

**Jean-Jacques
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THE MEANINGS OF "RÉVOLUTION" IN THE WRITINGS OF ROUSSEAU¹

Was Rousseau a revolutionary? The question is still a thorny one. There is no doubt that his writings propose a radical restructuring of society, and that his ideas are sometimes couched in a highly inflammatory style that many Frenchmen, in 1789, took to be an incitement to revolution.² It is still not clear, however, whether he would have condoned such an uprising or if he was anything more than a passive and speculative theoretician.

Although Rousseau was always careful to dissociate himself from revolutionaries, and stressed the fact that revolutions, in the end, bring only new masters for people already accustomed to slavery, not everyone has taken him at his word, especially with regard to his attitude towards Geneva. Michel Launay, for example, in his magisterial study of Rousseau as a political writer,³ sees him as someone who was passionately and actively, though not openly, engaged in the struggle to wrest control from an oligarchy that masqueraded as a republic. The late Ralph Leigh, in his monumental edition of the correspondence, added evidence to support Launay's thesis, particularly for the years 1762-65 when popular unrest challenged the tyranny of the Petit Conseil. Jean Terrasse has shown how, in the *Lettres écrites de la Montagne*, Rousseau identified himself with the cause of the Représentants.⁴ Arthur Melzer, however,

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1. References are to the four-volume Pléiade edition of the *Œuvres complètes* (1959-1969) and to the *Essai sur l'origine des langues*, introduction et notes par Angèle Kremer-Marietti, Paris, Aubier Montaigne, 1974. The edition of the correspondence is R.A. Leigh's *Correspondance complète de Jean-Jacques Rousseau*, Oxford, the Voltaire Foundation, 1965-199?, 53 vols. The spelling has been modernized throughout.
 2. For details of the attitudes of the first revolutionaries towards Rousseau, see R. Barney, *Rousseau dans la Révolution: le personnage de Jean-Jacques et les débuts du culte révolutionnaire (1787-1791)*, *Studies on Voltaire and the Eighteenth Century*, vol. 246, 1986.
 3. *Jean-Jacques Rousseau, écrivain politique (1712-1762)*, Grenoble, ACER, 1971.
 4. "Rousseau, Tronchin et les Représentants: aspects du débat politique à Genève en 1763-1764," *Swiss-French Studies*, vol. II, no. 2, 1981, 58-72. Douglas G. Creighton, *Jacques-François DeLuc of Geneva and his Friendship with Jean-*

has argued that Rousseau's radical doctrines were mainly intended for the monarchies because his revolutionary ideas "could no longer do any harm in an utterly decadent world, and because they might do some good by keeping a spark of freedom alive in despotic Europe, and by slowing the decay of the few remaining republics."⁵

We shall probably never know for certain whether Rousseau was a profound political strategist, a pessimist, a conservative, a utopian, or any of the other labels that have been attached to him over the years. Opinion will doubtless always be divided. It seems worthwhile, however, to study Rousseau's vocabulary, as he invites us to do, and to see if the ways in which he uses the word "révolution" offer some clue to his intentions. The task has been made somewhat easier by the publication of *Le Vocabulaire politique de Jean-Jacques Rousseau*⁶ that forms part of the vast project on the indexes and concordances of Rousseau's works. I am indebted also to several important articles on the use of the word "révolution" in the 17th and 18th centuries.⁷

It goes without saying that my own examination of the word, in a paper of this length, will obviously be incomplete. To do a proper analysis, it would be necessary to examine, in their different contexts, not only the word "révolution" but a whole family of related words such as "guerre," "joug," "pouvoir," "tyrannie," "crise"⁸ and a host of others proposed in the articles referred to above. But perhaps this small offering will be a contribution to an eventual, more exhaustive study.

Jacques Rousseau, University, Mississippi, Romance Monographs Inc., 1982, is also most informative for this period.

5. "Rousseau's 'Mission' and the Intention of his Writings," *American Journal of Political Science*, vol. 27, 1983, 294-320.
6. Published by Michel Launay, Genève, Slatkine, 1977. I have also consulted the *Index des 'Considérations sur le gouvernement de Pologne' et Index-Concordance du 'Projet de constitution pour la Corse'* by Etienne Brunet and Léo Launay, Genève, Slatkine, 1986.
7. Jean-Marie Goulemot, "Le mot *révolution* et la formation du concept de révolution politique," *Annales historiques de la Révolution Française (fin XVII^e siècle)*, oct-déc 1967, 417-444; Michel Launay et Jean-Marie Goulemot, "Tenants et aboutissants d'une recherche sur le vocabulaire de Rousseau et l'histoire des idées au XVIII^e siècle," *Langages*, no. 11, sept 1968, 101-111; Georges Mailhos, "Le mot *Révolution* dans l'*Essai sur les mœurs* et la correspondance de Voltaire," *Cahiers de lexicologie*, vol. 13, 1968-II, 84-93.
8. For a discussion of the relationship between "révolution" and "crise" see Jean Starobinski, *Le Remède dans le mal*, Paris, Gallimard, 1989, pp.180-182.

The first thing to note is that, in the eighteenth century, the word "révolution" had a wide variety of meanings, and that, of the nine meanings given by Littré,⁹ only one had political connotations. The other eight include such meanings as the motion of the heavenly bodies, any circular or spiral movement, the cycle of the seasons, the functioning of machinery, a term in geometry, a term in medicine, changes brought about by natural events, usually catastrophic, and non-political changes in fortune, ideas or opinion.

