

EMILE, OR ON EDUCATION: A PSYCHOPEDAGOGICAL APPROACH TO ROUSSEAU'S WORK.

ERIK OBIOL ANAYA

UNIVERSIDAD DE SAN MARTÍN DE PORRES, PERÚ EMAIL: eobiola@usmp.pe, ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3513-5592

PAMELA NIEVES PEÑA

UNIVERSIDAD NACIONAL DE TRUJILLO, PERÚ EMAIL: pnieves@unitru.edu.pe, ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0002-4270-110X

SUMMARY

Like a plant, each human being has a root from which derives that knowledge that arises and grows little by little until it is founded in the deepest part of our being. As thinking beings, we know that the origin starts from a whole and at the same time a whole starts from an origin; then, this small seed called reason arises within us that sprouts in each person as something innate, something that is there and prevails inert to develop with each life lesson. This nature that shapes us must be molded in each step we take, and thus each decision that is made must mean progress for man. Like a blank page, our memory remains empty unless something is marked on it, which is why, through experience, man embarks on a path that introduces him to the world of knowledge, a world that exposes him to understand what surrounds him and discover new things. However, the knowledge that is acquired should not remain as something fleeting, it should be maintained and grow as another root. And so it is that the human being takes the route of "learning", which is nothing more than a way of understanding the world and putting into practice what we know through the interaction of reason and experience.

Keywords: Learning, education, knowledge.

INTRODUCTION

In the floating world in which we live, the human species has been undergoing changes since its origin, evolving not only in bodily matters but also in that formation of its "rationalization" that helped it to survive and stay on its feet until today. Man, in the beginning, was forced to "learn" in order to survive and in turn forced to face the unknown, but that is already very different from now, before the only rival was the recondite and now it is that which lies in full light but corrupts our mind. Society and man remain in an interactive and discordant relationship, where we depend on it to know, but it also corrupts us. Therefore, the knowledge that is acquired must be filtered with the dispositions of society and in this way, be able to preserve the ideas that arise in each one.

Knowledge goes like a current, it is not something new to know that in everything that surrounds us there will always be something new to know. Regardless of the size of our world, man will remain in constant interaction with his surroundings. But how does man access knowledge? And if he agrees to that, what do you do to retain him? The human being is a social being, he is a rational being, he is a being who thinks. And it is for this very reason that experience is the main determinant for his knowledge. It is necessary to learn, and there is no better method than through education, which will allow the development of all the capacity and ability that a person has to become a free and thinking citizen.

Human existence is something fascinating, you are born a small creature who has no idea what is happening in your environment, you are not yet aware of your own existence, but part of your nature knows what you need. Along with him an innate purity is born, which frees him from that perversity that soils thought and



darkens the soul. Since nature is the source of purity and goodness, man also acquires this, and from birth he possesses it as the most extraordinary gift. This goodness being a genuine element, this small being must remain strong to face the darkness that hides humanity and be able to use reason as its main guide.

Man is born good by nature, but it is his interaction with society that corrupts him and leads to decadence. The relationship between the individual and society is direct, man is in constant contact with other thinking beings, but many of them are subject to a system that takes ignorance as its head. It is for this reason that the reasonable mind must be exercised according to the knowledge that provides the truth of things. The solution to this is nothing more than "Education", which will mean the primary source of learning, by which man will find reason for everything and from the time he is a child he will mold his behavior towards what is right.

Throughout history, mention can be made of numerous characters who sought the freedom of man in the face of the corruption of his political system, but without a doubt, none equals the legacy left by Jean-Jacques Rousseau in modern life. This philosopher born in Switzerland, was in the period of enlightenment, a moment in which this European philosophical movement began that sought to free man from ignorance and base himself on reason to explain the reality of the world. In his work "Emile or Education", Rousseau proposed the best solution to escape from the oppression of society, which is how he proposes those educational elements that make up the ideal of man's education. It is in this work that he exposes the aspects that must be taken into account in each of the stages of a child's development in the way that his or her own human nature requires. Considering these points, a philosophical notion is offered that goes beyond people's thinking, but transcends towards the behavior that they must comply with in order to be moral and correct. "Emile or of Education" not only represents a philosophical work, but is also considered a pedagogical novel par excellence of the eighteenth century, characterizing this stage of history as the century of education due to its theoretical dimensions and practical schemes. It is important to take into account the way in which Rousseau revolutionizes the concept of education, since what he offers is a more up-to-date idea of childhood, which considers different peculiar features of thought and in the same way the application of a moral teaching that evidences the presence of duties and truth in everything.

