes les actions humaines.⁸¹

The 'Economie politique' should also be distinguished from the later political writings of Rousseau because of its more concentrated use of organic metaphors with respect to the institutions of the state. Thus "le corps politique", he observes,

peut être considéré comme un corps organisé, vivant, et semblable à celui de l'homme. Le pouvoir souverain représente la tête; les lois et les coutumes sont le cerveau, principe des nerfs et siège de l'entendement, de la volonté, et des sens, dont les juges et magistrats sont les organes; le commerce, l'industrie, et l'agriculture, sont la bouche et l'estomac qui préparent la subsistance commune; les finances publiques sont le sang qu'une sage économie, en faisant les fonctions du coeur, renvoie distribuer par tout le corps la nourriture et la vie; les citoyens sont le corps et les membres qui font mouvoir, vivre, et travailler la machine, et qu'on ne sauroit blesser en aucune partie, qu'aussitôt l'impression douloureuse ne s'en porte au cerveau, si l'animal est dans un état de santé.⁸²

81. O.C.III, p. 245.

82. Ibid., p. 244. According to Vaughan, this passage affords clear proof that Rousseau adopted an organic theory of the state. Thus, writes Vaughan (on p. xxviii of the introduction to his own edition of the Contrat social), "The idea of the State, as an organism, dominates the whole of the Contrat social; but the word itself is never used, and the analogy between the State and an organised body is never explicitly brought forward. Both omissions are made good in the Economie politique, where the analogy is drawn out to the minutest detail". Again, in his introduction to the Political Writings of Rousseau (I, pp. 57-58), he remarks that "the analogy between the animal and the social organism, so elaborately worked out in the Economie politique, is conspicuous by its absence from the Contrat social. But its spirit dominates the whole treatise". For Derathé (Rousseau et la science politique, p. 410), on the other hand, "Tout au contraire de ce qu'affirme ...Vaughan, l'analogie entre le corps politique et le corps humain réapparaît à plus d'une reprise dans le Contrat social [see note 83 below], mais elle n'y joue qu'un rôle épisodique, et ne constitue nullement l'idée directrice...du traité". And Derathé (O.C.III, p. 1393) points to the use of the term

It is true that in some of his other writings Rousseau also draws an occasional parallel between the 'corps politique' and the 'corps de l'homme'. But the conception of a 'corps politique' which can be found in the Contrat social,⁸³ for instance, refers clearly to a legally prescribed and publicly acknowledged authority, that is, to a 'personne morale',⁸⁴ and not to any organic community of men. In his article for the Encyclopédie, however, the metaphor of the 'corps politique' is devised in the relative absence of just that contractual terminology whose purpose elsewhere is, at least in part, to underscore

'machine' in this passage from the 'Economie politique' as evidence that Rousseau never, in fact, adhered to any properly organic conception of the state: "En réalité, 'machine' et 'corps organisé' sont de simples comparaisons dont Rousseau se sert indifféremment pour faire comprendre le fonctionnement de l'Etat." Of course a feature that is "conspicuous by its absence" from a work (even if Vaughan is mistaken to suppose that it is entirely absent) does not generally 'dominate' its spirit, and Derathé is, I think, quite correct in his claim (Rousseau et la science politique, p. 411) that Rousseau was generally sceptical of any truly organic conception of the state (see note 86 below). But at the same time it seems to me that Derathé overlooks the particular significance of this passage from Rousseau's article, for it provides a far more detailed account of the living 'corps politique' than can be found in any other writing by Rousseau, and it also appears, I hope I have shown, among some other features of an essay that have few counterparts in Rousseau's work elsewhere. Cf. Hubert, Rousseau et l'Encyclopédie, p. 63, and Léon, 'Le Problème du Contrat social', p. 189. Derathé (p. 412) also points to the similarity between this passage and the first paragraph of the introduction to Hobbes's Leviathan (English Works, III, pp. ix-x), and while it is not entirely clear that Rousseau ever came across the works of Hobbes first-hand, and while at the same time it is certainly clear that Hobbes did not himself adhere to any organic conception of the state, I am inclined, nonetheless, to agree with Derathé that Rousseau's passage was inspired by the Leviathan.

83. See Livre II, ch. iv, O.C. III, p. 372: "Comme la nature donne à chaque homme un pouvoir absolu sur tous ses membres, le pacte social donne au corps politique un pouvoir absolu sur tous les siens." Cf. the passage in Livre III, ch. xi cited in note 68 above, and Livre III, ch. i (*ibid.*, p. 396). The significance of these passages, and others like them in Rousseau's work, is considered at some length by Achille Mestre in 'La notion de personnalité morale chez Rousseau', Revue du droit public et de la science politique en France et à l'étranger, XVIII (1902), pp. 447-468.

84. See, for instance, Livre I, ch. vi, O.C. III, p. 361: "A l'instant, au lieu de la personne particulière de chaque contractant, cet acte d'association produit un corps moral et collectif composé d'autant de membres que l'assemblée a de voix." Cf. Livre II, ch. iv (*ibid.*, p. 372), and the Manuscrit de Genève, I. iv (*ibid.*, pp. 294-295 - the passage cited on p. 65 above). See also Mestre, 'La notion de personnalité morale', pp. 450-453 and 464-467, and Derathé, Rousseau et la science politique, pp. 397-410, and O.C. III, p. 1446, note 5.

the optional and conventional character of political life.⁸⁵ To be sure, Rousseau often counsels against the use of such metaphors in his other writings,⁸⁶ and nowhere do they appear so prominently as in the 'Economie politique'.

I do not, of course, wish to imply that the arguments which were conceived by Rousseau in this essay are altogether incompatible with the views that he expressed in his other works. Indeed, a number of passages which figure in the 'Economie politique' were also incorporated by him in the Manuscrit de Genève,⁸⁷ and even certain elements of his first account

85. The only explicit reference to the social contract which appears in the 'Economie politique' has to do with the institution of property (O.C.III, pp. 269-270): "Le fondement du pacte social est la propriété, et sa première condition, que chacun soit maintenu dans la paisible jouissance de ce qui lui appartient." Vaughan (I, p. 230, note 6), however, notes two other passages in which some conception of the social contract is implied. The first (O.C.III, p. 248) has already been cited here in another context (see note 80 above); the second (*ibid.*, p. 256) is a reference to what Rousseau calls the "conventions fondamentales" of men in society.

86. See, for instance, this passage from an unfinished work which Rousseau originally entitled 'Que l'Etat de guerre naît de l'état social' (*ibid.*, p. 606): "La différence de l'art humain à l'ouvrage de la nature se fait sentir dans ses effets, les citoyens ont beau s'appeler membres de l'état, ils ne sauroient s'unir à lui comme de vrais membres le sont au corps; il est impossible de faire que chacun d'eux n'ait pas une existence individuelle et séparée, par laquelle il peut seul suffire à sa propre conservation; les nerfs sont moins sensibles, les muscles ont moins de vigueur, tous les liens sont plus lâches, le moindre accident peut tout désunir." According to Vaughan (I, pp. 283-284) the 'Etat de guerre' was probably composed in connection with the Principes du droit de la guerre (to which Rousseau refers in a letter to Marc-Michel Rey of 9 March 1758), while the Principes were most likely designed, in turn, to figure as one of the sections of his Institutions politiques, that he ultimately abandoned. On this interpretation both Vaughan and Derathé (p. 56) contend that the fragment dates from around 1753-55, but in the view of Sven Stelling-Michaud (see O.C.III, pp. cxlvi-cli) it was probably written between 1756 and 1758, around the time Rousseau completed his Projet de paix perpétuelle and Polysynodie, both commentaries on the works of the abbé de Saint-Pierre.

87. The whole section on the relation between the state and the family, for instance, beginning with the second paragraph of the 'Economie politique', is reproduced, with a few variations, in Livre I, ch.v of the Manuscrit (cf. O.C.III, pp. 241-244 and pp. 298-300). A shorter passage on the rule of law (which, somewhat against the thread of my argument, however, includes Rousseau's reference to the 'volonte de tous' cited on p. 72 above) is also repeated in the Manuscrit, I.vii (cf. *ibid.*, pp. 248 and 310). And both Vaughan and Derathé note still other passages or phrases from the 'Economie politique' which have their counterpart in the later work. See, among these, Vaughan, I, p. 238, note 2, and O.C.III, p. 1418, note (a) to p. 299 of text. See also Léon, 'Rousseau et l'Etat moderne', p. 224, note 1, and 'L'Idée de volonté générale', p. 185, note 7.

of the 'volonté générale' were later repeated or endorsed elsewhere.⁸⁸

But despite the features that are shared between the 'Economie politique' and Rousseau's other writings, the article, I think, is still noteworthy for its comparative neglect of those distinctions between the natural and the conventional, between the realm of organic necessity and the realm of moral prescription, between the social and the political institutions of men⁸⁹ - which are all so sharply drawn by Rousseau in his political thought elsewhere. In none of his other writings is the conceptual boundary between the natural and the civil state of men so ill-defined.

