

# Rousseau The Social Contract And Other Later Political Writings Cambridge Texts In The History Of Political Thought V 2

Few people can claim to have had minds as fertile and creative as the French philosopher Jean-Jacques Rousseau. One of the most influential political theorists of the modern age, he was also a composer and writer of opera, a novelist, and a memoirist whose *Confessions* ranks as one of the most striking works of autobiography ever written. Like many creative thinkers, Rousseau was someone whose restless mind could not help questioning accepted orthodoxies and looking at matters from novel and innovative angles. His 1762 treatise *The Social Contract* does exactly that. Examining the nature and sources of legitimate political power, it crafted a closely reasoned and passionately persuasive argument for democracy at a time when the most widely accepted form of government was absolute monarchy, legitimised by religious beliefs about the divine right of kings and queens to rule. In France, the book was banned by worried Catholic censors; in Rousseau's native Geneva, it was both banned and burned. But history soon pushed Rousseau's ideas into the mainstream of political theory, with the French and American revolutions paving the way for democratic government to gain ground across the Western world. Though it was precisely what got Rousseau's book banned at the time, the novel idea that all legitimate government rests on the will of the people

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is now recognised as the core principle of democratic freedom and represents, for many people, the highest of ideals.

Censored in its own time, the *Social Contract* (1762) remains a key source of democratic belief and is one of the classics of political theory. It argues concisely but eloquently, that the basis of any legitimate society must be the agreement of its members. As humans we were 'born free' and our subjection to government must be freely accepted. Rousseau is essentially a radical thinker, and in a broad sense a revolutionary. He insisted on the sovereignty of the people, and made some provocative statements that are still highly controversial. His greatest contribution to political thought is the concept of the general will, which unites individuals through their common self-interest, thus validating the society in which they live and the constraints it imposes on them. This new translation is fully annotated and indexed. The volume also contains the opening chapter of the manuscript version of the *Contract*, together with the long article on *Political Economy*, a work traditionally between the *Contract* and Rousseau's earlier masterpiece, the *Discourse on Inequality*.

"Man was born free, and he is everywhere in chains"

These are the famous opening words of a treatise that has not ceased to stir vigorous debate since its first publication in 1762. Rejecting the view that anyone has a natural right to wield authority over others, Rousseau argues instead for a pact, or 'social contract', that should exist between all the citizens of a state and that should be the source of sovereign power. From this fundamental

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premise, he goes on to consider issues of liberty and law, freedom and justice, arriving at a view of society that has seemed to some a blueprint for totalitarianism, to others a declaration of democratic principles. For more than seventy years, Penguin has been the leading publisher of classic literature in the English-speaking world. With more than 1,700 titles, Penguin Classics represents a global bookshelf of the best works throughout history and across genres and disciplines. Readers trust the series to provide authoritative texts enhanced by introductions and notes by distinguished scholars and contemporary authors, as well as up-to-date translations by award-winning translators. With splendid new translations, these four major works offer a superlative introduction to a great social philosopher whose ideas helped spark a revolution that has still not ended. Can individual freedom and social stability be reconciled? What is the function of government? What are the benefits and liabilities of civilization? What is the original nature of man, and how can he most fully realize his potential? These were the questions that Jean-Jacques Rousseau investigated in works that helped set the stage for the French Revolution and have since stood as eloquent expressions of revolutionary views, not only in politics but also in such areas as personal lifestyles and educational practices. Rousseau's concepts of the natural goodness of man, the corrupting influence of social institutions, and the right and the power of the people to overthrow their oppressors and create new and more responsive forms of government and society are as

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richly relevant today as they were in eighteenth-century France. Includes: The Social Contract Discourse on Inequality Discourse on the Arts and Sciences “The Creed of a Savoyard Priest” (from Emile)

