

Attending to Time and Place in Rousseau's Legislative Art

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Abstract: In his *Plan for a Constitution for Corsica*, Rousseau recommends a series of institutional arrangements and psychological incentives designed to generate certain salutary opinions and behaviors on the part of the citizens. However, he also indicates in several ways that it is not only impossible to control such outcomes absolutely or permanently, but also undesirable insofar as a static people tends to be a languorous people. This essay argues that the model of citizenship that emerges in *Corsica* is more dynamic and less thoroughly choreographed than is often recognized. Rousseau suggests that what it takes to attach citizens to the collective good over the long term requires not only a specific form of socialization, but also that the people are capable, to some degree, of transcending their socialization. The goal of Rousseau's legislative art is not to form a people that can remain on "autopilot," but rather to cultivate a form of reflection and judgment that is rooted in and animated by healthy attachments and proper conditioning of the passions. The puzzle becomes the relationship between these two sides of the legislative art.

In 1764, Rousseau was contacted by Corsican general Matthieu Buttafuoco for help with the drafting of a new constitution for the newly independent Corsica.¹ Rousseau spent much of the next year composing the *Plan for a Constitution for Corsica*. Unfortunately, this work remained unfinished at the time of his death, so it is impossible to draw definitive conclusions about the final contours of his recommendations. However, what he did write suggests to many readers that this work is consistent with, and offers an example of a practical application of, Rousseau's theoretical principles.² Moreover, Corsica is specifically singled out by Rousseau in the *Social*

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¹Regarding the circumstances surrounding the composition of Rousseau's *Plan for a Constitution for Corsica*, as well as the controversies surrounding Corsica during Rousseau's time, see Sven Stelling-Michaud's introduction in *Œuvres complètes de Jean-Jacques Rousseau*, ed. Bernard Gagnebin et al., vol. 3 (Paris: Gallimard, 1964), cxcix–ccxiii.

²See, for example, Ethan Putterman, "Realism and Reform in Rousseau's Constitutional Projects for Poland and Corsica," *Political Studies* 49, no. 3 (2001): 481–94.

Contract (SC, 162; 3:391)³ as the only state in Europe that is capable of receiving legislation. Thus Corsica (as it appears in Rousseau's imagination) has always represented a special case for exploring Rousseau's understanding of the possibilities and limits of the art of legislation.

In the opening lines of his *Plan for a Constitution for Corsica* Rousseau expands upon the assessment of Corsica's potential that he made in *On the Social Contract*, but also qualifies that assessment in one important respect:

The Corsican people is in the fortunate condition that makes a good foundation possible; it can depart from the first point and take measures in order not to degenerate. Full of vigor and health it can devote itself to the government that keeps it vigorous and healthy. Nevertheless this establishment must already find some obstacles. The Corsicans have not yet taken on the vices of other nations, but they have already taken on their prejudices; it is these prejudices that must be combated and destroyed in order to form a good establishment. (CC, 123–24; 3:902)

Rousseau does not claim that a foundation sufficient to support good legislation already exists in Corsica, but only that the island is in a "fortunate condition" that makes such a foundation possible. Despite their renewed patriotic vigor, the Corsicans have begun to develop the taste for individual wealth, status, and competition. While this tendency has not yet risen to the level of an actual "vice," Rousseau notes, it has coincided with the adoption of certain erroneous "prejudices." Owing to policies introduced by the Genoese during their control of the island, the Corsicans have begun to lose their taste for the simple agricultural life and to develop an interest in commerce as a way of overcoming their poverty. This inclination has not yet borne fruit only because Genoese policies hindered commerce in an effort to keep the people poor and dependent. "The Genoese themselves prepared your foundation and with a care worthy of Providence they founded freedom while believing they were consolidating Tyranny. They deprived you of almost all commerce and now is not in fact the time to have any" (CC, 129; 3:908). The Corsicans' fortunate condition is marked by an absence of commerce rather than the presence of any positive condition other than a

³ Parenthetical citations of Rousseau's works will be to the following translations, followed by the volume and page number from the Pléiade *Œuvres complètes*: *On the Social Contract* (SC), in *The Collected Writings of Jean-Jacques Rousseau*, vol. 4, ed. Christopher Kelly and Roger D. Masters (Hanover, NH: University Press of New England, 1994); *Plan for a Constitution for Corsica* (CC) and *Considerations on the Government of Poland* (GP), both in *Collected Writings*, vol. 11, ed. Christopher Kelly and Judith Bush (Hanover, NH: University Press of New England, 2005); *Discourse on Political Economy* (PE), in *Collected Writings*, vol. 3, ed. Roger D. Masters and Christopher Kelly (Hanover, NH: University Press of New England, 1992); and *Emile* (E), trans. Allan Bloom (New York: Basic Books, 1979).

momentary sense of unified resolve that could develop in any number of directions, and might just as easily dissolve.

What Rousseau seeks to change about the Corsicans is their "prejudices," that is, their aspirations toward commercial success. Rousseau's plan for them is designed to produce a cultural shift away from these concerns and toward more salutary goals. To that end, he advises an elaborately rigged system of incentives and stimuli to condition citizens' opinions and behavior. By attaching the citizens to the land and strengthening the family, Rousseau hopes to generate the national pride and civic virtue necessary to maintain a people capable of freedom, that is, capable of self-legislation and free from foreign domination. In Rousseau's estimation, the Corsicans are in a liminal state: they have not quite achieved this condition, but neither have they fallen irreversibly from it. They are capable of being formed, or *made* to achieve it. This is where the art of legislation, as he characterizes it in the *Social Contract*, enters in.

In the *Social Contract*, Rousseau explains that the lawgiver does not directly legislate; this power belongs to the sovereign people alone. Laws are "acts of the general will" (SC, 153; 3:379). The need for a lawgiver arises when Rousseau considers how a "blind multitude" can be expected to undertake something "as vast and difficult" as the task of legislation. "By itself, the people always wants the good, but by itself it does not always see it. The general will is always right, but the judgment that guides it is not always enlightened" (SC, 154; 3:380). The function of the lawgiver, therefore, is to prepare the people to undertake the task of self-legislation, that is, to dispose them to will the general will.