88. Compare, for example, the following passages: (a) "La premiere et la plus importante maxime du gouvernement légitime ou populaire, c'est-à-dire de celui qui a pour objet le bien du peuple, est...de suivre en tout la volonté générale" ('Economie politique', O.C.III, p. 247 - see note 74 above); "La premiere et la plus importante conséquence des principes ci-devant établis est que la volonté générale peut seule diriger les forces de l'Etat selon la fin de son institution, qui est le bien commun" (Contrat social, II.i, *ibid.*, p. 368). (b) "Je conclus...que...le premier devoir du législateur est de conformer les lois à la volonté générale" ('Economie politique', *ibid.*, p. 250); "La volonté générale est toujours droite, mais le jugement qui la guide n'est pas toujours éclairé...Voilà d'où naît la nécessité d'un Législateur" (Contrat social, II.vi; *ibid.*, p. 380 - see note 62 above).

89. Only in the 'Economie politique' (*ibid.*, p. 263) does Rousseau suppose, for instance, that "le droit de propriété est le plus sacré de tous les droits des citoyens, et plus important à certains égards que la liberté même". Only in this work does he state (*ibid.*) that "la propriété est le vrai fondement de la société civile, et le vrai garant des engagements des citoyens". For in the Contrat social (I.i, *ibid.*, p. 352) it is not property but "l'ordre social" which is "un droit sacré, qui sert de base à tous les autres", and there (I.ix, *ibid.*, p. 367) it is the community itself which alone changes "l'usurpation en un véritable droit, et la jouissance en propriété". See too Vaughan, I, pp. 104-110. Rousseau's claims with regard to property in the 'Economie politique' are also directly opposed, moreover, to his position in the Discours sur l'inégalité, since in that work he contends (O.C.III, p. 164) that "vous êtes perdus, si vous oubliez que les fruits sont à tous, et que la Terre n'est à personne". Derathé (see *ibid.*, pp. lxxv-lxxvi and 1402-1403) notes these distinctions, but he and Launay (see Rousseau: Ecrivain politique, p. 223) still argue that the 'Economie politique' is not fundamentally different in conception from the political ideas which Rousseau sets forth elsewhere. In my view, however, it is particularly striking that Rousseau's account of property in the 'Economie politique' should be so distinct from his remarks in his other writings. And if we recognise (as most Rousseau scholars do) the similarity between this account and that of Locke, we should also bear in mind its connection with the following account that appears in the article 'Propriété (Droit naturel & politique)', (Encyclopédie, XIII (1765), p. 491): "Une des principales vues des hommes en formant des sociétés civiles, a été de s'assurer la possession tranquille des avantages qu'ils avoient acquis, ou qu'ils pouvoient acquérir; ils ont voulu que personne ne pût les troubler dans la jouissance de leurs biens." This article, though unsigned, is most likely by Diderot. See also ch. III, note 193.

When the 'Economie politique' was reissued as a separate work in 1758,⁹⁰ Rousseau's first reference to the article 'Droit naturel' was deleted from the text.⁹¹ And the possibility that, by this time, he no longer accepted at least some of the views which he had earlier expressed is perhaps implied by his complaint, made in a letter to Jacob Vernes, that he had been denied any opportunity by his publisher to make those corrections and additions to his essay that he would have liked.⁹² Rousseau never in fact repudiated any of the arguments which he had put forward in the 'Economie politique', though he did insist, both in the Confessions and in one of his letters, that when he had been under Diderot's influence he had agreed to incorporate some of his friend's expressions into his writings and had been persuaded to employ a borrowed style of discourse, neither of which were really in his own taste.⁹³ But his article for the Encyclopédie is not included in these accusations, and I do not wish to suggest that his first account of the 'volonté générale'

90. See note 47 above.

91. See Vaughan, I, p. 242, note 2. It must nevertheless be admitted that this change was not made upon his instructions. The second reference (see note 48 above), moreover, was deleted from the Moulou-Du Peyrou edition of Rousseau's Oeuvres complètes, and, according to Vaughan (I, p. 244, note 1), it was not reinstated in any other edition before his own. At the same time, the text of Moulou-Du Peyrou includes an important passage and several minor variants (see O.C.III, pp. 1390-1392) which had not appeared in the previous versions of the 'Economie politique'.

92. See Rousseau's letter of 4 July 1758 in the Correspondance complète, V, p. 106: "J'ai reçu l'exemplaire de M. DuVillard, je vous prie de l'en remercier....Il a eu tort d'imprimer cet article sans m'en rien dire; il a laissé des fautes que j'aurois ôtées, et il n'a pas fait des corrections et additions que je lui aurois données." Cf. the letter to Vernes of 22 October 1758 (*ibid.*, pp. 183-186). In an earlier letter to Vernes of 28 March 1756 (*ibid.*, III, p. 308), however, Rousseau made no mention of any faults in the article: "Vous êtes content de l'article Economie, je le crois bien, mon coeur l'a dicté et le vôtre l'a lu." The letter in which Vernes suggested to Rousseau that he should have the work published separately (*ibid.*, V, p. 88) was probably written in May 1758. See also the letters of 21 March and 8 April 1765 (*ibid.*, XXIV, pp. 272-273, and XXV, no. 4261) which the Genevan bookseller François Grasset addressed to Rousseau, asking if he would like to make any changes for yet another edition of the text (Rousseau's replies have not survived, but I am most grateful to Professor Leigh for inviting me to see these letters before their publication); and Ronald Rosbottom and Launay, 'Autour de l'article 'Economie politique' de l'Encyclopédie', in Launay, ed., Jean-Jacques Rousseau et son temps (Paris 1969), pp. 105-112.

93. See ch. III, note 6.

was actually formulated by Diderot. My contention is just that the analysis of the expression which Rousseau submits in the 'Economie politique' is at once distinct from his later view and at the same time significantly like the interpretation proposed by Diderot in the essay to which he acknowledged his debt.

It was only a short while after the two accounts of the 'volonté générale' had appeared together in the Encyclopédie that Rousseau came to express a very different opinion of Diderot's work. Already in 1755 he had begun to quarrel with many of his friends, claiming that he could no longer tolerate the intellectual complacency and scepticism of the Encyclopédistes.⁹⁴ He planned at first to return to his homeland in Geneva⁹⁵ but finally decided instead to accept a country retreat which had been offered to him by Mme d'Epinau, and in the spring of 1756, accompanied by Thérèse and her mother, he installed himself at l'Ermitage near the forest of Montmorency. Diderot soon came to see Rousseau's move from Paris as a gesture of contempt for the society of civilised men, and before the end of that year he complained bitterly of the writer whose conceit had led him to prefer solitude to friendship. "Pour être tranquille", he remarked in Le Fils naturel,

94. See the Confessions, O.C.I., p. 392: "La fréquentation des Encyclopédistes loin d'ébranler ma foi l'avoit affermie par mon aversion naturelle pour la dispute et pour les partis. L'étude de l'homme et de l'univers m'avoit montré par tout les causes finales et l'intelligence qui les dirigeoit. La lecture de la Bible et surtout de l'Évangile à laquelle je m'appliquois depuis quelques années m'avoit fait mépriser les basses et sotes interprétations que donnoient à Jesus-Christ les gens les moins dignes de l'entendre."

95. See *ibid.*, p. 393. One reason why Rousseau changed his mind was that in 1755 Voltaire moved very near to Geneva at les Délices. It was from there that on 30 August 1755, after receiving a copy of the Discours sur l'inégalité, he wrote to Rousseau (Correspondance complète, III, p. 156), "J'ai reçu, Monsieur, votre nouveau livre contre le genre humain". Thus, Rousseau reflected (Confessions, O.C.I., p. 396), "Je compris que cet homme y feroit révolution, que j'irois retrouver dans ma patrie le ton, les airs, les mœurs qui me chassoient de Paris; qu'il me faudroit batailler sans cesse, et que je n'aurois d'autre choix dans ma conduite que celui d'être un pédant insupportable, ou un lâche et mauvais citoyen".

il faut avoir l'approbation de son coeur, et peut-être celle des hommes. Vous n'obtiendrez point celle-ci, et vous n'emporterez point la première, si vous quittez le poste qui vous est marqué...Vous, renoncer à la société! J'en appelle à votre coeur; interrogez-le; et il vous dira que l'homme de bien est dans la société, et qu'il n'y a que le méchant qui soit seul.⁹⁶

And while Rousseau was clearly wounded by these lines,⁹⁷ later he was also to reflect that his departure from Paris at this time marked a very important change in his life. "Je n'ai commencé de vivre que Le 9 Avril 1756",⁹⁸ he wrote in a letter to Malesherbes, pointing to the very day of his departure.