In this way, this essay will focus on giving an analytical point of view on different aspects that Rousseau's philosophy addresses within his work "*Emile or Education*". The work is divided into 5 "books" that are assigned according to the different stages of development of a person, such as childhood, adolescence and also the bases of the "ideal woman". Within this essay, a synthesis of the most outstanding elements in each of the chapters of the work will be made, considering mainly those most relevant topics and also those that include the moral disposition of humanity, the nature of man, innate goodness and its deterioration, the interaction of thought with society and the ideal educational formation of a child.

DEVELOPMENT

The importance of the context in relation to the eloquent character of the work is a fundamental aspect. That is why, taking as a starting point the events that occurred simultaneously with the realization of the work, it will be possible to know the bases that were considered to prepare it. The eighteenth century was a century of multiple changes in society, philosophy and politics, much of Europe was dominated by an authoritarian supremacy that imprisoned the freedom of the people. The absolutist regime was the one that predominated and highlighted the king as the sole representative of the power granted by divine law. Therefore, the society of that time was subject to what the highest authority dictated and depended on the reforms that it promulgated to survive. Their lives were subordinated according to a law that did not satisfy enough to meet the basic needs of the population, therefore, people only considered important those "indispensable" elements that allowed them to continue living and demanded what they deserved. That is why, due to the government's indifference to the population, education was neglected and became a matter that was not a priority. According to an anonymous booklet entitled "Public Education"; Out of 2 million infants (between 7 and 17 years old), illiteracy reached 90% by 1764. This exposed how the rulers of modern Europe had no interest in education. This can also be argued with the fact that the education of people would mean having a greater development of intellectual capacity so that the population would be more likely to compete against the government when they realize the catastrophe of their actions.

Within this political chaos that did not allow men to be free and civilized, a socio-cultural environment arose called "the crisis of the European conscience" which was nothing more than that intellectual



panorama that predominated in most men where their thought was still dominated by unquestionable sources of authority such as the Christian Bible and the works of classical Greco-Roman authors. Thus, the mentality of society was not yet completely freed from the weight of the medieval tradition (of the Middle Ages), still having a great dependence on what was dictated by the church and being controlled by an egocentric government. Having this panorama in a large part of Europe, enlightenment was born, which promoted an environment of autonomy and freedom of individual reason, so that each person could be instructed according to the truth. This movement will have equality and freedom as principles and likewise, education takes an outstanding role since through it it will be possible to have more contact with the mentality of the people and mold it according to a program that raises the cultural level and wisdom. Thus, in 1762, Rousseau published the exclaimed work "Emile or Education", having as a panorama a total social chaos, but in the same way a new beginning where the Enlightenment will free man and separate him from darkness.

Jean Jacques Rousseau writes this work with Emile as the protagonist, a prototype of a student who will have the necessary characteristics to be able to represent the ideal student and the methods of satisfactory education. The Emile will progress according to what the work progresses, and all the original qualities by nature and by relationship with society will be impregnated in him.

In the first place, within the first book that makes up the work, the initial stage of man's life is addressed: Childhood. In this book Rousseau introduces the general ideas about the relationship that exists between man and education, as well as highlighting the importance of caring for the child at this stage of his life. One of the first points it addresses is the fundamental role played by the mother in the upbringing of the child in this period. To this end, he addresses the mothers mentioning: "... if the author of nature had wanted to entrust it to men, he would have given them milk to raise children." In this way, the philosopher refers to women as those who can be more closely aware of the actions of men and those selected to comply with the upbringing of their children, that is, the first phase of children's education depends on the work that their mother fulfills in that process. Thus, one of the main factors that would contribute to the physical well-being and emotional balance of children in this phase would be the dedication that the mother has in the care and supervision that she has.