As Rousseau goes on to consider the characteristics of one who is capable of such a task, he attributes to the legislator an extraordinary wisdom that combines knowledge of the theoretical principles of political right with the practical knowledge of how to dispose a people to be public-spirited enough to will the general will and thus to govern themselves in a way that reflects those principles. This practical wisdom has two major features. First, it consists of the ability to transform each individual, "who is by himself a perfect and solitary whole, into a part of a larger whole from which this individual receives, in a sense, his life and his being" (SC, 155; 3:381). Second, it entails knowledge of how to produce this collective ethos within a particular political context—that is, the legislator must attend to the particulars of time and place. "Just as an architect, before putting up a big building, observes and tests the ground to see whether it can bear the weight, so the wise founder does not start by drafting laws that are good in themselves, but first examines whether the people for whom he destines them is suited to bear them" (SC, 157; 3:384–85).

At first glance, the relationship between these two dimensions of the legislative art seems clear enough: the goal is the cultivation of patriotic devotion of the citizens to the good of the whole, while the means must be adapted to particular circumstances. This adaptation consists not simply in proposing an

institutional arrangement that suits a people as one finds them, but rather in designing an arrangement to transform the people into a vigorous collective that can support a good institutional arrangement. Effecting this transformation, moreover, requires tailoring this effort to existing conditions, prejudices, and passions—to “the ills of the times.”⁴ In Corsica (as in Poland), this means rooting out the specific sources of incipient self-interest that threaten to undermine the fragile collective ethos that is the salutary (but likely short-lived) effect of a recent fight for independence from a foreign power. To that end, as several commentators have argued, Rousseau’s proposals are designed to harness the animating force of *amour-propre* to redirect it toward civic virtue.⁵

The “practical” nature of *Corsica* is therefore typically understood in terms of Rousseau’s willingness to work with a people’s existing tendencies instead of assuming or trying to create a clean slate. “If the desire for distinction is ineradicable from the spirit of a people, then it is on the basis of accomplishments of service to all that these distinctions of persons will best be made.”⁶ However, to the extent that this rechanneling relies on manipulation of the passions, Rousseau’s legislative art begins to look like nothing more than social engineering, which raises doubts about its contribution to human freedom. If, in performing its necessary function in promoting civic cohesion, the legislative art thoroughly obviates the people’s critical capacities by “making” them think and behave in certain ways, self-rule in any meaningful sense becomes compromised, if not impossible, as implied by those who see Rousseauian citizenship as fundamentally passive and devoid of any critical capacity.⁷

On this view, the foremost goal of Rousseau’s legislative art is to condition the people so deeply and completely that they operate on autopilot, so to speak. Steven Johnston, for example, finds Rousseau’s plan for Corsica a “chilling” example of deep social engineering, and argues that, in this and other works, Rousseau ultimately subverts human freedom by seeking to

⁴Ryan Patrick Hanley, “Enlightened Nation Building: The ‘Science of the Legislator’ in Smith and Rousseau,” *American Journal of Political Science* 52, no. 2 (2008): 225.

⁵See, for example, Hanley, “Enlightened Nation Building”; J. S. Maloy, “The Very Order of Things: Rousseau’s Tutorial Republicanism,” *Polity* 37, no. 2 (2005): 235–62; and Jeffrey A. Smith, “Nature, Nation-Building, and the Seasons of Justice in Rousseau’s Political Thought,” *The Review of Politics* 68, no. 1 (2006): 20–48.

⁶Nicholas Dent, *Rousseau* (London: Routledge, 2005), 177.

⁷For example, Ruth Grant states that “in Rousseau’s view self-consciousness is simply not a necessary requirement for freedom. ... Rather, through manipulation and deception, freedom and virtue together are purchased at the price of a highly developed rational self-consciousness” (*Hypocrisy and Integrity: Machiavelli, Rousseau, and the Ethics of Politics* [Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997], 138). See also William Connolly, “Rousseau: Docility Through Citizenship,” chap. 3 in *Political Theory and Modernity* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1988).

"choreograph" the rhythms and motions of politics in advance, making the "force of habit ... the true foundation of Rousseau's republic."⁸ Daniel Cullen comes to a similar conclusion: "For it cannot be denied that, as Rousseau presents it, the work of political education (which is the transformation of the self) occurs not in the continuing process of democratic deliberation but in the founding activity of the Legislator, which is later routinized in the permanent influence of *moeurs*."⁹ Along these lines, Julia Simon argues that Rousseau's goal is to induce a "static state of social conformity."¹⁰ Even some who emphasize Rousseau's anti-utopian, pragmatic stance in *Corsica* tend to emphasize the degree to which his proposals endeavor to "make" the citizens think and behave in certain ways.¹¹

It is certainly the case that Rousseau's explicit, overriding concern is the reestablishment of social unity grounded in the austere mores of republican simplicity, and that passionate attachment to the fatherland is, for Rousseau, the indispensable foundation of civic virtue and good government. To that end, his recommendations for Corsica focus on two major points: the rejection of modern commerce in favor of a subsistence, agrarian economy organized around barter rather than monetary exchange; and the strengthening of the traditional family unit. "I see no more prompt and more certain means for reaching that point than the two following ones: the one of attaching men to the land, so to speak, by drawing their distinctions and their rights from it, and the other, of strengthening this bond by that of the family by making the land necessary to the station of fathers" (CC, 138; 3:919).

The success of such changes depends, Rousseau argues, not simply on "good laws and a new constitution," but more fundamentally on a cultural shift that redirects the Corsicans' ambitions by changing their objects of esteem. "It is a question of making the people ... love the occupation we want to give it, of fixing its pleasures, its desires, its tastes there, in general of making it into the happiness of life, and of limiting plans of ambition to it" (CC, 138; 3:918). In short, Rousseau's argument is that the best way of attaching the Corsicans to a simple agrarian lifestyle and its accompanying virtues is to "not even allow a better or nobler one to be imagined." Unable to conceive of "anything above them," the Corsicans will be limited to finding satisfaction in the only life available to them (CC, 144; 3:925).

Such remarks about directing desires and restricting the imagination lend apparent support to the claim, advanced by Crocker and others, that

⁸Steven Johnston, *Encountering Tragedy: Rousseau and the Project of Democratic Order* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1999), 118–19.

⁹Daniel Cullen, *Freedom in Rousseau's Political Philosophy*, (Dekalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 1993), 132.

¹⁰Julia Simon, *Mass Enlightenment: Critical Studies in Rousseau and Diderot* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1995), 65.

¹¹See, for example, Smith, "Nature, Nation-Building, and the Seasons of Justice," 40, 41.