J'étois vraiment transformé....Je n'étois plus cet homme timide et plutôt honteux que modeste, qui n'osoit ni se présenter ni parler....Audacieux, fier, intrépide, je portois par tout une assurance d'autant plus ferme qu'elle étoit simple et résidoit dans mon ame plus que dans mon maintien....Ce changement commença sitôt que j'eus quitté Paris, et que le spectacle des vices de cette grande Ville cessa de nourrir l'indignation qu'il m'avoit inspirée.⁹⁹

96. Assézat-Tourneux, VII, pp. 65-66. It has even been suggested by Blandine McLaughlin ('A New Look at Diderot's Fils naturel', Diderot Studies, X, (1968), pp. 109-119) that the entire dialogue between Constance and Dorval in Act IV, scene iii of Le Fils naturel was conceived by Diderot to portray the difference between his own ideas about friendship, on the one hand, and the views of Rousseau on the other. Cf. the article 'Indépendance' (Encyclopédie, VIII (1765), p. 671), which is unsigned but was most probably composed by Diderot: "La pierre philosophale de l'orgueil humain; la chimere après laquelle l'amour-propre court en aveugle...c'est l'indépendanceL'ame dépend du corps; le corps dépend de l'ame, & de tous les objets extérieurs: comment l'homme, c'est-à-dire l'assemblage de deux parties si subordonnées, seroit-il lui-même indépendant? La société pour laquelle nous sommes nés nous donne des lois à suivre, des devoirs à remplir; quel que soit le rang que nous y tenions, la dépendance est toujours notre apanage." And one has only to turn to the article 'Philosophe' (*ibid.*, XII (1765), p. 510), which is included in Assézat-Tourneux but is in fact by Dumarsais, to see how widely shared was this view among the Encyclopédistes: "L'homme n'est point un monstre qui ne doive vivre que dans les abîmes de la mer, ou dans le fond d'une forêt: les seules nécessités de la vie lui rendent le commerce des autres nécessaire; & dans quelque état où il puisse se trouver, ses besoins & le bien être l'engagent à vivre en société. Ainsi la raison exige de lui qu'il connoisse, qu'il étudie, & qu'il travaille à acquérir les qualités sociables." See also Gay, The Enlightenment: An Interpretation, 2 vols. (New York 1966 and 1969), I, pp. 195-196.

97. See the Confessions, O.C.I., p. 455.

98. Correspondance complète, X, p. 52. See also the Confessions, O.C.I., p. 403.

99. *Ibid.*, pp. 416-417.

It was in this sense that he saw his withdrawal from the company of the Encyclopédistes as a kind of intellectual emancipation,¹⁰⁰ and it was from the formidable presence of Diderot, above all, that he had now made his escape.¹⁰¹ For in the first work to which he turned after his arrival at l'Ermitage, Rousseau attempted to disengage his own political ideas from the theory that Diderot had put forward and he himself had endorsed just one year before in the Encyclopédie.

From as early as 1743 he had planned to compose a major study in political thought which was to be called the Institutions politiques. Yet by 1756 he had not got very far with this work, and it was only at l'Ermitage that he began in earnest to produce it.¹⁰² Here, in his new home, he resolved that it should be the finest of all his writings, and he was prepared, so he claimed, to devote the whole of his life to the task.¹⁰³ It was thus in the spring of 1756 that Rousseau began his first draft of the Contrat social, about half of which has survived as the Manuscrit de Genève.¹⁰⁴

100. See Hubert, Rousseau et l'Encyclopédie, pp. 120-121.

101. See the Confessions, O.C.I., pp. 455-456: "J'aimois tendrement Diderot, je l'estimois sincèrement....Mais excédé de son infatigable obstination à me contrarier éternellement sur mes goûts, mes penchans, ma manière de vivre, sur tout ce qui n'intéressoit que moi seul; révolté de voir un homme plus jeune que moi vouloir à toute force me gouverner comme un enfant; rebuté de sa facilité à promettre et de sa négligence à tenir...j'avois déjà le coeur plein de ses torts multipliés."

102. See *ibid.*, pp. 404-405: "Après quelques jours livrés à mon délire champêtre je songeai à ranger mes paperasses et à régler mes occupations.... Des divers ouvrages que j'avois sur le chantier, celui que je méditois depuis plus longtems...étoit mes Institutions politiques. Il y avoit treize à quatorze ans que j'en avois conçu la première idée, lorsqu'étant à Venise j'avois eu quelqu'occasion de remarquer les défauts de ce Gouvernement si vanté....Quoiqu'il y eut déjà cinq ou six ans que je travaillois à cet ouvrage, il n'étoit encore guère avancé. Les livres de cette espèce demandent de la méditation, du loisir, de la tranquillité. De plus, je faisais celui-là, comme on dit en bonne fortune, et je n'avois voulu communiquer mon projet à personne, pas même à Diderot." See also ch. V, p. 423.

103. See *ibid.*, p. 404. Cf. also ch. I, pp. 26 and 31.

104. There has been as much disagreement as to the possible dates on which Rousseau composed the several sections of the Manuscrit as there has been about the chronology of the 'Economie politique' (see note 73 above).

And it was then, in this composition, that he addressed himself to the 'Droit naturel' in a manner which was altogether different from that which he had employed in the 'Economie politique'. For the arguments which he had earlier adopted were now subjected to a much more severe appraisal, and while I have so far tried to examine Diderot's influence upon him in terms of some concepts borrowed by a sympathetic reader, I should like next to consider that influence in terms of some objections made by an exacting critic.

One aspect of the 'Droit naturel' which I think must have

According to Schinz ('La Question du Contrat social', p. 773) the Manuscript is "une oeuvre purement encyclopédique, ou 'philosophique'", and like the 'Economie politique', therefore, it must have been written before the Discours sur l'inégalité, in this case, he supposes, between 1749 and 1752. For Beaulavon ('La Question du Contrat social. Une fausse solution', p. 592), on the other hand, "le plus simple est d'admettre que le Ms. a été rédigé vers l'époque du voyage à Genève, vers 1754-1755", while for Derathé (O.C.III, p. lxxxiv) "il a dû être composé pendant les années 1758-1760", though he agrees that certain parts of the work, such as Livre I, ch. v, must have been completed some years earlier, insofar as they incorporate passages drawn from the 'Economie politique'. In the view of Alexis Bertrand ('Le texte primitif du Contrat social', Séances et travaux de l'Académie des sciences morales et politiques [Institut de France], CXXXV (1891), p. 851), however, the connection between these passages actually suggests that "le manuscrit de Genève est certainement antérieur à l'année 1756 puisque plusieurs pages du Discours sur l'Economie politique en ont été extraites textuellement". Most scholars, nevertheless, have followed Rousseau's commentary in the Confessions, and it is now widely accepted that the bulk of the Manuscript, including its second chapter, was written around 1756. Cf. Masson, 'Questions de chronologie rousseauiste', p. 55; Hubert, Rousseau et l'Encyclopédie, pp. 59-60; and Léon, 'L'Idée de volonté générale', p. 199, note 2. So far as I know, only Schinz (see 'La Question du Contrat social', p. 743) among Rousseau's interpreters is committed to the view that at l'Ermitage he began to work upon his final version of the Contrat social. Rousseau appears to have intended the Manuscript for publication, since the copy which survives contains few corrections and is written in his finest hand. It may even be that he submitted a final draft of this work to his publisher in either 1760 or 1761, but it was never in fact printed in his lifetime (see Rousseau's letters to Rey of 9 August and 23 December 1761 in the Correspondance complète, IX, pp. 90-91 and 346; O.C.III, pp. lxxxii-lxxxiii; and Vaughan, I, p. 435, note 1). When it was finally donated to the Bibliothèque de Genève in 1882 by the widow of Georges Streckeisen-Moultou, only half the work remained, the rest having been torn away some time before, possibly by Rousseau himself. It was first published (in French) as an appendix to Aleksandr Semenovich Alekseev's Sviâz' politicheskoi doktriny Zh. Zh. Russo s gosudarstvennym bytom Zhenevy, (Moskva 1887). See also Louis-John Courtois, 'Chronologie critique de la vie et des oeuvres de Jean-Jacques Rousseau', Annales, XV (1923), p. 86, note 5.

led Rousseau to reconsider its meaning at this time is the peculiar theatrical character of the work. Its general form is that of a hypothetical dialogue between two protagonists, a philosophe and a raisonneur violent, and it is charged with caricature, with exclamations of intolerance and exasperation, and, now and again, with abusive remarks. Thus the raisonneur, who in vain implores the reader not to reproach him for holding obstinately to his views, must, writes the relentless Diderot, be dismissed and then suppressed.¹⁰⁵ If in fact the raisonneur is not really concerned with the questions of justice that he raises, then, Diderot adds, "il faudroit l'étouffer sans lui répondre".¹⁰⁶ To be sure, Diderot is no more generous to his readers than to the unfortunate raisonneur within the article. For if only men reflect attentively upon what has been said, he enjoins, they must see that the conclusions of the argument are obvious. Any man who chooses to ignore the truth,

renonçant à la qualité d'homme, doit être traité comme un être dénaturé.¹⁰⁷

Now while it may be difficult to see how such a stringent tone might contribute to the substance of Diderot's account, it is certainly not difficult to see how these remarks could have made a deep impression upon Rousseau. For he was, as we are continually reminded, all too susceptible to the calumny of a careless word, all too easily led to find personal effrontery disguised behind the façade of apparently lofty abstraction.¹⁰⁸

105. See the Encyclopédie, V, pp. 115 and 116: "Mais quels reproches pourrons-nous faire à l'homme tourmenté par des passions si violentes, que la vie même lui devient un poids onéreux...?....Que répondrons-nous donc à notre raisonneur violent, avant que de l'étouffer?"