Another point taken in this first book is the importance of placing trust in human nature. That nature that originates with birth and that dwells in each one in a way that inevitably develops. To this end, he points out: "Nature incessantly exercises children, hardens their temperament with all kinds of trials, and teaches them very early what sorrow and pain are." This is how he suggests 2 points: The first of them is how life is always surrounded by obstacles that test man's strength, teaching him what pain is since it is necessary to suffer to know the reality of things. In this way, nature puts man under tests which challenge his strength and other qualities, causing him to adapt to almost all kinds of circumstances. As a second point, he tries to explain that at birth the child is free of all defects, vices and evil, and that it is as he develops and begins to relate to the example of the adult who will adhere those attributes in his condition. Therefore, the transfer of these "evils" in the child arises from the adult who is in greater contact with society, who are also in charge of teaching the children.

Thirdly, a large part of the fragments of this first book address aspects that seek to explain what education is and how it originates and develops in the child from the time he is a baby. From the moment we begin to live, our first instruction begins, Rousseau mentions: "We are born with the capacity to learn, but without knowing anything or knowing anything" the human being is born with the faculties to learn, but it is not until his reason is sufficiently reinforced that he can expand his knowledge and put it into practice. The meaning of the word "education" has lost its original meaning since it formerly referred to the concept of "food", implying that education is something as essential in life as food, since without it we cannot grow or prosper. This comparison between the two concepts tacitly clarifies how crucial it is for human beings to be constantly learning about the knowledge they acquire about the world. Thus, Rousseau reaffirms this statement by pointing out that: "Plants are straightened by cultivation, and men by education" which in a few words refers again to how education fulfills that primordial role of forging an intellect that is built by optimizing elements, intensely executing in his mind the ideals that lead him to the truth. As for the origin of this education linked to man, it is stated that it begins from birth: "before speaking and before hearing, one is already instructed" this learning begins with the first voices he pronounces, the child despite not yet having the ability to communicate with words what he wants, resorts through shouts and cries to attract attention so that his needs are met; That is why he cries when he is hot or cold, he cries when he is hungry,



he cries because he is thirsty, since it is the only thing he knows that will allow him to get what he needs. In this way, education is substantial for man, not only because it will strengthen him intellectually and give him the ability to understand things according to the truth, but like a plant it will make him grow and stand upright in the restricted path of life.

One of the ideas that Rousseau specifies in this first book is how the role that society takes does not go beyond being an impediment for man to reach certain knowledge. The philosopher mentions the statement: "The literature and knowledge of our century tend more to destroy than to edify." It makes a direct reference to the context in which he found himself in the eighteenth century, where European man was immersed in the vices of society, distancing himself from everything that made him free; within this context the government was not the only oppressor of man but also the disposition in the face of ignorance. stalling the way out of an outdated mentality to become a renewed one that has freedom and equality as its principles. The fragment refers to how that thought of society only represented a "destruction" since the only thing it symbolized was a limitation for the progress of man, stopping the advance that would make him become free and reasonable. On the other hand, he refers to literature as another destructive factor since basically the main books that were attributed to people were only related to the Christian religion or the Greco-Roman classics, which limited man's possibilities to acquire new objective and equanimous learning. That is why within medieval society the mentality and the sources of learning most direct to man consisted of a detrimental determinant for man's freedom; Teaching was only led by religion, making education an intimate matter of the Church, so that the knowledge obtained would be subject and directed according to what the religious institution deems appropriate. Thus, everything that concerns the medieval context of the eighteenth century was accepted as a factor that slowed down man's advance towards the eves of truth.

Finally, one of the aspects that is most often raised is the importance of the roles of parents in the upbringing of the child. At the beginning Rousseau explicitly states that the mother is directly responsible for the task of watching and being aware of her children, as well as her husband, therefore, the primary function of the child's first educational stage falls on her, being the main preceptor who will help not to divert his knowledge. Likewise, Rousseau mentions the fundamental role played by the father in the development of the child, mentioning: "Whoever cannot perform the functions of a father does not have the right to be one" with this he simply states that there is no excuse for not having a presence in the formation of a child, and that the father must mainly support the family he has formed and part of this is to provide for education to mean support for the intellectual progress of the child.