Rousseau's vision for Corsica is a totalitarian one, or at least one that renders citizens passive and blindly submissive by disabling their critical capacities. "Fear, hope and vanity are to be used as incentives, aided especially by ignorance."¹² The incentives are designed, according to Crocker, to produce "submissive conformity," and reflect Rousseau's belief that one must exercise "absolute control" over people's hearts and minds in order to prevent the eruption of "unsocial competition" among them, which would undermine the unity of the state.¹³ I shall argue, however, that Rousseau's plan for Corsica does *not* ultimately rest on enforced ignorance, precisely because his goal is not blind or static conformity. While he certainly stresses the importance of combating individual vanity in favor of national pride, he also indicates that this collective ethos must be animated by conscious choice and actions of individual citizens who are not simply made to conform their behavior to certain salutary norms, but must also to some degree consciously embrace those norms on the basis of considered judgments about their utility and value. My reading of *Corsica* thus lends support to interpretations of the *Social Contract* that emphasize Rousseau's concern for deliberation and active citizenship.¹⁴

This is not to deny that Rousseau's prescriptions for Corsica are designed to arrange institutional and psychological incentives to generate certain salutary opinions and behaviors. However, he also indicates in several ways that it is not only impossible to control such outcomes absolutely or permanently, but also undesirable insofar as a static people is also a languorous people.¹⁵ The model of citizenship that emerges in *Corsica* is more dynamic and less thoroughly "choreographed" than is often recognized. What it takes to

¹²Lester G. Crocker, "Rousseau's *soi-disant* liberty," in *Rousseau and Liberty*, ed. Robert Wokler (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1995), 257–58. See also Steven Johnston, *Encountering Tragedy*, 100–103.

¹³Crocker, "Rousseau's *soi-disant* liberty," 259.

¹⁴Christopher Bertram, for example, notes that although affective identification among citizens (strengthened by public festivals and spectacles) is an important foundation for Rousseau's model of citizenship, it does not exhaust "all that Rousseau values ... there is a time for dancing and a time for individuals to reason together in common as citizens" (*Routledge Philosophy Guidebook to Rousseau and the "Social Contract"* [London: Routledge, 2004], 146). Christopher Kelly similarly emphasizes the need for active (if limited) public deliberation in Rousseau's ideal regime, arguing that unanimity for Rousseau "is not simply desirable at any cost" (*Rousseau as Author: Consecrating One's Life to Truth* [Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003], 122). See also Ethan Putterman, who argues that for Rousseau citizenship is more "active and robust" than commonly recognized (*Rousseau, Law, and the Sovereignty of the People* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010], 173).

¹⁵This view is consistent with Jeffrey A. Smith's argument that *Considerations on the Government of Poland* shows that in order to remain free a people should retain some sense that their freedom is in peril ("Nationalism, Virtue, and the Spirit of Liberty in Rousseau's *Government of Poland*," *Review of Politics* 65, no. 3 [2003]: 409–37).

“make” the people embrace a simple and virtuous way of life and attach them to the collective good turns out to require not only a specific form of socialization, but also that the people are capable, to some degree, of transcending their socialization.

This, in turn, has implications for understanding Rousseau's stipulation that the legislative art must attend to considerations of time and place. Attending to time and place turns out to be more than simply a matter of devising incentives and modes of socialization that are suited to a particular people's preexisting virtues, vices, and location—their specific natural, cultural, and psychological topography. Rousseau's legislative art also recognizes that once passions are redirected toward a common good, a “static state of social conformity,” as Simon terms it, may, over time, undermine freedom instead of preserving it. Even if one could “freeze”¹⁶ a particular social order in defense against external contamination, this would not adequately address considerations of time and place. The goal, then, is not to form a people that can operate on autopilot by discouraging any reflection on their way of life, but rather to cultivate a form of reflection and judgment that is rooted in and animated by healthy attachments and proper conditioning of the passions. The puzzle becomes the relationship between these two sides of this tension in the legislative art.

Both the people's passions and their judgments must be redirected in order to address considerations of time and place. Rousseau makes this explicit in several works. What we see in the *Plan for the Constitution of Corsica* are some less explicit but still significant indications that Rousseau recognized that redirecting judgment must have a different character from redirecting passion, inasmuch as judgment cannot be *entirely* directed without ceasing to be judgment. While Rousseau calls for a lawgiver in the *Social Contract* precisely because the people tends to lack judgment, the lawgiver's task involves not only working around this deficiency or permanently substituting his judgment for their own, but also, to some degree, correcting it: the people “must be shown how to assimilate considerations of time and place; taught to weigh the attraction of tangible advantages against the danger of remote, hidden ills” (SC, 154; 3:380). Rousseau's *Plan for a Constitution for Corsica* provides an opportunity to explore the implications of this statement for Rousseau's understanding of the art of forming a people for the long term, as well as his understanding of citizenship.

Corsica Unbound

Rousseau characterizes the political context to which he directs his advice as follows: Emerging from their successful campaign for independence from the

¹⁶George Armstrong Kelly, “A General Overview,” in *The Cambridge Companion to Rousseau*, ed. Patrick Riley (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 33.

Genoese, the Corsicans find themselves in a fortuitous but also precarious situation. On the one hand, the experience of uniting against an external enemy stimulated a sense of concord, common purpose, and national pride. Past internal factions are washed away in a sort of collective “amnesia” produced by the uniting experience of fighting for independence. But the effects of this salutary amnesia are beginning to wane, and the Corsicans’ “propensity to dissension” is beginning to re-emerge. “When the peril that has brought them together goes away, the factions that it pushes aside will be reborn among them. ... This is what must be forestalled” (CC, 125; 3:903). While internal dissensions were deliberately sown by the Genoese and other imperial powers for their own purposes (“the divisions of the Corsicans have ever been a trick of their masters”), the departure of the Genoese does not, by itself, make dissension disappear, even though the root cause has been removed. The problem is that this masterful “trick” was repeated so many times that a propensity to dissension has, over time, taken root and made the Corsicans “restless, turbulent, and hard to govern, even by their own masters.” In other words, the effects of the external arrangement became internalized; “the artifice has finally produced the inclination” (CC, 125; 3:903).

One might sum up Rousseau’s response to this state of affairs as the deployment of a countervailing artifice designed to produce the contrary inclination—that is, toward agriculture rather than away from it. But such a neat summation glides over the more interesting complexities of the artifice Rousseau suggests. There are several indications that his goal is not simply to foster an unreflective attachment to agriculture, but also, to some degree, to develop a conscious appreciation for the virtues of agriculture, in order to *secure* that attachment against the vagaries of time and its own potential excesses. “It is less a question of becoming different than you are than of knowing how to preserve yourself that way” (CC, 125; 3:903). We see evidence of this concern in Rousseau’s discussion of the Swiss model and its relevance to Corsica; in his paradoxical recommendation to use the fields “badly”; and finally in his repeated attention to the problem of laziness.

