

## Rousseau's Reflection on Rationality

### --Take *Emile* as an Example

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**Abstract.** *Emile* is one of Rousseau's representative works, this book reflects his educational thoughts, mainly embodied in Rousseau's reflection on rationality. This article combines the concrete text *Emile*, discusses Rousseau's criticism and the modification method to the Enlightenment rational worship. Rousseau's lifetime shows the authenticity of self analysis and self-improvement, emphasizing that the attention to self-worth and the value of others in a free society can achieve harmonious development, this romantic recourse is Rousseau in the *Emile* in the constant expression of the value of thinking.

*Emile* is a masterpiece that Rousseau used for 20 years, which involves education, literature, philosophy, society, politics and so on, and is called an encyclopedia-style masterpiece. *Emile* in the exposition of educational issues, but also expressed Rousseau's personal philosophical views, thoughts and feelings, poured into his social, political, human nature of profound thinking.

#### "Social Person" and "Natural Person".

Rousseau has always been skeptical and critical of human socialization, or he believes that the human problem is due to civilization and socialization itself, in contrast, he more believe in the state of human nature, and strive to make the direction of human survival in the natural state. When it comes to education, he thinks that the first thing to be confronted with is the question of what kind of person to cultivate. The first mention of the educational goal of *Emile* is to nurture natural persons. Rousseau believes that human beings are born in the social environment, and the human society is the environment that causes human nature to change the root cause, "the things from the hands of the creator, are good, and one into the hands of people, all become bad." People grow in the soil of society, not only the growth is bound, human nature is also affected by the negative effects of society distorted, because "in the social environment of the heavy siege, due to the impact of thousands of kinds of constantly producing reasons, Because of the acquisition of many of the knowledge at the same time received a lot of false see, due to the changes in body temperament and the constant impulse of desire, it can be said that the soul is also made almost recognized. Traditional education is the social people, that is, the "can hardly recognize the" people.

Rousseau is based on this idea, the criticism of the society and the thought of the ideal personality, think that through the "Hand of society" is a bad person, is not in accordance with the natural nature of human beings, so education should promote people to maintain the nature, so that people become a real free natural person. Rousseau attaches importance to the thought of natural nature on the basis of the theory of sexual goodness, which is similar to Mencius in China, and all of them recognize the moral nature of the people. There are also scholars to compare the nature of Rousseau's natural characteristics with the nature of the old Zhuang. He believes that human nature is good and healthy, education should be obedient to human nature. In Rousseau's view, education is an art, a kind of art that shapes the perfect natural independent personality of children, and his educational theory thinks that it is necessary to unify human education, thing education and nature education, and take natural education as foundation.

Through *Emile*, Rousseau created a natural education under natural conditions, keeping the individual image of the most beautiful and natural nature of mankind, he expects the natural person to be a completely independent person, "completely for oneself and life, he is the unit of number, is

the absolute unity, only with his own and his compatriots have relations" You can achieve your will by not relying on others but by your own abilities and choices. Thus, Rousseau further proposes a pair of concepts of "natural person" and "social person" which represent the type of human existence. The so-called "social person" only seems to be free, but there is no individual independent will, the fate of their own to other people or the hands of society, so "social people" always rely on others or society, is in a state of slavery, freedom for them is not true freedom. Rousseau believes that in order for humans to be able to preserve themselves as individuals, endowed with the ability and the will of human judgment, "Man is a free subject, he can combine the behavior governed by nature with his own active behavior", the freedom of man as an independent individual, the most outstanding manifestation is the ability of self-perfection, Thus human beings have the ability to make up for the defects of their instincts, "and to raise it beyond the power of his instincts" . This ability to self-improvement can satisfy the natural desires of human nature. But human desires are more than that, people in the natural desire to be satisfied at the same time, derived more and more needs in the society to realize the desire, these social desires can not rely on the perfection of individual ability to meet, so people began to rely on his things, "the dependence on people, is the lack of strength of the characterization: If everyone does not need the help of others, we do not want to unite with others "

As a "social person" exists, people can never have real freedom. People rely on the existence of feeling, people through the senses to perceive the world, feel the self. Rousseau emphasized the role of natural emotion based on love and compassion in the choice and will of the people, advocating that people should control and obey their own emotions. Rousseau regarded human emotion as the highest pursuit, and thought that compassion and self love were the most natural, universal and useful virtues in human nature. The truest aspect of a natural person is that in the influence and bondage of social environment, we can insist that will obey to the emotion, make the will and the emotion unify, that is, let the self love and compassion to achieve the internal and external unification in social practice and spiritual activities. Comparatively speaking, "social person" is no longer to think and judge from the nature of man's natural emotion, on the contrary, the identity, status and wealth as well as personal excellence as the first pursuit of human, in such a mindset, human scientific civilization and culture and art will only strengthen the shackles of people. The demise of this nature has doomed the society to be not only enslaved, but hypocritical. In Rousseau's view, this result is irreversible, society can not go back to the previous natural state, the social people can not be changed back to natural persons. But he is also dedicated to guide mankind to the emancipation of the mind so that the human face to the state of their own bondage, the pursuit of their own natural state of freedom. How to reveal the essential difference between "human beings" and "natural persons" in the society that has become the established fact, Rousseau accomplishes this task through the detailed description of nature education in Emile .