The Social Contract & Discourses by Jean Jacques Rousseau. Philosophy and Theology. Translated with Introduction by G. D. H. Cole. Jean-Jacques Rousseau (28 June 1712 – 2 July 1778) was a Genevan philosopher, writer, and composer of the 18th century. His political philosophy influenced the French Revolution as well as the overall development of modern political, sociological, and educational thought. Rousseau's novel Emile, or On Education is a treatise on the education of the whole person for citizenship. His sentimental novel Julie, or the New Heloise was of importance to the development of pre-romanticism and romanticism in fiction. Rousseau's autobiographical writings — his Confessions, which initiated the modern autobiography, and his Reveries of a Solitary Walker — exemplified the late 18th-century movement known as the Age of Sensibility, and featured an increased focus on subjectivity and introspection that later characterized modern writing. His Discourse on the Origin of Inequality and his On the Social Contract are cornerstones in modern political and social thought. He argued that private property was conventional and the beginning of true civil society. Rousseau was a successful composer of music, who wrote seven operas as well as music in other forms, and made contributions to music as a theorist. As a composer, his music was a blend of the late Baroque style and the emergent Classical fashion,

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and he belongs to the same generation of transitional composers as Christoph Willibald Gluck and C.P.E. Bach. One of his more well-known works is the one-act opera *Le devin du village*, containing the duet "Non, Colette n'est point trompeuse" which was later rearranged as a standalone song by Beethoven. During the period of the French Revolution, Rousseau was the most popular of the philosophes among members of the Jacobin Club. Rousseau was interred as a national hero in the Panthéon in Paris, in 1794, 16 years after his death.

(Book Jacket Status: Jacketed) Two works in one volume Jean-Jacques Rousseau was the first, and the most eloquent and versatile, of that extraordinary line of radical modern thinkers who aimed their disenchantment at the very roots of the human social order and thereby forever reshaped the way we deal with one another. Of Rousseau's many contributions to the tradition he inaugurated, the one for which he is most revered and that makes these pages glow with conviction is his passionate indignation about anything that trammels individual freedom. This revised edition of G. D. H. Cole's celebrated translation includes an appendix of sections from the first manuscript draft of *The Social Contract* and the passage in Rousseau's novel *Emile* in which he summarizes its argument, along with Cole's original preface, which has itself become a classic. Translated by G. D. H. Cole Revised and augmented by J. H. Brumfitt and John C. Hall

This is an introduction to the critical literature on the classical and social political thinkers Thomas Hobbes,

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John Locke and Jean-Jacques Rousseau.

Jean-Jacques Rousseau's ideas about society, culture and government are pivotal in the history of political thought. His works are as controversial as they are relevant today. This volume brings together three of Rousseau's most important political writings - The Social Contract and The First Discourse (Discourse on the Sciences and Arts) and The Second Discourse (Discourse on the Origin and Foundations of Inequality) - and presents essays by major scholars that shed light on the dimensions and implications of these texts.

Rousseau's Social Contract is a benchmark in political philosophy and has influenced moral and political thought since its publication. Rousseau and the Social Contract introduces and assesses:

- \*Rousseau's life and the background of the Social Contract
- \*The ideas and arguments of the Social Contract
- \*Rousseau's continuing importance to politics and philosophy

Rousseau and the Social Contract will be essential reading for all students of philosophy and politics, and anyone coming to Rousseau for the first time.

The Social Contract, originally published as *On the Social Contract; or, Principles of Political Rights*, is a book in which Rousseau theorized about the best way to establish a political community in the face of the problems of commercial society, which he had already identified in his *Discourse on Inequality*

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(1754). The Social Contract helped inspire political reforms or revolutions in Europe, especially in France. The Social Contract argued against the idea that monarchs were divinely empowered to legislate. Rousseau asserts that only the people, who are sovereign, have that all-powerful right. *Emile, or On Education* is a treatise on the nature of education and on the nature of man. Jean-Jacques Rousseau considered it to be the "best and most important" of all his writings. Due to a section of the book entitled "Profession of Faith of the Savoyard Vicar", *Emile* was banned in Paris and Geneva and was publicly burned in 1762, the year of its first publication. During the French Revolution, *Emile* served as the inspiration for what became a new national system of education.