The crux of Rousseau’s advice is that commerce and agriculture are fundamentally incompatible, and the Corsicans should eschew the former in favor of the latter. He begins with the “indisputable maxim” that “everywhere that money is of the utmost necessity the nation detaches itself from agriculture in order to throw itself into more lucrative professions” (CC, 139; 3:920). Furthermore, the circulation of money necessarily produces inequality, because money is “a relative sign which has genuine effect only by the inequality of its distribution.” Finally, when citizens apply themselves to pursuits that generate money rather than cultivating the land, the entire community produces less of the goods that it needs and becomes dependent on external trade. To counter these effects, Rousseau proposes that the role of money should be radically reduced, in favor of a barter economy. “Exchanges can be made in kind and without intermediate values.” When

a lack of money ceases to function as a sign of poverty and the possession of monetary wealth no longer signals high status, the people will not be motivated to pursue it, and "the less of it that circulates in the Island the more real abundance will reign there" (CC, 141; 3:922).

What is most interesting about Rousseau's discussion of how to eliminate money from the Corsican economy is the way that he subtly draws attention to the similarities between the austerity measures he recommends as beneficial and the devastating austerity imposed by the Genoese during their rule. Clearly, there are differences in both intent and structure, but more than once Rousseau's language invites us to consider striking parallels. The Genoese were similarly concerned with fostering Corsican agriculture, for their own purposes. The Genoese sought to keep the Corsicans poor and dependent by "attaching them so to speak to their soil, by turning them away from commerce, the arts, from all the lucrative professions" (CC, 137; 3:918). To that end, they "made money so rare" in Corsica that "in some cantons of the Island currency was not even known" and a barter economy prevailed (CC, 141; 3:922). Rousseau even notes that his idea for common storehouses (to control distribution of goods) is "not new," as they existed under the Genoese—in that case, "as pretext for a thousand odious monopolies" (CC, 141; 3:923). By drawing attention to the surface similarities between his proposals and the policies of the Genoese, Rousseau implies that judgment is necessary to discern the different psychic effects that very similar policies and structural arrangements can have on the same population. An overly simplistic view of how automatically or directly even carefully arranged social and economic structures lead to or produce certain opinions and behaviors can blind one to possible adverse effects.

There is, to be sure, a major difference between Rousseau's proposed system and the one imposed by the Genoese, even beyond their divergent intentions. While the Genoese policies had the effect of making money scarce in Corsica, they also made it necessary (and thus still desirable) because of high taxes. The tax burden led the Corsicans to flee agriculture in order to pursue monetary wealth through commerce and the "lucrative professions." Thus while the Genoese may have claimed to want to attach the Corsicans to their soil and turn them away from commerce, their policies had the opposite effect. Rousseau argues, by contrast, that his proposals are designed to make money not only rare but also *unnecessary*, so that the lack of money would no longer be an indicator of poverty (CC, 141; 3:922).

Point by point, Rousseau's recommendations are designed to counter the inclination toward commerce, which produces civic weakness and moral decay, in order to foster the simplicity and industriousness of rural life, which he sees as the moral foundation for a healthy and independent state. Relationship to the land shapes national character. Whereas love of money "extinguishes" love of the fatherland, love of the land feeds it. Commerce produces private individuals driven by self-interest, whereas the simplicity of rural life, which keeps a community isolated from the corrupting influences

of neighboring states and trading partners, produces vigorous citizens. The “laborious and independent” life of the farming Swiss, for example, resulted in “agreement in resolutions and courage in combat.” Rousseau extols the “constant union that reigned” among them; “all having the same interests and the same tastes, united without difficulty in order to want and do the same things; the uniformity of their life took the place of law for them” (CC, 134–35; 3:915).

The Swiss, Rousseau says, were “good and just without even knowing what justice and virtue were” (CC, 134; 3:914–15). But these qualities developed in the Swiss accidentally, as a result of their rough climate. Rousseau begins by praising their simplicity, constancy, and independence, but goes on to explain how they “insensibly” (*insensiblement*) debased themselves by allowing foreign influences to “make them love what they ought to have feared and admire what they ought to have disdained.” They developed a “taste for money” (*le goût de l’argent*), and eventually began to feel “disdain for their station,” which—again, *insensibly*—“destroyed the virtues that were its work” (CC, 135; 3:915).

Corruption is introduced almost imperceptibly as one “taste” is replaced by another. In Rousseau’s presentation, the Swiss are not deliberately corrupted by tyrannical rulers, but rather “insensibly” lead themselves into a state of dependence to which they bring the same good qualities that were said to support their prior independence: valor, fidelity, and national pride. “It was surprising to see them bring to the service of princes the same valor that they had put into resisting them, the same fidelity they had kept for the fatherland” (CC, 135; 3:915). The qualities that were foundational to their independence—qualities Rousseau seeks to cultivate in the Corsicans—were evidently insufficient to secure it. This is, I would argue, due to their unselfconscious quality. Just as human beings in the original state of nature lacked the foresight and imagination to anticipate the pernicious long-term effects of a series of seemingly minor alterations in their environment, citizens who are “good and just without knowing” it experience a similarly “insensible” decline. Rousseau may find decline inevitable, but he also indicates that health and vigor can be prolonged. What is “practical” about *Corsica* is that it gives consideration to how this prolongation might be tended to from within, without perpetual reliance on a semidivine legislator figure.

It is for this reason that Rousseau advises the Corsicans, “It is less a question of becoming different than you are than of knowing how to preserve yourself that way” (CC, 125; 3:903). Moreover, this helps us to make sense of what appears to be a contradiction in Rousseau’s advice with regard to emulating other states. On the one hand, he tells the Corsicans that they “must not draw conclusions from other nations” (CC, 125; 3:903). On the other hand, he devotes considerable attention to extracting various lessons from the example of the Swiss, which he presents to the Corsicans as “the model that you ought to follow to return to your primitive state” (CC, 135; 3:915). In fact, it is immediately following this reference to the Swiss as a

model that Rousseau begins to detail their decline. The Swiss are in one sense a model, and in another sense not. Rousseau believed that they had a good foundation in the form of a strong national character and good moral "taste," but that they lacked the ability to preserve themselves that way. Presumably, then, part of what Rousseau wishes for the Corsicans is precisely this ability to preserve themselves. But rather than promote a static, unreflective conception of civic virtue to anchor that preservation, he suggests that something more is required—something in between completely unselfconscious, simple goodness, on the one hand, and "knowledge" in any theoretical or scientific sense, on the other. As he makes his case for the merits of agriculture, Rousseau distinguishes between "the art of talking about agriculture in a sophisticated way" and "the taste for agriculture" that is characteristic of peasants who "do not know any other life" (CC, 126; 3:904–5). The first is the self-aware but ultimately, on Rousseau's view, empty form of knowledge that one finds in books and academies. His critique of such erudition is a recurring theme throughout his work, most notably in the *Discourse on the Arts and Sciences*. Rousseau generally seems much more favorable toward the untutored "taste" of peasants, but at the same time his analysis of the Swiss example in *Corsica* suggests that something more than an unconscious inclination and goodness is needed.