The second book that makes up the work takes as its protagonist a stage in which the child is already able to interact with the world around him, recognizing through methods such as observation and his own experience what knowledge is. In addition, the "sensations" take an important role for him to know the world more closely. What is special about this section of the work is that the direction that Rousseau takes with respect to the teaching of his Emile turns towards a direction that is based on 2 elements: experimental lessons and freedom of action. With these 2 concepts, it seeks that the child develops his rational capacity independently and gets out of that retention that disposes him to depend on his parents and mentors. Likewise, Rousseau deposits other additional factors within education complementing the path that must be traced to obtain a satisfactory education, these aspects are "Happiness" and self-love that will have an impact on the formation of this. Finally, the essential use of experience as the main method for learning is intensely reaffirmed, detracting from the importance of words and memory, since by none of these will the child be able to know closely what is happening in his environment.

Which method is the most appropriate for the child to access information more directly? According to Rousseau, any type of lesson that is only based on the theoretical should be replaced, that is, that which only stimulates memorization, in this way the strategies used to educate the child should be aimed at complying with what not only makes him retain information, but can process and apply it in his daily behavior. One of the excerpts from the second book states: "Do not give your pupil verbal lessons of any kind; only experience should give them them", clearly expresses how learning should only resort to the teachings offered by the world that is outside of a text or a word. It is reaffirmed that words do not go beyond being concrete terms without value, being stored and forgotten in the child's mind. There is until now a confrontation between the most effective learning methods of which it is considered that children should be educated with lessons that stimulate their capacity for analysis and understanding, however, they start from simple theoretical worksheets and readings that do not penetrate the mind of the student but rather



discourage him, causing him to lose that desire to know more. Therefore, experiential learning must be selected as the most effective mechanism for learning, there is no better way to know than through the lessons of our actions. Through experience, man lives more closely with the novelty, which will be what is deeply impregnated in his mind, leaving a mark not only in his memory, but also in his behavior, putting into practice more often that new knowledge acquired. The link that has been created between observation and experience is what gives shape to the new knowledge, a child will learn to the extent that he has direct contact with the outside, it is useless to have him oppressed and without movement since he will not be able to know beyond a simple idea, therefore, It is important to allow him some freedom so that he can strengthen his reasoning on his own.

Many times the idea is associated that there must be a punishment so that the child learns a lesson and does not perform that action that was wrong again. From this conception Rousseau argues that: "Do not impose any kind of punishment on him, because (the child) does not know what it is to commit guilt, nor do you ever make him ask for forgiveness, because he cannot offend you." The first point that can be inferred is that employing punishments as a method of teaching will not help the child at all. On the one hand, it will instill this fear, which will make the child not perform as he should and be subject to fear of every action he commits. Likewise, punishments are not useful since he is not aware of his acts, the child is still in the process of deciphering and differentiating what is right and wrong, therefore, it would be useless to subject him to punishment for actions of which he is unaware of the error and does not feel any guilt.

Another aspect that must also be taken into account is the relationship between memory and learning through the senses. You are already aware of how memory serves as a store to store the information that is collected when you have contact with the outside world, however, it is also essential to take into account that it is right there where the information is processed, creating a link with what reason provides. In this way, the kind of use that a child gives to his memory does not mean that he is less qualified by the fact that he resorts to books, speeches and conversations to be able to instruct himself, since if he remembers what he heard, observed or spoke he will be able to enrich his memory and optimize his reason. Rousseau, referring to this, mentioned: "everything that comes close to him is the book with which, without thinking about it, he continually enriches his memory until his reason can take advantage of it" While it is true, Rousseau values experience as the main means of learning as a principle, he also takes into account that reunion of information that can be transmitted through a book, and those factors that can generate in the child in his educational process. However, as is already known, within the context of the eighteenth century, books were subject to very strict parameters, with the simple printing of Diderot's encyclopedia in 1751, the church and other political institutions prohibited their distribution since this work would symbolize the reasonable new awakening of society. Thus, if we take into account the medieval context with respect to books, it will be concluded that it was not and was not a totally reliable source (because they came from unquestionable sources) or accessible.

Finally, Rousseau, in the second of the books of the work, proceeds to expose the face of emotion over man's experience. We proceed to locate elements such as freedom, pain, desire and self-love in relation to what dictates the mobility of human life. How is it that those critical points have such a strong impact on man's actions in such a way that the goal of life arises in him: Happiness. In the first place, freedom is addressed, a term that encompasses that human satisfaction with everything that surrounds it, acting as its mind orders it and without falling into what others impose; This use of freedom is what will lead man to experience in his own flesh what happiness means. Rousseau writes: "Before social concerns and laws alter our natural inclination, the happiness of children as well as of men consists in the use of their freedom." Within this fragment it is detailed how the mind is constantly subjected to what society dictates, so that the head puts aside its autonomy and is forced to follow what is accepted by people and rules that have no link with oneself, thus generating a constant state of worry and anguish.