A lively new translation of Rousseau's best-known work, accompanied by additional political writings "Man is born free, and everywhere he is in chains" are the famous opening words of Jean-Jacques Rousseau's *Social Contract*, a work of political philosophy that has stirred vigorous debate ever since its publication in 1762. Rejecting the view that anyone has a natural right to sovereignty, Rousseau argues instead for a pact—a "social contract"—that should exist among all the citizens of a state and that should be the source of governing power. From this premise, he goes on to consider issues of liberty and justice, arriving at a view of society that has seemed

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to some a blueprint for totalitarianism, to others a declaration of democratic principles. For more than seventy years, Penguin has been the leading publisher of classic literature in the English-speaking world. With more than 1,700 titles, Penguin Classics represents a global bookshelf of the best works throughout history and across genres and disciplines. Readers trust the series to provide authoritative texts enhanced by introductions and notes by distinguished scholars and contemporary authors, as well as up-to-date translations by award-winning translators.

This Critical edition of Rousseau's most important work offers the definitive modern translation of the work itself and complete translations of its two predecessors, Political Economy and the Geneva Manuscript. The text includes an extensive introduction and notes that provide interpretive and biographical information and clarify many previously obscure references in the text.

Rousseau first exposes in Discourse on the Origin of Inequality his conception of a human state of nature, presented as a philosophical fiction and of human perfectibility, an early idea of progress. He then explains the way, according to him, people may have established civil society, which leads him to present private property as the original source and basis of all inequality. Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712 – 1778) was a Genevan philosopher, writer, and



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composer of the 18th century, mainly active in France. His political philosophy influenced the Enlightenment across Europe, as well as aspects of the French Revolution and the overall development of modern political and educational thought. Individualist and communitarian. Anarchist and totalitarian. Classicist and romanticist. Progressive and reactionary. Since the eighteenth century, Jean-Jacques Rousseau has been said to be all of these things. Few philosophers have been the subject of as much or as intense debate, yet almost everyone agrees that Rousseau is among the most important and influential thinkers in the history of political philosophy. This new edition of his major political writings, published in the year of the three-hundredth anniversary of his birth, renews attention to the perennial importance of Rousseau's work. The book brings together superb new translations by renowned Rousseau scholar John T. Scott of three of Rousseau's works: the Discourse on the Sciences and Arts, the Discourse on the Origin and Foundations of Inequality Among Men, and On the Social Contract. The two Discourses show Rousseau developing his well-known conception of the natural goodness of man and the problems posed by life in society. With the Social Contract, Rousseau became the first major thinker to argue that democracy is the only legitimate form of political organization. Scott's extensive introduction

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enhances our understanding of these foundational writings, providing background information, social and historical context, and guidance for interpreting the works. Throughout, translation and editorial notes clarify ideas and terms that might not be immediately familiar to most readers. The three works collected in *The Major Political Writings of Jean-Jacques Rousseau* represent an important contribution to eighteenth-century political theory that has exerted an extensive influence on generations of thinkers, beginning with the leaders of the French Revolution and continuing to the present day. The new translations on offer here will be welcomed by a wide readership of both Rousseau scholars and readers with a general interest in political thought. In *Jean-Jacques Rousseau's Discourses on the Origin of Inequality*, he outlines his own history of the development of human society. He explains in general terms how the differences between social and economic classes arose alongside the formation of modern states. He also explores the means by which these inequalities were actually built into and perpetuated by the foundational notions of modern society and government. Rather than endorse a return to the peaceful ways of pre-modern human beings, Rousseau addresses these inequalities in his seminal work, *The Social Contract*. Rousseau does not see government as an inherently corrupting influence, and he makes very clear and precise recommendations about how the state can and should protect the equality and character of its citizens. A Reader's Guide to one of the most important and influential works of political thought in the history of philosophy.

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A comprehensive 1997 anthology of Rousseau's work containing *The Social Contract*, his most famous single work. A milestone of political science, Rousseau's 1762 work argues that all government is fundamentally flawed and that modern society is rife with inequality. He proposes an alternative system for the development of self-governing, self-disciplined citizens.