This "something more" comes out most clearly in Rousseau's discussion of how to fund the government that must support, regulate, and enforce this agricultural economy. Rousseau makes clear that while the prevalence of money in Corsica can and should be drastically reduced, it will not be possible to eliminate it entirely. In part this reflects a pragmatic concession to the fact that "there is some commerce in every country" (CC, 127; 3:905). In accommodating this reality, however, Rousseau does more than simply express the hope that it can be reduced to "so small a thing that it will be difficult for abuses to arise" (CC, 147; 3:929). His argument takes another step. When discussing the means by which the government will collect public revenue, he notes repeatedly that revenue will be collected partly in produce and partly in money. He presents this neither as a temporary measure nor as a grudging compromise. "The receipts of each jurisdiction are farmed out; they are made in kind or in money *at the choice of the contributors*" (CC, 150; 3:933, emphasis added). He reiterates this point about choice a few paragraphs later: "Since private individuals will always be free [*seront toujours libres*] to pay their quota in money or in produce at the levels that will be set every year in each jurisdiction, once the government has calculated the best proportion that ought to be found between these two sorts of quotas, as soon as this proportion is altered it will be in a position to notice this alteration on the spot, to seek its cause and to remedy it" (CC, 151; 3:935). The choice to pay in money or produce is not presented as a temporary or transitional measure; Rousseau says individuals will always be free to choose to pay in one form or the other. To be sure, Rousseau's proposals devote a great deal of attention to steering those choices in the right direction. But

he makes clear that there is a difference between steering and determining or guaranteeing.

What began as a rant against money as something thoroughly pernicious that should be eliminated (or almost eliminated) from the island and replaced by the currency of agricultural produce, now turns into a defense of a necessary “proportion” between produce and money. There is no formula for determining the correct proportion; it is a matter of judgment. “This is the key to our political Government, the only part that requires art, calculations, meditation” (CC, 152; 3:935). It requires art because while one might assume that, given Rousseau’s overall system, the ideal proportion would be as much produce as possible and as little money as possible, it turns out that the ideal proportion is more balanced. “When collections in produce go *beyond their measure* and those in money *do not reach theirs*, this will be a sign that agriculture and population are going well, but that useful industry is being neglected; it will be appropriate to rekindle it a bit out of fear that the private individual, having also become too isolated, too independent, too unsociable will not hold the government highly enough” (CC, 152; 3:935, emphasis added). Moreover, the requisite judgment is exercised not only on the part of administrators in a top-down fashion, but also on the part of the citizens themselves, insofar as quotas are to be paid in kind or in money “at the choice [*au choix*] of the contributors” (CC, 150; 3:933).

There are several points to consider here. First, while the Corsicans are meant to emulate the wintry Swiss by spreading themselves throughout the terrain in a pattern that encourages domestic industry by isolating families from one another, they must also beware of producing too much isolation. On one level, this can be explained, as it is by Jonathan Marks, as Rousseau’s attempt to reconcile a strong collective identity with some measure of individual liberty.¹⁷ But the proportion between social unity and individuality is not the only proportion at issue here. Perhaps even more fundamentally, Rousseau signals another sort of proportion between attachment and detachment—that is, between the passionate attachment to a way of life and certain salutary objects of esteem, and some measure of detachment from them that allows for the exercise of critical judgment. What the Swiss achieved unreflectively or by accident as a result of their wintry climate, the Corsicans must achieve self-consciously by design. Moreover, what it means to approach this task with human art and design (rather than relying on natural forces) is not a matter of applying a strict formula. It requires “art, calculations, meditation” precisely because the desired state of affairs is dynamic and affected by ongoing considerations of time and place. Attending to time and place is not something a legislator does once and for all, erecting a static social culture designed to persist

¹⁷Jonathan Marks, *Perfection and Disharmony in the Thought of Jean-Jacques Rousseau* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 77–78.

unwaveringly through time until friction slowly alters its course. Whereas a building is a fixed entity, a living culture is and must be constantly reproduced as the result of myriad human choices. Rousseau's language draws attention to this ineradicable instability when he emphasizes the importance of having individuals choose whether to pay in money or in produce. To seek to eliminate all potential instability in order to guard against the possibility of incremental change and corruption is to render a culture a lifeless artifact—which itself contributes to decline.

Rousseau's attention to this issue emerges most explicitly in his discussion of the problem of laziness. In discussing the root causes of the vices that threaten to destroy Corsica's capacity for good government and the deleterious effects of Genoese rule, Rousseau briefly mentions the problem of competition and animosity among citizens turned "ceaselessly against each other" (CC, 136; 3:917), and then devotes considerable attention to the problem of laziness. "The discouraged Corsicans abandoned a labor that was not animated by any hope. They preferred to do nothing rather than to fatigue themselves at a pure loss. The laborious and simple life gave way to laziness [*la paresse*]" (CC, 137; 3:919).

Put simply, Rousseau proposes to counter this tendency by ensuring that labor is rewarding. "May their labor easily furnish them with enough to continue to exist, them and their family!" (CC, 138; 3:918). In other words, Rousseau contends that the "hope" of feeding and supporting their family in comfort, rather than the despair of laboring only to enrich their masters, will inspire the Corsicans to become industrious cultivators of the land. It is in this context that he insists that they be deprived of the temptation toward any other life, so that they cannot even imagine alternatives that might detract from the charm of their agricultural existence. "Not seeing anything above them, those who carry it on will make it their glory." In the absence of any other path to glory, the citizens' ambitions and desire for individual distinction will be channeled directly into their work of the land. "Not being able to leave this station, one will want to distinguish oneself in it." Rousseau concludes, "As long as the human heart remains what it is such establishments will not produce laziness" (CC, 144; 3:925).