106. Ibid., p. 116.

107. Ibid.

108. See, for instance, the following passage in the Confessions, O.C.I., pp. 492-493: "Grimm....forma le projet de renverser ma réputation de fond en comble, et de m'en faire une toute opposée sans se compromettre, en commençant par élever autour de moi un édifice de ténèbres qu'il me fut

And there can be no doubt but that in his manuscript version of the Contrat social he devoted a number of pages to a direct refutation of the article 'Droit naturel'. The title which he finally selected for the second chapter of the Manuscrit ('De la société générale du genre humain'),¹⁰⁹ and, even more, an earlier crossed out version of that title ('Qu'il n'y a point naturellement de société entre les hommes'), refer quite clearly to the dominant theme of Diderot's earlier work. Indeed, Rousseau's principal argument now was that the concept of a moral 'droit naturel' is a chimerical notion which could not be established with reference to any natural society of mankind,¹¹⁰ and nearly every line of his chapter

impossible de percer pour éclairer ses manoeuvres et pour le démasquer. Cette entreprise étoit difficile en ce qu'il en falloit pallier l'iniquité aux yeux de ceux qui devoient y concourir....Je sentis les premiers effets de ce système par les sourdes accusations de la cotterie holbachique, sans qu'il me fut possible de savoir ni de conjecturer même en quoi consistoient ces accusations." Rousseau was certainly troubled too by the apparently menacing remarks contained in Diderot's article. As late as 1770, in his letter to Claude de Saint-Germain (Correspondance générale, XIX, p. 237), he wrote, "Si jamais pareille contradiction, pareille absurdité, pareille extravagance pouvoit réellement trouver foi dans l'esprit d'un homme, oui, j'ose le dire sans crainte, il faudroit étouffer cet homme-la". And on the very last page of his Confessions (O.C.I, p. 656) he noted, even more bitterly, "Quiconque, même sans avoir lu mes écrits, examinera par ses propres yeux mon naturel, mon caractéré, mes moeurs, mes penchans, mes plaisirs, mes habitudes et pourra me croire un malhonnête homme, est lui-même un homme à étouffer". Cf. Vaughan, I, pp. 427-428. But whatever may have been Rousseau's impression of Diderot several years after their separation, in 1756 their break was not yet final, and they were still to regard each other as friends, even if no longer as companions, for some time to come. I cannot agree with Vaughan, therefore, that at the time Rousseau composed his second chapter of the Manuscrit he replied to Diderot as the victim of a personal attack.

109. Both Léon ('Le Problème du Contrat social', p. 192) and Derathé (O.C.III, p. 1411) have suggested that these words were inspired by Bossuet, since Livre I, art.ii of the Politique tirée de l'Ecriture sainte is entitled 'De la société générale du genre humain naist la société civile'. A fragment from Neuchâtel Ms R 30 (ancienne cote: 7854) indicates that Rousseau had also proposed, as a title for this chapter, 'Du droit naturel et de la société générale' (see O.C.III, p. 481). Cf. Léon, 'Rousseau et l'Etat moderne', p. 230.

110. See ch. I, note 54 above and notes 133 and 141 below. According to Derathé (Rousseau et la science politique, p. 145) this part of the Manuscrit refers directly to Pufendorf as well as to Diderot: "Il nous paraît infiniment probable, pour ne pas dire certain, qu'en rédigeant ce chapitre, Rousseau qui avait lu le Droit de la nature et des gens, avait également sous les yeux ou présents à l'esprit les textes de Pufendorf.... Les expressions mêmes de Pufendorf ('cette bienveillance universelle') ou

contains an explicit contradiction of one or another of Diderot's views.

The philosophe, Rousseau wrote,

me renverra par devant le genre humain...parce que le plus grand bien de tous est la seule passion qu'il ait. C'est, me dira-t-il, à la volonté générale que l'individu doit s'adresser pour savoir jusqu'où il doit être homme, Citoyen, Sujet, Père, enfant, et quand il lui convient de vivre et de mourir. "Je vois bien là, je l'avoüe, la règle que je puis consulter; mais je ne vois pas encore", dira nôtre homme indépendant, "la raison qui doit m'assujétir à cette règle. Il ne s'agit pas de m'apprendre ce que c'est que justice; il s'agit de me montrer quel intérêt j'ai d'être juste."¹¹¹

It is in this fashion that Rousseau replied on behalf of the raisonneur violent to the invectives hurled against him by the philosophe in Diderot's article.

"Je sens que je porte l'épouvante et le trouble au milieu de l'espèce humaine", dit l'homme indépendant que le sage étouffe; "mais il faut que je sois malheureux, ou que je fasse le malheur des autres, et personne ne m'est plus cher que moi." "C'est vainement", pourra-t-il ajoûter, "que je voudrois concilier mon intérêt avec celui d'autrui; tout ce que vous me dites des avantages de la loi sociale pourroit être bon, si tandis que je l'observerois scrupuleusement envers les autres, j'étois sur qu'ils l'observeroient tous envers moi; mais quelle sureté pouvez-vous me donner là-dessus?"¹¹²

Hence the account of the 'volonté générale' with which Diderot had confronted his hypothetical raisonneur now seemed quite unconvincing to Rousseau.

des expressions voisines ('identité de nature') se retrouvent en effet dans le chapitre du Manuscrit de Genève, sans que Diderot les ait employées." Any connection between Rousseau and Pufendorf which may be apparent in the Manuscrit is certainly remote, however, by comparison with the connection between Rousseau and Diderot. The second chapter of that work could conceivably be interpreted as a critique of Pufendorf, though only insofar as Diderot had himself adopted the views of Pufendorf (see pp. 45-48 above) in the essay against which Rousseau now directed his attack. Cf. Hubert, Rousseau et l'Encyclopédie, p. 103, note 1, and Havens, 'Diderot, Rousseau, and the Discours sur l'inégalité', pp. 247-249.

111. O.C.III, p. 286. Cf. 'Droit naturel', Encyclopédie, V, p. 116.

112. O.C.III, pp. 284-285. Cf. 'Droit naturel', Encyclopédie, V, p. 116.

En effet que la volonté générale soit dans chaque individu un acte pur de l'entendement qui raisonne dans le silence des passions sur ce que l'homme peut exiger de son semblable, et sur ce que son semblable est en droit d'exiger de lui, nul n'en disconvient: Mais où est l'homme qui puisse ainsi se séparer de lui même...peut on le forcer de regarder ainsi l'espèce en général pour s'imposer, à lui, des devoirs dont il ne voit point la liaison avec sa constitution particulière? Les objections précédentes ne subsistent-elles pas toujours, et ne reste-t-il pas encore à voir comment son intérêt personnel exige qu'il se soumette à la volonté générale?¹¹³

A proper interpretation of Rousseau's meaning in the Manuscript must therefore include some consideration of the sense in which his second chapter was designed to refute the 'Droit naturel' of Diderot. But while most scholars are agreed that the one work was intended to be a critique of the other,¹¹⁴ the nature of Rousseau's objections to a composition which he had previously admired has, I think, been generally misunderstood. C.E. Vaughan, Paul Léon, and Roger Masters, for instance, have suggested that this chapter of the Manuscript was conceived by Rousseau as a reply to an attack which had been made against him by Diderot.¹¹⁵ Thus we are told that Rousseau

113. O.C.III, p. 286. Cf. 'Droit naturel', Encyclopédie, V, p. 116.

114. A few writers, however, too much impressed by the fact that these passages in the Manuscript contain sentences which are identical with others in the 'Droit naturel', have supposed that the two works are identical in substance too. Indeed, Schinz made this confusion the central feature of his interpretation of Rousseau's thought. For pointing to the 'Droit naturel' he wrote ('La Question du Contrat social', p. 772), "Tout cela ne sont pas seulement quelques pensées rappelant le Contrat social de Rousseau, c'est le Contrat social même en résumé. Cela est évident, on ne nous demandera pas de le démontrer....Lequel des deux hommes de Rousseau ou de Diderot, a traité le sujet ainsi le premier; lequel des deux écrits, le Contrat social de Genève ou l'article Droit naturel, a la priorité sur l'autre? nous ne sommes pas pour le moment prêt à répondre. Mais peu importe la réponse: l'auteur de l'article de l'Encyclopédie pensait comme Rousseau, et Rousseau pensait comme l'auteur de l'article de l'Encyclopédie: - quod erat demonstrandum!". Despite the efforts of Masson, Beaulavon, Vaughan, and others, this misconception was not finally put to rest until the publication of Hubert's Rousseau et l'Encyclopédie in 1928 (see pp. 31-64).