Likewise, freedom is linked to pleasure, we define pleasure as that feeling of satisfaction that exists when doing things. This pleasure is the determining factor that will allow happiness to be achieved in the person, if one has pleasure in acting and thinking, then each new knowledge that comes will be accompanied by new sensations that fill man with peace. "The one who suffers the least sorrows is the happiest, and the most miserable the one who enjoys the least pleasures," it was reaffirmed how pleasure is usually a determinant to achieve full happiness, so that when this factor is absent, man is left under misery. This is how desire is reached, which refers to what one wants to achieve despite all the difficulties that may arise, it is that which man accepts as the main goal to achieve, it is that aspiration that man seeks to achieve in



everything he does. Rousseau affirms that "The person whose faculties were at the level of his desires, would be completely happy", at this point, desire represents more than a pleasure, it becomes something permanent in the state of the person; If a balance is achieved where the desire is at the same level as the other capacities that are possessed, then happiness would be achieved with simplicity, however this is not a simple process, since the human mind is complicated to decipher. And it is that complexity that ultimately causes pain; In order for man to be serene and maintain order in his life, he must reduce the excess of desires, so that in reducing them he will find himself with perfect equality in his faculties and strengths. According to Roseau "Every painful feeling is inseparable from desire", this manifests simply how desire, just as it can cause happiness, can also sink man. Since the link between desire and pain is inseparable, it is sought to explain it with the fact that all desire supposes a deprivation, which distances him from what pleases him and causes satisfaction, that distance is finally what leads man to immerse himself in misery. It is necessary to know pain, since it is only in this way that sensitivity to everyday situations can originate, "Whoever does not know pain, does not know the tenderness of humanity, nor the softness of compassion; nothing moves it; he would not be sociable, he would be a monster among his peers." That monster that is needed refers to the man who, by losing all sensitivity for the other, immerses himself in the evils that make up society. Thus, pain is what will give the person that trait of humanity that he needs to be free and know the truth of the things that surround him.

Finally, the last aspect that will allow man to reach happiness is self-love. This represents the trust that is placed in each one, which arises with people from birth. Rousseau accordingly mentions that "Until reason comes, self-love is the guide", At birth, reason is in constant development, so the love you have for yourself will assume the function of keeping stable all the functions we perform. The importance of self-love lies in the fact that it provides true goodness that must remain intact throughout human life. This individual love is the only factor that leads to happiness and that does not depend on anyone but oneself. Therefore, his goodness is natural and proper to every human being, whoever loses self-love will have lost everything. Thus, considering all the aspects that lead man to happiness, one can only argue that humanity will reach the destination of infinite happiness to the extent that all evil obstacles that provide negativity and limit man's desire are eliminated.

The third of the books exposes to everyone, how that being so small that at first was constantly watched and depended on a guide, now has grown and reached one of the most complex stages that is adolescence, from the age of 12 begins a facet in which the child, now young, it contains in it an exaggerated amount of rational capacity which forms it as a more developed thinking being. Likewise, within this period, the sensations that were previously formed when learning about something new are now transformed into ideas that manage to build concepts of the new knowledge acquired. In this regard, Rousseau values how the student is now capable not only of feeling and thinking but also of reasoning and judging everything he knows. This transition that is imposed turns the child into a reasonable being and guided by education. It has come to shape the way it forms ideas into an information processing system, this being one of the main characteristics of human understanding.

One of the central aspects of the third book is the correct relationship between the educational stages and the age of the student. If it is a child, the appropriate thing to do is to treat him as one and not as if he were a man of society. Rousseau proposed that: "Prepare him for what may be useful to him in another age, but do not talk to him about things whose present use he does not see." Each age has a function and if education does not go according to each of them, then what they learn will not be useful to them in any way. When reaching this stage of adolescence, the young man is often treated as if he already had enough life experience to be considered a man, which is tacitly incorrect since he is still in a period of his life in which he is already able to reason and interact with everything around him. He still needs to be an integral part of society, which represents the greatest challenge of all, because he faces a set of beings different from him, with opposing interests and with selfishness as the main guide of life.