But this puts the matter *too* simply, for while at this point in the text Rousseau seems confident that citizens who are "happy in their mediocrity" will be lively and industrious rather than lazy, he later observes: "Two contrary states cast men into the torpor of laziness. One is that peace of soul that makes one satisfied with what one possesses; the other is an insatiable longing that makes one feel the impossibility of satisfying it. The one who lives without desires and the one who knows he cannot obtain what he desires remain equally in inaction" (CC, 154; 3:938). Clearly Rousseau seeks to avoid both of these pitfalls by suggesting the Corsicans can be both content and ambitious, but his resolution of the tension is less tidy than it first appears. On the one hand, the virtual elimination of commerce is designed to keep the agricultural station "happy in its mediocrity" (CC,

143; 3:925), which suggests a certain peace of soul. On the other hand, it is supposed to foster competition for distinction within that station, which implies a certain restlessness. That Rousseau keeps revisiting concerns about the possible threat of laziness suggests that he is just as (or almost as) worried about passive, peaceful acceptance of one's station as he is about the desire to leave one's station.

Rousseau's characterization of the two causes of laziness also sheds light on his oft-quoted remark that "it is better to use fields badly than men" (CC, 143; 3:925). Rousseau acknowledges that the very same structure that is designed to promote an agricultural way of life may introduce factors that actually threaten the agricultural way of life. Specifically, when individual ambition is limited to the agricultural sphere, the desire to distinguish oneself and seek glory in that position will prompt each one to compete to "make larger harvests" than the others (CC, 144; 3:925). This sort of industriousness is, of course, in keeping with Rousseau's goal of promoting attachment to land and family. Copious yields can support large families, which Rousseau, who insists that a healthy population is a growing population, affirms as a positive development—to a point. But "every people of cultivators multiplies" and finally "multiplies so strongly that the land is no longer sufficient for it" (CC, 128; 3:907). Rousseau thus warns against unfettered agricultural production. But this is not simply a matter of mandating smaller yields ("using fields badly") as a way of controlling population growth. Here again, as in the collection of public revenue, "every cultivator can and ought to make this choice in his land and each parish or community in its communal goods" (CC, 143; 3:925).

What it means to use the fields "badly," then, is not simply a matter of undercultivating them; neither is using the fields "well" strictly a matter of increasing production. There are, Rousseau implies, better and worse ways of using fields badly (and the Genoese did it poorly). Both modes share similarities when it comes to short-term effects. What is required is the judgment to discern what "badly" and "well" mean relative to a particular population that is necessarily in flux as it interacts with and responds to its own mode of production. Thus even the legislator who wishes to attend to time and place in making proposals cannot prescribe a fixed rule or formula, even if such a rule is tailored to a particular population—because a population, Rousseau emphasizes, fluctuates over time, even when it is robustly engaged in activities conducive to civic virtue. There is a tension between his principle that a population should remain what it is, and his principle that it should grow in size, since the very things that support increased population introduce factors that alter the culture. By drawing attention to the question of how a population reproduces itself (in terms of numbers) over time, and the challenges of stabilizing that growth, Rousseau indirectly addresses the challenge of how a population reproduces and maintains its values and sensibilities over time.

What is called for, then, is not a universal rule to be applied unreflectively in every case, but rather a guiding principle that must “attend to time and place” in the sense of taking into account not only immediate but also long-term effects. Conditioning by means of careful institutional and economic arrangement is not, by itself, sufficient to address the long term. “The success of the first foundation will make change necessary afterwards” (CC, 128; 3:906–7). Because these effects are not entirely predictable, part of what it means to anticipate and attend to them is to make room for the exercise of judgment on the part of the people. This entails some degree of alienation, which may pose a risk to social cohesion and the virtue of simple souls, but Rousseau suggests that it is a risk that any healthy, well-governed community cannot do without, over the long term.

Once Rousseau introduces the principle of “using fields badly,” the problem of laziness resurfaces.

It will be feared, I fear it, that this economy might produce an effect contrary to the one that I expect from it, that instead of stimulating cultivation it might discourage it, that the settlers, having no demand for their produce, might neglect their labors, that they might limit themselves to subsistence without seeking abundance, and that satisfied with harvesting what is absolutely necessary for themselves, they might moreover leave their lands fallow. (CC, 143; 3:925)¹⁸

It may be argued that this simply reflects Rousseau's aspiration to achieve the deepest form of manipulative conditioning, operating at the level of will-formation. However, a better understanding of the complexity of what he means by attending to “time and place” can be illuminating on this very point. Neither love of the land, as a positive motivator, nor the absence of

¹⁸In *Considerations on the Government of Poland* Rousseau similarly addresses the possibility that his proposed reforms could have the opposite effect to what he intended—in the case of Poland, that his proposed graduated system of public advancement (which appeals to ambition and self-interest in order to redirect these toward the public good) might inadvertently further entrench corruption by rewarding those who feign public-spiritedness. Rousseau takes seriously the possibility of fraud (GP, 225, 233–34; 3:1022, 1033), and although his proposed system contains some institutional safeguards, the risk nevertheless remains that those who only *seem* to be public-spirited could play the system. Ultimately, the only check on the advancement of corrupt individuals is the public's correct evaluation of them. In other words, the only *real* means of reviving Poland's republican virtue is to cultivate the people's capacity for judgment. There is no institutional mechanism that can substitute for this exercise of judgment or operate correctly in its absence. What Poland needs, Rousseau argues, is “an entire order of citizens who could not be easily fooled or corrupted” (GP, 235; 3:1035). For a more detailed discussion of this point and the broader theme of citizenship and judgment in *Poland*, see my “Realism, Rhetoric and the Possibility of Reform in Rousseau's *Considerations on the Government of Poland*,” *Polity* 42, no. 3 (2010): 377–97.

any alternative, as a disincentive, can reliably produce Rousseau's desired outcome, because either can inadvertently lead to the opposite outcome, even when (perhaps especially when) the conditioning is thorough and seamless. Unchecked, positive motivation can lead to overpopulation, and the lack of avenues for advancement (even for one's family, owing to the law of inheritance) can lead to laziness. In order to avoid these negative outcomes, consideration of the long-term effects is necessary on the part not only of the legislator, but also, to some degree, on the part of the citizens. Rousseau suggests that the reproductive practices of discrete family units can be managed but not determined. Even in the city-in-speech of Plato's *Republic*, which Rousseau knew well, the attempt to control this aspect of the citizens' lives (to the point of assigning mating partners and disallowing families) founders despite the philosopher-kings' best efforts to control it; what sets in motion the decline of the *kallipolis* is "irregular intercourse." Rousseau suggests several mechanisms for managing the size of population, but when one follows the thread of his suggestions, they lead back to the self-regulation of the family unit and the choices made by "every cultivator."