115. See Vaughan, I, pp. 424 and 427-428; Léon, 'Rousseau et l'Etat moderne', pp. 214, note 2, and 218; and Masters, The Political Philosophy of Rousseau, pp. 262-265. Though none of these writers makes the claim, it has sometimes been said that Diderot's vituperative letter, ostensibly addressed to Paul Landois, of 29 June 1756 (see Assézat-Tourneux, XIX, pp. 432-438, and McLaughlin, 'A New Look at Diderot's Fils naturel', pp. 110 and 118-119) was in fact meant for Rousseau and thus shows the contempt

must have understood the hypothetical raisonneur violent to refer to him personally,¹¹⁶ so that Diderot's hostility toward this figure should, according to such an account, have been interpreted by Rousseau as the malevolence of a newly estranged friend. It would therefore follow that Rousseau, now dismayed by the affront, devised his chapter of the Manuscrit in response to a direct challenge that had been made by his former colleague.

I cannot accept, however, that the critique of Diderot in the Manuscrit is in any sense at all the expression of a felt injury. For Rousseau had no reason to suppose that the 'Droit naturel' was intended to malign him, and it was the substance of the arguments that were contained in this work rather than its sharp tone or aggressive style which, by 1756, he was to find unacceptable. The theatrical representation of a poor case may have made its faults appear more glaring in his judgment, but his own reply in a similar genre rather took the form of parody than of self-vindication.¹¹⁷ There is a kind of narrative plot in both Diderot's essay and Rousseau's rejoinder which Vaughan, Léon, and Masters overlook, for their supposition that the raisonneur violent refers directly to Rousseau is at once unnecessary and misleading. There is not a line in

which Diderot felt toward his former bosom companion even before he produced Le Fils naturel (see pp. 79-80 above) and very nearly at the same time that Rousseau was engaged in refuting the 'Droit naturel'. But while this letter shows Diderot to be a master of the art of personal abuse in precisely the period that Rousseau is alleged to have seen himself as the victim of such abuse, there is insufficient evidence to prove that Diderot had Rousseau in mind when he composed it.

116. See especially Vaughan, I, p. 424: "So far...as Diderot accepts the idea of Natural Law...he must be regarded as arguing in conscious opposition to Rousseau. Rousseau, on his side, good-humouredly accepts the position, and fits the cap of the 'violent reasoner' without demur upon his own head; rejecting the arguments of Diderot, but setting other, and far more cogent, arguments against individualist anarchy triumphantly in their place. In later years...he became convinced...that the main fire of the argument was directed not only against his opinions, but even against his character; that he was himself the red-handed anarchist whom Diderot desired to 'stifle', the 'enemy of the human race', who was to be hunted down 'like a wild beast'."

117. See the following passage (O.C.III, p. 285), for example: "Que répondre de solide à de pareils discours si l'on ne veut amener la Religion à l'aide de la morale, et faire intervenir immédiatement la volonté de Dieu pour lier la société des hommes. Mais les notions sublimes du Dieu des sages, les douces loix de la fraternité qu'il nous impose, les vertus sociales des ames pures,

Rousseau's works which Diderot could ever have taken as a model for the statements that were made by his artificial antagonist, and even though Diderot was later to turn against his friend with a good deal more venom than he showed in this period, he never displayed so great a malice as to lead him to render Rousseau's tediously repetitive exclamations of his virtue¹¹⁸ in terms of what the raisonneur proclaims: "'Je sens que je porte l'épouvante & le trouble au milieu de l'espece humaine'".¹¹⁹ Neither was Rousseau's own paranoia, moreover, ever to lead him to construe this phrase and others like it as a caricature of his own beliefs - beliefs which were often ridiculed as naïve¹²⁰ but could hardly be described as vicious. Clearly whatever may be thought of the relation between Diderot and Rousseau around 1755, no such malice or paranoia could have confused either writer into accepting the interpretation provided by Vaughan, Léon, and Masters.

In his second chapter of the Manuscrit Rousseau agrees with Diderot that the raisonneur violent must be challenged and opposed, though he also dissents from Diderot's alternative claims, and his complaint is not that Diderot maligned him but rather that he provided an inadequate account of a theory whose proper refutation he therefore failed to grasp.

Quand il faudroit consulter la volonté générale sur un acte particulier, combien de fois n'arriveroit-il pas à un homme bien intentionné...de ne suivre que son penchant en pensant obéir à la loi? Que fera-t-il

qui sont le vrai culte qu'il veut de nous, echaperont toujours à la multitude. On lui fera toujours des Dieux insensés comme elle, auxquels elle sacrifiera de légères comodités pour se livrer en leur honneur à mille passions horribles et destructives. La terre entière regorgeroit de sang et le genre humain périroit bientôt si la Philosophie et les loix ne retenoient les fureurs du fanatisme, et si la voix des hommes n'étoit plus forte que celle des Dieux."

118. Reflecting upon his arrival at l'Ermitage, Rousseau exclaimed (Confessions, O.C.I., p. 416), "Jusques là j'avois été bon; dès lors je devins vertueux, ou du moins enivré de la vertu". His virtue was so great, indeed, that it eventually turned his head.

119. Encyclopédie, V, p. 115.

120. Among all such interpretations of Rousseau's thought this passage (Correspondance complète, III, p. 157) from Voltaire's letter of 30 August 1755 remains the most celebrated: "On n'a jamais tant employé d'esprit a vouloir nous rendre Bêtes. Il prend envie de marcher a quatre pattes quand on lit

donc pour se garantir de l'erreur? Ecouterait-il la voix intérieure? Mais cette voix n'est...formée que par l'habitude de juger...dans le sein de la société et selon ses loix, elle ne peut donc servir à les établir....quoiqu'il n'y ait point de société naturelle et générale entre les hommes...efforçons nous de tirer du mal même le remède qui doit le guérir....Que nôtre violent interlocuteur...voye dans une meilleure constitution de choses le prix des bonnes actions...ne doutons point qu'avec une ame forte...cet ennemi du genre humain n'abjure enfin sa haine avec ses erreurs ...qu'il ne devienne bon, vertueux...et...le plus ferme appui d'une société bien ordonnée.¹²¹

The 'violent interlocuteur' should therefore be dissuaded from his views, according to Rousseau, but not for the reasons that Diderot supposed.

And neither in the 'Droit naturel' nor in the Manuscrit de Genève are the beliefs of Rousseau himself ascribed to this figure.

Whom, then, did Diderot mean to condemn in his portrait of the raisonneur violent, and why did Rousseau go at least part of the way toward his defence? I think there can be little doubt but that the raisonneur is Hobbes, or at any rate Hobbes as Diderot understood him.¹²² In his article 'Hobbisme', which appeared in volume VIII of the Encyclopédie,¹²³

votre ouvrage. Cependant comme il y a plus de Soixante ans que j'en ay perdu l'habitude, je sens malheureusement qu'il m'est impossible de la reprendre. Et je laisse cette allure naturelle a ceux qui en sont plus dignes, que vous Et moy." See also note 95 above.

121. O.C.III, pp. 287-289.

122. See Thielemann, 'Diderot and Hobbes', pp. 248-249: "Diderot proposes to show what philosophy can...reply to this violent reasoner before stifling him....Fundamentally the 'Droit naturel' article represented a return to Cicero, and a confutation of Hobbes." Cf. Thielemann, 'Thomas Hobbes dans l'Encyclopédie', RHLF, LI (1951), p. 338.