Finally, another point that is developed in book number three is the principle of curiosity as a strategy to reach knowledge. Curiosity is a key element for the person to know more things, that is, the importance of curiosity lies in the fact that it is a means to reach knowledge. Within the stage of adolescence, young people are more likely to have desires and interest in the unknown, that which they have not yet managed to experience. That is why curiosity arises as a tool to try new things that attract the attention of man. Rousseau in the work mentions: "it only develops in proportion to our passions and our lights." By this he means that curiosity depends on the qualities and characteristics that each person has. This is related to his



desires and the search he undertakes to find new experiences that are not necessarily those that are already imposed in a system, but it is about man, through curiosity, being able to increase his knowledge regarding what is new and not yet discovered. In the same way, within this book Rousseau continuously mentions the relationship of desire, pain, self-love and passion in order to achieve authentic happiness, since as it is known, man being in direct contact with society, loses that naïve emotion that characterizes him, therefore, he must be in constant search of what makes him happy. The third book starts with a new educational stage that is adolescence, a period in which things are complicated since the young person is now in a more direct interaction with society and in the same way has greater independence, so the union between the mentor and the student is broken so that he can find knowledge on his own through that flame that motivates him to investigate called "curiosity".

Book number four briefly exposes a very important idea in the whole process of man's development: Sensitivity. The feelings within a person can favor and at the same time harm the man to achieve with what he proposes, therefore, the sensitive part must also go in the direction of what reason dictates. To know the sentimental world, it is only necessary to understand society, which is not moved by empathy but only by selfishness. People become self-centered and believe that everything around them belongs to them, that is why society represents nothing more than a set of people corrupted by a system that deceives them and a cold mentality that does not think beyond itself. The thinking being must move away from it, otherwise he will be subjected to an endless chain of prejudices and complexes. Book number four qualifies the human by his nature which remains until the end with each one but that loses its strength and hides those unpublished elements such as empathy, kindness and self-love.

CONCLUSION

To conclude with this essay, we will gather those ideas that stood out the most in each of the books that make up Rousseau's work "Emile or Education", in addition to taking into account the relationship that has been found between the elements that make up the ideal education and each stage of man's learning. As a first point to highlight, within the first book of the work it is revealed that the first educational stage of the child begins with his birth, so that, only being a baby, this little individual looks for ways in which, by drawing his mother's attention through imprecise movements and constant crying, the basic needs that he requires at that time can be satisfied. Within this period of childhood, the role played by the parents, especially that of the mother, is essential, since the child needs to be in constant contact with his parents since they will be the primary guides of this initial stage. Likewise, it is during this stage that reason begins to develop little by little seeking independence. In the second of the books, the freedom that the child gains by having greater closeness to the world around him is highlighted, so that through experience and observation he can have more access to knowledge. Finally, as for the fourth of the books that make up the work, important aspects are mentioned such as some natural elements of man, mainly modesty and empathy that make up elements that preserve that humanity of man. As a last idea to highlight in this essay, the greatest effectiveness that education can have is to form a rational man, a man who can make use of all his intellectual capacities together and who preserves the natural elements that make him up. "Emile or Education" is more than a philosophical work, it is an art of pedagogy since it not only exposes man as a rational being, but links him with all his natural characteristics. This philosophical treatise between man and nature highlights man for his innate goodness, a virtue that identifies him before everyone. However, the interaction he maintains with the ignorant society will lead him to decadence because he does not have sufficient autonomy and development of his reason, which is why the education and training of man is the ideal solution to stop the spread of darkness and ignorance throughout the world. The formation of Rousseau's Emile finally left us with one of the greatest lessons and that is that education not only trains a man to live in society, but also leads him to the discovery of his own happiness.

REFERENCES:

 Rousseau, J. (1762). Emilio or Education. (R. Viñas, Trans.) Paris: elaleph.com. Retrieved from https://www.heterogenesis.com/PoesiayLiteratura/BibliotecaDigital/PDFs/Jean-JacquesRouseeau-Emilioolaeducacin0.pdf