Knowing How to Preserve

Rousseau's discussion of the importance of restoring an agricultural economy in Corsica navigates a middle course between the vain "art of agriculture" that one finds in books and academies, and the unreflective "taste" for agriculture that he attributes to the Swiss. It also navigates a middle course between what he identifies as the two "springs" of human conduct: pleasure and vanity. Genuine pleasure, he argues, is unselfconscious. Whenever pleasure is accompanied by the desire to show it off, it is no longer pleasure but "ostentation," or a species of vanity. "True pleasure is simple and peaceful" and "the one who tastes it *belongs completely to the thing*; he does not amuse himself by saying, 'I am having some pleasure'" (CC, 153–54; 3:937, emphasis added). Vanity, by contrast, is externally directed in that it takes its bearings not from the thing itself but from opinion. The one is an experience of being utterly "inside" oneself and one's experience, whereas the other causes one to view oneself through the eyes of others. Neither is a sound basis for civic virtue. Rousseau then identifies a third category: pride. Pride seems at first to be a simple redirection of vanity toward collective rather than individual ends. But pride, too, can be problematic, and can lead to the desire to expand one's territory. As Jeffrey Smith observes, while pride is preferable to vanity, "it is also desirable that national pride should wane, so that it does not become an end in itself."¹⁹ I have shown that this is the case with regard to peaceable contentment and "satisfaction with one's station" as well. In each instance, belonging "completely to the thing," or giving

¹⁹Smith, "Nature, Nation-Building, and the Seasons of Justice," 24n10.

oneself over to it unselfconsciously, is something Rousseau both praises as a necessary anchor to a healthy society and, at the same time, indicates is insufficient. It must be supplemented by some degree of awareness of how to preserve the positive aspects of the passion and mitigate the negative. Once a healthy culture is formed, it must unselfconsciously remain what it is, and actively and consciously affirm what it is. To the extent that Rousseau emphasizes the exercise of choice on the part of the citizens, he suggests that the conscious direction and preservation of this passionate attachment over time cannot be restricted to the artifice imposed by an external lawgiver.

We can look to some passages in *Emile* for clarification of this idea of preserving oneself as one is, or staying in place. Rousseau links the possibility of human freedom to the acceptance of our place in the order of things. Increasing our desires and aspirations through expansion of the imagination only hinders our freedom by destroying the equilibrium between desires and faculties that allows us to be free of dependence on others. Consequently, we should restrict ourselves to a very narrow, simple sphere of existence, within which equilibrium is possible. "Let us measure the radius of our sphere and stay in the center like the insect in the middle of his web; we shall always be sufficient unto ourselves; and we shall not have to complain of our weakness, for we shall never feel it" (*E*, 81; 4:305). However, as Rousseau continues his discussion of human wisdom and its relation to happiness, he leaves behind the image of an insect caught in its own web, and introduces a reflective dimension. While he continues to advise man to "remain in the place which nature assigns to you in the chain of being" (*E*, 83; 4:308), he also notes that the wise man "knows how to stay in his place" (*E*, 84; 4:310). Unlike the insect, who remains in place by instinct or incapacity, or natural man, who lacks the foresight and experience to understand the consequences of leaving it, the wise man possesses an understanding of his distinctive place in the chain of being and of how to maintain it. Rousseau contrasts this wisdom not only with the simplicity of other animals, but with that of the human child, who "does not know his place [and] would not be able to keep to it" (*E*, 84; 4:310). Unlike the child, whose equilibrium and thus happiness must be maintained by an external force (in this case, the tutor), the wise man must possess, in addition to an equilibrium of desires and faculties, some faculty that allows him to reflect on and maintain that very equilibrium. This is likely to involve the "superfluous" faculties that, Rousseau laments, tend to serve as instruments of unhappiness rather than happiness. The issue becomes not whether this superfluity can be severely curtailed or even avoided altogether in favor of perfect equilibrium, but whether it can be harnessed and directed to serve the cause of happiness rather than unhappiness. This in turn raises the question of how the child held to one standard becomes the adult held to a very different standard. How does one *learn* to stay in one's place if one has always been *made* to stay in one's place?

Rousseau raises this question with regard to peoples as well. In the *Discourse on Political Economy*, for example, after extolling the virtues of a

centralized, extremely parochial civic education that molds the citizens from birth to consider themselves only in terms of their patriotic duties, Rousseau remarks that citizens should one day become the “fathers of the fatherland whose children they will have been for so long” (*PE*, 156; 3:261). This raises a question Rousseau leaves unanswered in the *Political Economy*: How will children subjected to such a narrow civic education, conditioned to possess an unreflective attachment to the “mother” state, suddenly stop behaving like obedient children and become the “fathers”? To do so, they cannot simply be the products of this education. They must develop some degree of appreciation for its principles and purposes, in order to adapt these to changing circumstances over time. As a result, they must become conscious of its artful quality—without, however, losing their passionate attachment, which must be engraved on their hearts.

Rousseau merely hints at this issue in the *Political Economy*, but in *Emile* he confronts directly the question of what it means to “grow up” in the sense of overcoming reliance on an external educative authority and making an authoritative perspective one’s own. Of course, *Emile* is not raised to be a citizen (or at least not along the lines of the fervently patriotic model of the citizen that appears in Rousseau’s explicitly political works), but many commentators have noted the parallel between the artifice employed by the figure of the tutor and that employed by Rousseau’s lawgiver.²⁰ What is often taken to be the climactic moment in *Emile*’s education in terms of his development of autonomy is a moment in which the pupil “chooses” to submit to his tutor’s authority and asks to be forced to be free so that he can remain what he has been made to be (*E*, 325; 4:651–52). The question of whether this internalization signals the achievement of autonomy or rather the deepest captivity of the will has been the subject of long-standing debate. “The relation of will to authority—of autonomy to educative ‘shaping’—is one of the most difficult problems in Rousseau.”²¹ But it is important to note that Rousseau does not present his imaginary pupil’s willing submission in a wholly uncritical light. The tutor responds, “Young man, you make difficult commitments lightly. You would have to know what they mean in order to have the right to undertake them” (*E*, 326; 4:652). To “know” them is neither a matter of acquiring theoretical knowledge of principles, nor a matter of simple unreflective “taste.” It does, however, require that one take on, to some degree, the perspective of the educative authority. This implies a necessary development or movement that is reflected in the rhetorical movement of Rousseau’s narration of this scene. He begins by announcing that he will “engrave” the

²⁰Parallels between *Emile* and the people, and also between the tutor and the political legislator, are frequently drawn. See, for example, Arthur M. Melzer, *The Natural Goodness of Man: On the System of Rousseau’s Thought* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990), 241–52.