123. The eighth volume of the Encyclopédie was published in 1765, but the references to Rousseau in 'Hobbisme' pertain to the Discours sur les sciences et les arts, and they suggest that Diderot probably composed his article not long after the appearance of Rousseau's work in 1751. (It should perhaps be noted here that on this occasion Diderot seemed quite prepared to dissociate his own ideas from those of an essay whose central theme, it would later be claimed, had been devised by him [see ch. V, pp. 400-403]). 'Hobbisme' was certainly completed, in any case, some time before the publication of the Discours sur l'inégalité in 1755, since Rousseau showed his familiarity with Diderot's text quite clearly in that work (see note 128 below). Like nearly all of Diderot's philosophical contributions to the Encyclopédie, the article was in fact drawn directly from Brucker's Historia critica philosophiae (see note 7 above). Indeed, Diderot remained so faithful to Brucker's text that he even transcribed its Latin mistakes into French. Thus, for example, a passage in Hobbes's De homine (Opera, III, p. 102) which Brucker had

Diderot described Rousseau as "éloquent & pathétique", but he depicted Hobbes, on the other hand, as "sec" and "austere".¹²⁴ The closing section of the article in fact consists of an extended contrast between Hobbes and Rousseau in which Diderot contended that

la philosophie de M. Rousseau de Genève, est presque l'inverse de celle de Hobbes. L'un croit l'homme de la nature bon, & l'autre le croit méchant. Selon le philosophe de Genève, l'état de nature est un état de paix; selon le philosophe de Malmesbury, c'est un état de guerre.¹²⁵

And while the arguments that Diderot attributed to Hobbes are very much like those expressed by the raisonneur of his other work,¹²⁶ the beliefs which he attached to Rousseau here are of an altogether different kind.

rendered incorrectly appeared with the same error in the article. Hobbes had written "At lex naturalis praeceptum est sive regula generalis ratione excogitata, qua unusquisque id, quod ad damnum suum sibi tendere videbitur, facere prohibetur", while Brucker's version (*Historia*, V, p. 194) read "Lex naturalis est regula generalis ratione excogitata, qua unusquisque, id quod ad damnum suum sibi tendere videbitur, facere poterit". In 'Hobbisme' (*Encyclopédie*, VIII, p. 239), therefore, Diderot wrote, "La loi naturelle est une regle générale dictée par la raison en conséquence de laquelle on a la liberté de faire ce que l'on reconnoît contraire à son propre intérêt". See Thielemann, 'Thomas Hobbes dans l'Encyclopédie', p. 345, and Proust, p. 342, note 7. It does not, of course, follow from this that Diderot's knowledge of Hobbes depended entirely upon his reading of Brucker's work. Even before 1750, when it seems that he first came across the *Historia*, he must have been acquainted with Hobbes through the writings of both Bayle and Shaftesbury, and in the summer of 1747 he in fact borrowed a French translation of De cive from the Bibliothèque du roi. Nonetheless almost the whole of his article 'Hobbisme', apart from the paragraph on Rousseau, was clearly taken from Brucker's work. See Venturi, Jeunesse de Diderot, pp. 350 and 353; Thielemann, 'Diderot and Hobbes', pp. 221-223; Proust, p. 343; and Ian Wilson, The Influence of Hobbes and Locke in the shaping of the concept of sovereignty in eighteenth century France, SVEC, CI (1973), p. 119.

124. Encyclopédie, VIII, p. 241.

125. *Ibid.*, pp. 240-241. Cf. the rather similar contrast between Helvétius and Rousseau which Diderot drew in his Réfutation de 'L'Homme' (Assézat-Tourneux, II, pp. 316-317).

126. See, for instance, the Encyclopédie, VIII, p. 239: "De-là, guerre de chacun contre chacun, tant qu'il n'y aura aucune puissance coactive. De-là une infinité de malheurs au milieu desquels nulle sécurité que par une prééminence d'esprit & de corps; nul lieu à l'industrie, nulle récompense attachée au travail, point d'agriculture, point d'arts, point de société; mais crainte perpétuelle d'une mort violente. De la guerre de chacun contre chacun, il s'ensuit encore que tout est abandonnée à la fraude & à la force, qu'il n'y a rien de propre à personne; aucune possession réelle, nulle injustice."

The identification of natural right with liberty in the political thought of Hobbes was, for Diderot, a mistake, since a right conceived in this manner implied that no person was under any obligation to respect it.¹²⁷

A right utterly divorced from duty, he believed, was not a moral right at all, and to suppose that men in the state of nature enjoyed rights which were not prescribed by law was to suppose, in his view, that men in such a state were vicious and immoral, which in fact could not be the case.¹²⁸ His own conception, therefore, of a morally binding 'droit naturel', allied as it was to the rule of a universal 'volonté générale', was propounded largely as an alternative to the theory which he ascribed to Hobbes.

Yet at the same time that Diderot rejected what he imagined to be the Hobbesian account of immoral natural man, he also repudiated the notion of immoral social man which he attached to the theory of Rousseau.

127. See *ibid.*: "La nature a donné à tous le droit à tout, même avec offense d'un autre; car on ne doit à personne autant qu'à soi.... Dans l'état de nature, tous ayant droit à tout, sans en excepter la vie de son semblable, tant que les hommes conserveront ce droit, nulle sûreté même pour le plus fort."

128. See *ibid.*, p. 241: "Sa définition du méchant me paroît sublime. Le méchant de Hobbes est un enfant robuste: malus est puer robustus. En effet, la méchanceté est d'autant plus grande que la raison est foible, & que les passions sont fortes. Supposez qu'un enfant eût à six semaines l'imbécillité de jugement de son âge, & les passions & la force d'un homme de quarante ans, il est certain qu'il frapperait son père, qu'il violerait sa mère, qu'il étranglerait sa nourrice, & qu'il n'y aurait nulle sécurité pour tout ce qui l'approcherait. Donc la définition d'Hobbes est fautive, ou l'homme devient bon à mesure qu'il s'instruit." Cf. Hobbes, *De cive*, Opera, II, p. 148. I thus find it difficult to understand why Thielemann ('Diderot and Hobbes', p. 229) should claim about the article 'Hobbisme' that "compared with other eighteenth-century judgments of Hobbes, it seems...conspicuously eulogistic". In a passage which appears in the *Discours sur l'inégalité* (O.C.III, p. 153) Rousseau repeated Diderot's critique of Hobbes in very much the same words: "Le méchant, dit-il, est un Enfant robuste; Il reste à savoir si l'Homme Sauvage est un Enfant robuste; Quand on le lui accorderait, qu'en concluerait-il? Que si, quand il est robuste, cet homme étoit aussi dépendant des autres que quand il est foible, il n'y a sorte d'excès auxquels il ne se portât, qu'il ne battît sa Mère lorsqu'elle tarderoit trop à lui donner la mamelle, qu'il n'étranglât un de ses jeunes frères, lorsqu'il en seroit incommodé, qu'il ne mordît la jambe à l'autre lorsqu'il en seroit heurté ou troublé; mais ce sont deux suppositions contradictoires dans l'état de Nature qu'être robuste et dépendant; L'Homme est foible quand il est dépendant, et il est émancipé avant que d'être robuste." See also ch. III, note 175.

Thus in 'Hobbisme', he remarked,

Ce sont les lois & la formation de la société qui ont rendu l'homme meilleur, si l'on en croit Hobbes; & qui l'ont dépravé, si l'on en croit M. Rousseau. L'un....voyoit le trône ébranlé, ses citoyens armés les uns contre les autres, & sa patrie inondée de sang par les fureurs du fanatisme presbytérien....l'autre ...voyoit des hommes versés dans toutes les connoissances, se déchirer, se haïr, se livrer à leurs passions...& se conduire d'une manière peu conforme aux lumières qu'ils avoient acquises, & il méprisa la science & les savans. Ils furent outrés tous les deux. Entre le système de l'un & de l'autre, il y en a un autre qui peut-être est le vrai: c'est que, quoique l'état de l'espece humaine soit dans une vicissitude perpétuelle, sa bonté & sa méchanceté sont les mêmes; son bonheur & son malheur circonscrits par des limites qu'elle ne peut franchir. Tous les avantages artificiels se compensent par des maux; tous les maux naturels par des biens.¹²⁹

It is of course clear from this passage that Diderot misinterpreted the meaning of Hobbes and Rousseau alike.¹³⁰ But what is more important to note here is that if the articles 'Droit naturel' and 'Hobbisme' are consistent, it follows that the two works together take the form of a challenge, both to the claim that man is naturally vicious, and equally to the view that he always becomes so in society.¹³¹ Virtue and vice are

129. Encyclopédie, VIII, p. 241.

130. There could be no vice in the state of nature according to Hobbes, and no virtue in that state according to Rousseau. Thus, remarks Hobbes (Leviathan, English Works, III, p. 115), "To this war of every man, against every man, this also is consequent; that nothing can be unjust. The notions of right and wrong, justice and injustice have there no place". And in the Discours sur l'inégalité (O.C.III, p. 152) Rousseau writes, "Il paroît d'abord que les hommes dans cet état n'ayant entre eux aucune sorte de relation morale, ni de devoirs connus, ne pouvoient être ni bons ni méchants, et n'avoient ni vices ni vertus".