### **Reflections on the Worship of Reason**

Rousseau said: "There is no need to make a man a philosopher before he becomes a man." From this remark, we can see that Rousseau has seen the development of the Enlightenment of the limitations of the rational authority has become a new religious authority to enslave the people. In Emile , Rousseau has repeatedly put forward the Emile and "Social man" comparison, trying to reveal the enlightenment of the reason for the suppression of human nature is a new tool.

First, Rousseau reflects on the new restrictions and enslavement of enlightenment rationality to people. The so-called rationality, should be the individual has independent consciousness, is the independent choice and the correct judgment ability. The Enlightenment thinker's rationality broke a superstition, but renewed the new superstition, so it could not really liberate the human mind. At the same time, what makes Rousseau dissatisfied is that the enlightening thinkers carry forward the spirit of critical skepticism, which makes the emotional connection of human society become weak, and it is easier for the people in the society to fall into the crisis of belief lost. This has been accurately confirmed in the development of the capitalist society after Rousseau. In "Milton", Thoreau believes that children should be taught how to learn and acquire knowledge. Learning the

knowledge they are interested in, he said: "The true benefits of our happiness is very few, but only such knowledge is worthy of a wise man to seek, and thus worthy of a child to seek, Because our aim is to make him a wise man like that. In short, the problem is not what knowledge he learns, but what he learns to be useful.

Second, compared with the acquired rationality, Rousseau is more inclined to congenital emotion, which is similar to Mencius. Rousseau believed that the Enlightenment caused people to rely excessively on rationality, enslaved by the Enlightenment thinkers of the doctrine of rationality, which will inevitably lead to the lack of free will, people can not live a natural independent life. Rousseau advocated that before the age of 15, do not read, in the rural areas away from the city, to carry out natural education, so as to maintain the natural and independent nature of children, until the natural nature of the children in the establishment of the necessary knowledge, to obtain rational.

Thirdly, the acquired rationality has great uncertainty relative to the congenital emotion. Because reason is not the nature of the income, but through external forces, can also be destroyed by external forces. When a person's existing value system, knowledge system is damaged by impact, rational concept is easy to be abandoned. When rationality becomes an ideology, the value and intension of rationality will be distorted, which will cause serious consequences. The Enlightenment, based on the ideology of rationality, largely resulted in the cult of rationality in the Age of Enlightenment, and later on the chaos of the revolution and subsequent reign. When Rousseau saw the Enlightenment, he would revolt against the rational dogma preached by the enlightened thinker so violently. Rationality can be stripped away, but emotions in the human nature do not. In a time when people are passionate about reason, "Love Milton" is a refreshing thought poured into, although not accepted, but its naturalistic ideas in politics, philosophy, education, or to bring people new ideas, call people to pay attention to their true feelings and natural nature.

### **The Pursuit of "Rationality"**

Rousseau's pursuit of "rationality" is a kind of lonely romantic appeal. Rousseau tries to enlighten with emotion, especially compassion, to awaken the good morals and spirit in human emotion, and try to make social change by this means.

This is the way of Rousseau's development ideal of human society under the lonely situation, hoping to create a democratic and peaceful society through the shaping of the virtues in the personal nature. Rousseau's time was a time of rational fanaticism, rationality, as the highest justice, is placed at the core of social morality, but when this supreme justice should lead people to the pursuit of freedom, this supreme justice has become a tool of oppression and injustice, and it is conceivable how strong this is for Rousseau's vibration. So Rousseau wrote *Emile*, in the book on the love of Milton's meticulous education, while, also deeply exposes and analyzes the society to the human nature Fetter, the social justice lets the people become alienated and is apt to be bewitched, the people has lost the natural noble virtue in the nature, has not had the independent survival judgment ability in the society. And in *Emile*, after a complete nature education, after the youth of Milton, mature to have their own internal independence of reason, he will return to human social life, and to build society. This is very similar to the use of Buddhism after the see, with pure thought to practice and construct the pure cause and the world. Rousseau pays attention to education, takes the child to the countryside to carry on the natural education, all these aim is in order to maintain and the development human good nature, lets its natural growth, does not become alienated because of the various injustice influence in the society. The ultimate aim of Rousseau's natural education is to make use of education to shape perfect human nature, and then to achieve the goal of reforming society, rebuilding social civilization, and building up his ideal country with education.

The "natural person" created by Rousseau is a person with free and independent consciousness and capacity, and also a citizen in the ideal democratic and just country. Reason and emotion are to human nature, but the tip of the iceberg. But in the long dark Middle Ages, people ignored and suppressed their nature for a long time, ignoring the emotion of human nature, and when the age of rationality came, people ignored the natural nature of human nature on reason because of the

fanaticism of reason. The focus of Rousseau's thinking has always been to look at human nature, rather than just a corner of reason, to create a romantic precedent. Rousseau uses the unique romantic vision to draw people's thinking from reason to human nature, so that the Western thought is no longer just the gray logic reason tradition. Rousseau has been firmly concerned about the most noble nature of human nature, with the thinking of the well-being of all mankind, in his time alone to people carrying out his appeal to the most beautiful humanity.

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