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*The Social Contract & Discourses* By Jean Jacques Rousseau Edited By Ernest Rhys Philosophy and Theology Rousseau's *Social Contract* Translated With Introduction BY G. D. H. Cole *Of The Social Contract, Or Principles of Political Right* (*Du contrat social ou Principes du droit politique*; 1762) by Jean-Jacques Rousseau is a book in which Rousseau theorized about the best way to establish a political community in the face of the problems of commercial society, which he had already identified in his *Discourse on Inequality* (1754). *The Social Contract* helped inspire political reforms or revolutions in Europe, especially in France. *The Social Contract* argued against the idea that monarchs were divinely empowered to legislate; as Rousseau asserts, only the people, who are sovereign, have that all-powerful right. The stated aim of *The Social Contract* is to determine whether there can be a legitimate political authority, since people's interactions he saw at his time seemed to put them in a state far worse than the good one they were at the state of nature, even though living in isolation. In this desired social

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contract, everyone will be free because they all forfeit the same amount of rights and impose the same duties on all. Rousseau argues that it is illogical for a man to surrender his freedom for slavery; thus, the participants must have a right to choose the laws under which they live. Although the contract imposes new laws, including those safeguarding and regulating property, a person can exit it at any time (except in a time of need, for this is desertion), and is again as free as when he was born. Rousseau posits that the political aspects of a society should be divided into two parts. First, there must be a sovereign consisting of the whole population, women included, that represents the general will and is the legislative power within the state. The second division is that of the government, being distinct from the sovereign. This division is necessary because the sovereign cannot deal with particular matters like applications of the law. Doing so would undermine its generality, and therefore damage its legitimacy. Thus, government must remain a separate institution from the sovereign body. When the government exceeds the boundaries set in place by the people, it is the mission of the people to abolish such government, and begin anew.

Rousseau: The Social Contract and Other Later Political Writings

"Confessions" is an autobiographical book which covers the first fifty-three years of Rousseau's life, up to 1765. It was completed in 1769, but not published until 1782, four years after Rousseau's death, even though Rousseau did read excerpts of his manuscript publicly at various salons and other meeting places. He wrote of his own life mainly in terms of his worldly experiences and personal feelings. "Emile, or On Education" or "Émile, or Treatise on Education" is a treatise on the nature of education and on the nature of man. Jean-Jacques Rousseau

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considered it to be the "best and most important" of all his writings. During the French Revolution, Emile served as the inspiration for what became a new national system of education. Rousseau seeks to describe a system of education that would enable the natural man he identifies in *The Social Contract* (1762) to survive corrupt society. Emile is scarcely a detailed parenting guide but it does contain some specific advice on raising children. It is regarded by some as the first philosophy of education in Western culture to have a serious claim to completeness, as well as being one of the first Bildungsroman novels.

Seminar paper from the year 2001 in the subject Politics - Political Theory and the History of Ideas Journal, grade: 1 - (A-), University of Wyoming (Department of Political Science), course: Recent Political Thought, language: English, abstract: "Man is born free and, and everywhere he is in chains. One believes himself the other's master, and yet is more a slave than they. How did this change come about? I do not know. What can it make legitimate? I believe I can solve this."<sup>1</sup> Regarding this quoted statement, Jean-Jacques Rousseau's *Of the Social Contract or Principles of Political Right* (in the following referred to as the *Social Contract*) of 1762 tries to explain and solve the problems of the society Rousseau lived in with the idea of a somewhat direct democracy and a radical popular sovereignty. Accordingly, the author's theory is the counterpart to the early liberal Montesquieuian model of a state with a binding constitution, but also to the later classical liberal theories of democracy of John Stuart Mill. In general,

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Rousseau is known as a representative of the concept of direct democracy and as an intercessor of the identity of governors and the governed. Moreover, he pledged for the inseparability of popular sovereignty. <sup>2</sup> Taking this into consideration, Rousseau's Social Contract – although censored and prohibited in his own time – remains a key source of democratic belief and is one of the classics of political theory. His theories were viewed so controversially that they were even publicly burned. So, the Social Contract and Emile or on Education (1762) became victims of the flames.<sup>3</sup> This was, because basically, the Social Contract argues, that “the first and the most important consequences of the principles established so far is that the general will [volonté générale] alone can direct the forces of the state according to the end of its institution, which is the common good.”<sup>4</sup> <sup>1</sup> Jean-Jacques Rousseau: The Social Contract and Other Later Political Writings, edited and translated by Victor Gourevitch, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press (Cambridge Texts in the History of Political Thought), 1997, Book I, p. 41. <sup>2</sup> Manfred G. Schmidt: Demokratietheorien. Eine Einführung, 2. Auflage, Opladen: Leske + Budrich, 1997, pp. 23-24. <sup>3</sup> Merle L. Perkins: Jean-Jacques Rousseau on the Individual and Society, Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1974, p. 239. <sup>4</sup> Rousseau: The Social Contract, Book II, p. 57.