131. See also, for instance, the Supplément au Voyage de Bougainville, p. 53: "Nous n'apportons en naissant qu'une similitude d'organisation avec d'autres êtres, les mêmes besoins, de l'attrait vers les mêmes plaisirs, une aversion commune pour les mêmes peines, ce qui constitue l'homme ce qu'il est, et doit fonder la morale qui lui convient." In the manuscript of this work which was produced by Jacques-André Naigeon and which incorporates a number of Diderot's revisions, there also appears the following line (*ibid.*, p. 55): "Vices et vertus, tout est également dans la nature." Cf. the passage from the Neveu de Rameau cited in note 52 above.

at once natural and social, and the moral attributes of human conduct cannot be distinguished sharply in terms of the particular circumstances under which men happen to live. It is then in this manner that the critique of Hobbes and Rousseau is associated with the arguments pertaining to the 'volonté générale' which Diderot employs in his rebuttal of the raisonneur violent. For in the light of this double refutation of the two philosophers, the 'volonté générale' once again appears as that moral standard which men already adopt in the state of nature, and which is neither abandoned nor transcended in society.¹³²

Now it seems to me that this feature of the 'Droit naturel' was in fact obvious to Rousseau. For in his second chapter of the Manuscrit he put forward a dialectic of an altogether similar kind, and while Diderot's discussion of the 'volonté générale' had assailed both his own errors and those of Hobbes, the reply which he himself made was conceived as a refutation of Hobbes and Diderot together. The raisonneur violent could indeed be challenged, but the objections that had been raised by Diderot were no less mistaken than were the views against which they had been addressed.

According to Rousseau, Diderot had supposed that in the state of nature men already shared a common interest and adhered to universal standards, so that the purely egoistical arguments of the raisonneur could be discredited in the light of those moral rules which prevailed in the 'société générale du genre humain'. But this, for Rousseau, must be false since in the state of nature the liberty which all men enjoy precludes their realization of any generally agreed objectives.

Il est certain que le mot de genre humain n'offre à l'esprit qu'une idée purement collective qui ne suppose aucune union réelle entre les individus qui le constituent.... Il est faux que dans l'état d'indépendance, la raison nous porte à concourir au bien commun par la vue de nôtre propre intérêt;

132. See note 49 above.

loin que l'intérêt particulier s'allie au bien général, ils s'excluent l'un l'autre dans l'ordre naturel des choses, et les loix sociales sont un joug que chacun veut bien imposer aux autres, mais non pas s'en charger lui même.¹³³

The raisonneur, Rousseau believed, had correctly identified the 'droit naturel' not with moral duty but with perfect licence, from which it followed that even if men in the natural state might wish to pursue a common goal there would have to be as many conceptions of such a goal as there were individuals in that state. Conflict and anarchy alone would arise from the attempt to make all men accede to any single one of its formulations.

"C'est vainement", pourra-t-il ajoûter, "que je voudrois concilier mon intérêt avec celui d'autrui; tout ce que vous me dites des avantages de la loi sociale pourroit être bon, si tandis que je l'observerois scrupuleusement envers les autres, j'étois sur qu'ils l'observeroient tous envers moi; mais quelle sureté pouvez-vous me donner là-dessus, et ma situation peut-elle être pire que de me voir exposé à tous les maux que les plus forts voudront me faire, sans oser me dédomager sur les foibles?"¹³⁴

A true 'volonté générale' can be established only when political authority is already recognised by a community, when obedience to a general rule is at once mandatory and habitual, and when men come to accept their obligations as in some sense, at least, self-imposed.¹³⁵ Only in political society is the expression of a 'volonté générale' possible, and only in a properly constituted state can the conception of a moral right for all men have any application.

But if Diderot had misconceived the meaning of the 'droit naturel', according to Rousseau, Hobbes had equally failed to grasp the manner in

133. O.C.III, pp. 283 and 284.

134. Ibid., p. 285. See Hubert, Rousseau et l'Encyclopédie, p. 39: "Si leurs besoins rapprochent les hommes, ce n'est pas qu'ils fassent naître entre eux un sentiment de bienveillance universelle. Tout au contraire - et ici Rousseau incline manifestement dans le sens de Hobbes et suit l'inspiration de sa philosophie de l'histoire politique - les besoins des hommes ne les rapprochent qu'à proportion que leurs passions les divisent."

135. See the passages from the Manuscrit de Genève and the Contrat social cited for notes 58 and 67 above.

which the 'droit naturel' could be expressed. For Hobbes had imagined that liberty itself engendered conflict between men and that the exercise of natural rights produced a state of war.¹³⁶ Antagonism thus arose, in his view, out of each man's efforts to establish his superiority over others when in fact actual power was distributed almost equally between all men.¹³⁷ Rousseau insisted, however, that in this account Hobbes had confused the state of nature with a state of civil strife and had wrongly supposed that the hostilities of corrupt society were a universal feature of mankind.

L'erreur de Hobbes n'est donc pas d'avoir établi l'état de guerre entre les hommes indépendans et devenus sociables mais d'avoir supposé cet état naturel à l'espèce, et de l'avoir donné pour cause aux vices dont il est l'effet.¹³⁸

For Rousseau it was nothing other than political and social discord, that is, conflicts over authority and conflicts over property, which truly produced a state of war,¹³⁹ since the passions of men in the natural state led only to their benevolence and pity for each other.¹⁴⁰ While Hobbes,

136. On this point see especially the following passage from the Discours sur l'inégalité, O.C.III, p. 153: "Hobbes a très bien vû le défaut de toutes les définitions modernes du droit Naturel: mais les conséquences qu'il tire de la sienne montrent qu'il la prend dans un sens, qui n'est pas moins faux. En raisonnant sur les principes qu'il établit, cet Auteur devoit dire que l'état de Nature étant celui où le soin de notre conservation est le moins préjudiciable à celle d'autrui, cet état étoit par conséquent le plus propre à la Paix, et le plus convenable au Genre-humain. Il dit précisément le contraire." See also ch. III, pp. 188-190.

137. See the Leviathan, English Works, III, p. 111: "From this equality of ability, ariseth equality of hope in the attaining of our ends. And therefore if any two men desire the same thing, which nevertheless they cannot both enjoy, they become enemies." Cf. De cive, Opera, II, pp. 165-166.

138. O.C.III, p. 288. See also the following passage from the 'Etat de guerre', ibid., p. 611: "L'erreur de Hobbes et des philosophes est de confondre l'homme naturel avec les hommes qu'ils ont sous les yeux, et de transporter dans un système un être qui ne peut subsister que dans un autre."

139. See especially the Discours sur l'inégalité, ibid., pp. 176-177.

140. See note 49 above.

therefore, had properly identified the 'droit naturel' with liberty, his explanation of how men exercised that liberty was incorrect.

It is in this fashion, I think, that one ought to assess the second chapter of Rousseau's Manuscrit. The argument, in short, is that neither duty nor conflict can be found in nature, for both arise in society alone. The 'droit naturel' in Diderot's account is a chimerical concept because it ascribes a moral rule to a state from which all authority is absent, while the account of right in Hobbes's theory is founded upon an equally erroneous supposition that the exercise of liberty entails civil disorder among men. Hobbes and Diderot derive their accounts of the 'droit naturel' from their understanding of the social rather than the natural attributes of men, and for this reason the theories of both writers are misconceived.

Nous concevons la société générale d'après nos sociétés particulières....Par où l'on voit ce qu'il faut penser de ces prétendus Cosmopolites, qui justifiant leur amour pour la patrie par leur amour pour le genre humain, se vantent d'aimer tout le monde pour avoir droit de n'aimer personne.¹⁴¹

The 'droit naturel' in Rousseau's own theory is neither a moral rule nor, on the other hand, a liberty incompatible with duty. For while in the state of nature, he believed, it could have no clear moral content, in the civil state it could be realized as a right bound together with obligations under the legitimate authority of a sovereign.

141. O.C.III, p. 287. In Livre II, ch. iv of the Manuscrit (*ibid.*, p. 329) Rousseau also remarks, in this case about the concept of virtue, "Étendez cette maxime à la société générale dont l'Etat nous donne l'idée". Cf. the following fragment from Neuchâtel Ms R 16 (*ibid.*, pp. 487-488): "La grande société n'a pu s'établir sur le modèle de la famille parce qu'étant composée d'une multitude de familles qui avant l'association n'avoient aucune règle commune leur exemple n'en pouvoit point fournir à l'état. Au contraire l'état s'il est bien gouverné doit donner dans toutes les familles des règles communes et pourvoir d'une manière uniforme à l'autorité du père, à l'obéissance des serviteurs et à l'éducation des enfants." With regard to this point Léon remarks ('Le Problème du Contrat social', p. 191), "Un cosmopolitisme abstrait fondé soit sur la volonté divine, soit sur l'identité de l'espèce d'une part, et le rétablissement de la hiérarchie traditionnelle dans le goût d'un Pufendorf ou d'un Burlamaqui d'autre part, tels sont les deux points sur lesquels s'exercera la critique de Rousseau".