²¹Patrick Riley, “Rousseau’s general will: Freedom of a particular kind,” in *Rousseau and Liberty*, ed. Wokler, 8.

memory (*E*, 321; 4:645) of his guidance on his pupil's heart, but shortly thereafter distinguishes between a child's understanding based "only" in memory, and a mature young man's superior understanding, which is grounded in "judgment" (*E*, 327; 4:654). The step of engraving on men's hearts cannot be dispensed with (and the engraving should never be effaced), but neither is it sufficient over the long term.

The question becomes what, exactly, is being internalized. If it is simply the conditioned effects of a series of deceptive and manipulative arrangements, then it would be fair to say that Rousseau seeks to circumvent judgment altogether. If, however, what must be internalized is, in part, the perspective that informed the design of those arrangements, then the notion that the children become the fathers becomes more meaningful. In the case of *Emile*, Rousseau refers to the need for a "new instruction" appropriate to maturity rather than childhood, one that discloses much of the tutor's art in providing an account of the pupil's education (*E*, 318; 4:641). The tutor advises his pupil, going forward, to always demand an account of the elder's reasoning (*E*, 326; 4:653). It is debatable whether *Emile* ever lives up to this standard (perhaps he does so only in the unfinished sequel to *Emile*, *Emile and Sophie or the Solitary Ones*), but this is clearly the standard Rousseau sets.²²

We see Rousseau apply this standard to peoples as well, albeit more tentatively. In *Considerations on the Government of Poland*, for example, even as Rousseau prescribes a rigorous lifelong program of civic education designed to produce citizens who are patriotic "by inclination, by passion, by necessity" (*GP*, 179; 3:966), he also advises the reformers to make their designs public (*GP*, 239; 3:1040), which suggests that in Rousseau's view the legislative art is not always or entirely deceptive, and that its effects are not meant to take hold in a purely unconscious way.²³ Finally, in the *Social Contract*, Rousseau not only states that the legislator must attend to considerations of time and place, but also states that the people (to whom he has just referred as a "blind multitude") must "be shown [*il faut ... rapprocher à ses yeux*] how to assimilate considerations of time and place" (*SC*, 154; 3:380). Rousseau's way of dealing with the problem of the multitude's blindness is not simply to substitute a different, more advantageous blindness that supports unreflective virtues, but rather to bring before their eyes factors initially discerned by the legislator.²⁴ We do not see this happen in the *Social Contract*, but of course in that work Rousseau considers men as they are, not as they might be.

²²I have argued elsewhere that *Sophie* may exemplify this standard (and the tensions that inhere in it) even more than *Emile* does. See my "Reconsidering the Role of *Sophie* in Rousseau's *Emile*," *Polity* 40, no. 3 (1998): 607–26.

²³See Ruth Grant, *Hypocrisy and Integrity*, 126.

²⁴The necessity of incorporating, to some degree, the legislator's perspective into the people's perspective is alluded to by Affeldt in his analysis of Rousseau's notion of forcing to be free. Affeldt argues that because the general will cannot be static but must be continuously reconstituted, the people cannot be a passive unreflective

While at times Rousseau's rhetoric suggests that it is the task of the legislative art to "fix" or secure the people's passions and attachments in such a way as to capture the will and disable their critical capacities,²⁵ at other times he draws attention to the limits of any attempt to exert such complete control. The problem is not simply that the effect of such efforts will wane over time, but that even at its apex such conditioning is not as secure as it may appear. Indeed, insofar as it renders the citizens passive artifacts of their conditioning, even the deepest conditioning can produce an effect that is the opposite of what is intended, once brought into contact with the inevitable vagaries of time.

In the *Political Economy*, Rousseau advises those who wish to create virtuous citizens to "start by making them love their fatherland" (*PE*, 152; 3:255). But this beginning is just that: a starting point.²⁶ Love of the fatherland is indispensable, but by itself it is not sufficient to withstand the challenges of time, because these challenges can, in part, stem from love of country gone awry—becoming either complacent or imperialistic. Rousseau tends to downplay this difficulty in his theoretical works, but acknowledges it in more "practical" or applied works such as *Plan for a Constitution for Corsica*, which give greater attention to considerations of time and place.²⁷ In the course of comparing and contrasting his proposed system for Corsica with the salutary arrangement of the Swiss, on the one hand, and the ill-founded policies imposed by the Genoese, on the other, Rousseau reveals the hidden deficiencies of *both* models of attachment to the land. While initially the unreflective, simple virtue of the Swiss seems the perfect model for the Corsicans to emulate, it soon becomes clear that their unreflective goodness is precisely what allows corruption to creep in, "insensibly." Passionate attachment to the fatherland is, for Rousseau, the foundation of civic virtue and the *sine qua non* of good government, but it is also implicated in his notion that the state carries within itself the cause of its demise.

herd. Affeldt adds, "To anticipate a line of thought that moves beyond the scope of this article, the function that this engagement places on each citizen aligns the work of citizenship with the work of Rousseau's legislator" (Steven G. Affeldt, "The Force of Freedom: Rousseau on Forcing to Be Free," *Political Theory* 27, no. 3 [1999]: 314). I pursue this line of thought in my reading of *Corsica*.

²⁵For a reading that emphasizes this side of Rousseau, see Bryan Garsten, *Saving Persuasion: A Defense of Rhetoric and Judgment* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2006).

²⁶Similarly, in *Emile*, when embarking on the final stage of Emile's education Rousseau states, "I shall *begin* by moving his imagination" (*E*, 323; 4:648, emphasis added).

²⁷I trace a similar pattern in *Considerations on the Government of Poland* in "Realism, Rhetoric, and the Possibility of Reform."

By offering recommendations designed to preserve choice and combat complacency and laziness, Rousseau signals the limitations of any attempt to produce social cohesion purely by manipulation of passions and a restricted imagination. Rousseau's goal for the Corsicans is not simply the replacement of one unreflective attachment (to money) with another (to the land). Although much of his rhetoric suggests that a social and economic arrangement that permits no other options—an enforced blindness toward the temptations of commerce—will necessarily produce the positive moral results he associates with rural life and republican virtue, he also indicates that selective blindness may be ultimately insufficient, since it may inadvertently produce laziness and apathy born of contentment, or allow corruption to be “insensibly” introduced. These negative tendencies can only be countered by the cultivation of a perspective that is *unconditioned* enough to adjust to change over time. The Corsicans must not simply remain as they are, but must know *how* to preserve themselves as they are. Ultimately, the tension between passionate attachment and conscious reflection is strategically and necessarily preserved, rather than circumvented or resolved, by Rousseau's art of legislation.