"The Government of Poland is the only finished work in which Rousseau himself dons the mantle of legislator, applying the principles of the Social Contract to the real world around him. Poland teaches us much about the

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mysterious art of the Social Contract's 'legislator, ' how he transforms each individual into part of a larger whole. Only in . . . Poland do we find what this crucial transformation entails and what it presupposes. But probably the greatest lesson to be learned from . . . Poland concerns Rousseau's understanding of the proper relationship between theory and practice. . . . Time and again we see Rousseau advising the Poles to do things which are in gross violation of the strict principles of political right he had elaborated in the Social Contract." --Richard Myers in Canadian Journal of Political Science

Reproduction of the original: The Confessions of J.J. Rousseau by Jean Jacques Rousseau

Rousseau's Social Contract: An Introduction offers a thorough and systematic tour of this notoriously paradoxical and challenging text.

Frederick Watkins' 1953 edition of Rousseau's Political Writings has long been noted for being fully accurate while representing much of Rousseau's eloquence and elegance. It contains what is widely regarded as the finest English translation of The Social Contract, Rousseau's greatest political treatise. In addition, this edition offers the best available translation of the late and important Government of Poland and the only published English translation of the fragment Constitutional Project for Corsica, which, says Watkins, provides the clearest possible demonstration of the practical implications of Rousseau's political thought.

For this edition Susan Dunn has provided a new translation of the "Discourse on the Sciences and Arts"

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and has revised a previously published translation of "The Social Contract".

Locke and Rousseau, if in different ways and different degrees, accepted the idea of the Social Contract: Hume, more historically minded, and more conservative in his convictions, was its critic. His sceptical intellect led him to approach political theories - the theory of divine right as well as the theory of Social Contract, but more especially the latter - with a touch of acid realism, which was mingled with a half-ironical suavity. 'There is something,' he seems to say, 'in your different theories but less, much less, than you think.' This book is highly recommended for inclusion on the bookshelf of anyone with an interest in the history of political philosophy.

In this superb introduction, Nicholas Dent covers the whole of Rousseau's thought. Beginning with a helpful overview of Rousseau's life and works, he introduces and assesses Rousseau's central ideas and arguments. These include the corruption of modern civilization, the state of nature, his famous theories of amour de soi and amour propre, education, and his famous work Emile. He gives particular attention to Rousseau's theories of democracy and freedom found in his most celebrated work, The Social Contract, and explains what Rousseau meant by the 'general will'.

Inspired by ancient Greek city states, Rousseau searched for a way which states of his day could be equally representative. Holding men in wretched subservience, feudalism—alongside religion—was a powerful force in the eighteenth century. Self-serving monarchic social systems, which collectively reduced common people to servitude, were now attacked by Enlightenment philosophers, of whom Rousseau was a leading light. His masterpiece, The Social Contract, profoundly influenced the subsequent development of society and



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remains provocative in a modern age of continuing widespread vested interest. This is the most comprehensive paperback edition available, with introduction, notes, index and chronology of Rousseau's life and times.

The new edition of this comprehensive and authoritative anthology of Rousseau's major later political writings, in up-to-date English translations.

This carefully crafted ebook: "Confessions & The Social Contract" is formatted for your eReader with a functional and detailed table of contents. "Confessions" is an autobiographical book which covers the first fifty-three years of Rousseau's life, up to 1765. It was completed in 1769, but not published until 1782, four years after Rousseau's death, even though Rousseau did read excerpts of his manuscript publicly at various salons and other meeting places. He wrote of his own life mainly in terms of his worldly experiences and personal feelings. In "The Social Contract" Rousseau theorized about the best way to establish a political community in the face of the problems of commercial society, which he had already identified in his Discourse on Inequality (1754). The Social Contract helped inspire political reforms or revolutions in Europe, especially in France. The Social Contract argued against the idea that monarchs were divinely empowered to legislate. Rousseau asserts that only the people, who are sovereign, have that all-powerful right.

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