Dans l'un et l'autre cas, l'homme est libre: ou bien aucun devoir ne s'oppose à son vouloir, ou bien il n'a d'autre volonté que de faire son devoir.¹⁴²

The natural rights of men were not merely renounced but were in fact transformed by the social contract, and they were not suppressed forever in the state but rather realized anew in the form of the political and moral rights of every citizen.¹⁴³ What was of crucial importance for Rousseau in connection with Diderot's essay, however, was that such moral rights could be established only in those communities that were formed by the agreement of their members. They were never to be found in any natural society of mankind.

Par de nouvelles associations, corrigeons...le défaut de l'association générale. Que nôtre violent interlocuteur juge lui même du succès. Montrons lui dans l'art perfectionné la réparation des maux que l'art commencé fit à la nature: Montrons lui toute la misère de l'état qu'il croyoit heureux, tout le faux du raisonnement qu'il croyoit solide.¹⁴⁴

The second chapter of the Manuscrit thus provides clear testimony of the influence which Diderot exercised upon Rousseau's political and

142. Bertrand de Jouvenel, 'Essai sur la politique de Rousseau', in his edition of the Contrat social (Genève 1947), p. 95.

143. See the Contrat social, I.viii (O.C.III, pp. 364-365): "Ce que l'homme perd par le contract social, c'est sa liberté naturelle et un droit illimité à tout ce qui le tente et qu'il peut atteindre; ce qu'il gagne, c'est la liberté civile et la propriété de tout ce qu'il possède. Pour ne pas se tromper dans ces compensations, il faut bien distinguer la liberté naturelle qui n'a pour bornes que les forces de l'individu, de la liberté civile qui est limitée par la volonté générale....On pourroit sur ce qui précède ajouter à l'acquis de l'état civil la liberté morale, qui seule rend l'homme vraiment maître de lui; car l'impulsion du seul appetit est esclavage, et l'obéissance à la loi qu'on s'est prescrite est liberté." This passage first appeared in an almost identical form, but without the final paragraph on moral liberty, in the Manuscrit, I.iii (ibid., pp. 292-293). At the same time, a passage in the Manuscrit (ibid., p. 289) which expressed an altogether similar view was not reproduced by Rousseau in the final version of the Contrat: "Sitôt que les besoins de l'homme passent ses facultés et que les objets de ses desirs s'étendent et se multiplient, il faut qu'il reste éternellement malheureux, ou qu'il cherche à se donner un nouvel être duquel il tire les ressources qu'il ne trouve plus en lui-même." See also pp. 65-66 above, and Léon, 'L'Idée de volonté générale', pp. 189-190.

144. O.C.III, p. 288. See also pp. 88-89 above.

social thought. For this chapter, in my view, can only be understood properly as a polemic against the essay 'Droit naturel',¹⁴⁵ and if it forms an integral part of the theory that was advanced by Rousseau¹⁴⁶ then the manner in which its ideas were conceived as a critique of Diderot will have to be considered carefully in any interpretation of his

145. It has been suggested that after the collapse of their friendship Diderot himself became dissatisfied with Rousseau's essay for the Encyclopédie and therefore wrote another article, under the title 'OEconomie politique', as a rejoinder. Thus Rousseau's reply to Diderot in the Manuscrit might have had its counterpart in Diderot's work as well. The 'OEconomie politique', which was printed in the Encyclopédie, XI (1765), pp. 366-383, is signed by Antoine-Nicolas Boulanger (who died in 1759), but in a letter to Etienne-Noël Damilaville of 19 October 1760 Diderot wrote, "Que ma boulangerie se fasse, je vous en prie", and it is at least conceivable that these words refer specifically to this article (though more likely they pertain to the article 'Vingtième' - see Diderot's Correspondance, ed. Roth and Jean Varloot, 16 vols. (Paris 1955-70), III, p. 161; Havens, 'Diderot, Rousseau, and the Discours sur l'inégalité', p. 254, note 2; and Lough, The 'Encyclopédie', pp. 53 and 310). Nevertheless, whether the 'OEconomie politique' was in fact composed by Diderot or - what is more probable - commissioned by him, it does not appear to have been designed as a refutation of Rousseau. It includes passages on the 'genre humain' which are faintly reminiscent of statements made by Diderot, but it also places emphasis on certain matters, such as theocratic government, which do not figure in the 'Droit naturel' or the 'Economie politique', and it contains no specific references to either work. Its connection with Rousseau's article is thus quite as tenuous as is the connection between Diderot's own 'Droit naturel' and the 'Droit de la nature' of Boucher d'Argis (see note 40 above). In the fifth volume of the Encyclopédie, at any rate, Diderot lavished even more praise upon Rousseau than Rousseau on Diderot. For in the article 'Encyclopédie' he wrote (p. 646), "O Rousseau, mon cher & digne ami, je n'ai jamais eu la force de me refuser à ta louange: j'en ai senti croître mon goût pour la vérité, & mon amour pour la vertu".

146. To be sure, the chapter was not incorporated in the final version of the Contrat social, and some scholars, including Schinz (see 'La Question du Contrat social', pp. 753-757), have suggested that it was deleted by Rousseau because he came to see its arguments as incompatible with the general principles of his theory. For Vaughan (I, pp. 441-442), on the other hand, "Rousseau suppressed the peccant chapter, not because it was irrelevant, but because it was fatally relevant, to his argument; because he became aware that, in refuting the idea of natural law, he had unwittingly made a deadly breach in the binding force of the Contract; and because, having no other principle to put in place of the Contract as the foundation of civil society, he felt that his only course was to silence the battery which he had incautiously unmasked against it: in one word, to strike out the refutation, and to let the Social Contract stand". See also ch. I, notes 25 and 33. Most of Rousseau's interpreters, however, believe that the chapter is compatible in substance with the Contrat social, and they suggest that he removed it from the final version only because, by around 1760, he must have seen that its style and form made it unsuitable for publication. Two main reasons are generally cited in support of this claim. Firstly, the chapter is somewhat carelessly constructed around a set of quotations ascribed to an anonymous

thought. His discussion of the 'genre humain' and the 'droit naturel' was put forward as a direct refutation of Diderot's account, and it reproduced in close detail both the elements and style of the article which had been composed by the editor of the Encyclopédie. Passages drawn from that essay were intercalated by Rousseau in his own exposition, and even Diderot's dialectical format was adopted and then turned inside out. Any study of the Manuscrit which overlooks these features cannot, therefore, supply an explanation of the meaning which Rousseau intended to express.

I have also tried to show that only a short while before Rousseau produced this work he had very largely accepted the principal contentions of the essay 'Droit naturel'. In the 'Economie politique', that is, he developed certain themes which had not appeared in his writings previously and which, indeed, were inconsistent with the theory that he elaborated later in his other works. His earliest account of the 'volonté générale', in particular, seems to reflect the arguments employed by Diderot in the article which Rousseau cited as his source. It follows from this that the 'Droit naturel' has some bearing upon two quite distinct aspects of Rousseau's social thought, and whether we focus upon his first reference

figure in an essay whose title is not even mentioned by Rousseau, and its literary quality suffers from this fact. It is certainly inferior in style to most of the works of Rousseau that were published in his lifetime, and it would hardly be surprising if he took out this section, along with other sections too, from a composition which he hoped would be the best of all his writings (see the passage from the Confessions cited in ch. I, p. 31; Beaulavon, 'La Question du Contrat social. Une fausse solution', pp. 592-593 and Launay, 'L'Art de l'écrivain dans le Contrat social', in Jean-Jacques Rousseau et son temps, especially p. 138). Secondly, the chapter is so clearly a polemic against Diderot that Rousseau might have thought it out of place in a work published some years after their quarrel was at its height, and particularly out of place in a general treatise on a subject about which Diderot was not an acknowledged authority (see Beaulavon, p. 593; Hubert, Rousseau et l'Encyclopédie, pp. 118-119; Derathé, O.C.III, p. lxxxviii; and Einaudi, The Early Rousseau, p. 174, note 12). These arguments are much more plausible, in my view, than are those which point to any fundamental inconsistencies between the Manuscrit and the Contrat social. Indeed, some reference to Rousseau's unpublished works, and, when they have survived, even to deleted sections of those unpublished works, may help more to clarify his meaning than to portray its inconsistencies. I shall elaborate this point with respect to the Essai sur l'origine des langues in ch. IV.

to the concept of the 'volonté générale', or alternatively upon his subsequent critique of the notion of a moral 'droit naturel', we must consider the sense in which his statements form a commentary upon the work of Diderot. Even the most abstract of Rousseau's ideas thus have their place in the context of his unsettled appreciation of the claims made by his sometime friend. And both the acknowledged debt which he owed, and the express challenge which he made, to the political thought of Diderot, figure as central elements in his own theory.