The ninth meaning of "révolution" corresponds, more or less, to our modern notion of an internal uprising designed to overthrow the régime in power, such as occurred in England in 1688-89, in America in 1775-76 and in France in 1789. According to Jean-Marie Goulemot,¹⁰ the word "révolution," in its modern sense, was used in France during the 17th century but did not gain widespread currency or achieve its full significance until the English revolution cited above. It should be noted, however, that of these three examples, only the French Revolution was really radical in the modern sense, in that its aim was to destroy the class-system and establish a new political and social order based on liberty, equality and, at least at the beginning, fraternity. Before the French Revolution, as Goulemot points out, the purpose of civil wars had been to replace the existing authority with a new one but not to alter the structure of society.

Furthermore, before the French Revolution, the term "guerre civile" was not synonymous with "révolution." In this regard, the dictionary evidence is instructive. Littré supplies a quotation from the *Esprit des lois* where Montesquieu observes that: "Toutes nos histoires sont pleines de guerres civiles sans révolutions; celles des États despotiques sont pleines de révolutions sans guerres civiles." It is quite evident from this quotation that Montesquieu makes a clear distinction between civil war and revolution, and that the latter term, at least in this instance, simply refers to change, to the effect rather than to the cause. It is true that, elsewhere, Montesquieu does use the word "révolution" to refer to internal strife,¹¹ but only in those cases where the uprisings resulted in a decided change as, for example, the wars of Tarquin and his son Sextus

9. E. Littré, *Dictionnaire de la langue française*, Paris, Hachette, 1863-1872, 4 vols. I have used Littré instead of the 1799 or 1835 editions of the *Dictionnaire de l'Académie Française*, because the former is more comprehensive.

10. Art. cit.

11. See the article cited of Launay and Goulemot, 108-109.

and, in more recent times, the dictatorship of Cromwell. A civil war without change, however, is apparently not a revolution.

Of 85 identified occurrences of the word "révolution" (including one of the verb "se révolter") in the writings of Rousseau,¹² we can distinguish six of the classifications proposed by Littré. These are (i) the motion of the heavenly bodies as, for example, the references in the *Premier Discours* to "les révolutions des planètes" (III, p. 18), in the *Lettre à Voltaire* to "les corps célestes [qui] font leur révolution dans l'espace non-résistant" (IV, p. 1066), and in the *Émile* where Rousseau speaks of the time and effort necessary "pour arriver d'une révolution diurne au calcul des éclipses" (IV, p. 433); (ii) the cycle of the seasons is referred to as "Les révolutions des saisons" in the *Essai sur l'origine des langues* (p. 131), as the spectacle of Nature in the *Second Discours*: "C'est toujours le même ordre, ce sont toujours les mêmes révolutions" (III, p. 144), and in the *Émile* as "[les] révolutions du globe" (IV, p. 434), although this example could also be included in the first category; (iii) "révolution" as a medical term is found in the *Confessions* where Rousseau describes some kind of cardiovascular crisis as "une révolution subite et presque inconcevable" (I, p. 227), and in *La Nouvelle Héloïse* where Claire writes to Julie, recovering from an attack of smallpox, of her efforts to prevent Saint-Preux's visit because of "le danger de te causer une révolution" (II, p. 331); (iv) natural catastrophes are presented as "révolutions" in the *Second Discours*: "Des révolutions du globe détachèrent et coupèrent en îles des portions du continent" (III, p. 168). Here Rousseau is following Buffon who, in volume two of his *Histoire naturelle*, writing of the period immediately following the creation of the earth, postulated "une infinité de révolutions, de bouleversements, de changements particuliers et d'altérations sur la surface de la terre." In the same vein, the *Essai sur l'origine des langues* refers to "ces temps reculés où les révolutions étaient fréquentes, où mille accidents changeaient la nature du sol et les aspects du terrain" (p. 133); "Révolution" with the non-political meaning of change seems to be divided into three categories. First, it is used in the old sense of the wheel of fortune to account for the unpredictable vicissitudes of life. In the *Rêveries*, for example, Rousseau bemoans the fact that "toutes les volontés, toutes

12. See Appendix. The list is not exhaustive.

les fatalités, la fortune et toutes les révolutions ont affermi l'œuvre des hommes" (I, p. 1010); and in *La Nouvelle Héloïse*, Julie tells Saint-Preux that once one's soul has been corrupted there is no remedy, "à moins que quelque révolution subite, quelque brusque changement de fortune et de situation ne change tout à coup ses rapports" (II, p. 364). The second category has to do with a change of heart or thought or habits either in the individual or in the community. In the polemics following the publication of the *Premier Discours*, for example, Rousseau recommends that, instead of trying to compare one nation with another, in order to measure the progress of corruption, it is more sensible to study the history of a single nation and to compare "les progrès de ses connaissances avec les révolutions de ses mœurs" (III, p. 76); in the *Confessions*, he reflects on his condition in Turin when the seminary training came to an end: "Il est aisé de juger quelle brusque révolution dut se faire dans mes idées lorsque de mes brillants projets de fortune je me vis tombé dans la plus complète misère" (I, p. 70); in the same work, he attributes his decision not to settle in Geneva to the presence there of Voltaire: "Je compris que cet homme y ferait révolution, que j'irais retrouver dans ma patrie le ton, les airs, les mœurs qui me chassaient de Paris" (p. 396); and in the *Contrat social*, discussing the Roman Comitia, he asks: "Où est le peuple moderne chez lequel la dévorante avidité, l'esprit inquiet, l'intrigue, les déplacements continuels, les perpétuelles révolutions des fortunes puissent laisser durer vingt ans un pareil établissement sans bouleverser tout l'État?" (III, p. 448). The third category refers to the inevitable changes brought about by the passage of time. Obviously, this category has some relation to the first in that vicissitudes are involved, but, in this latter case, Rousseau seems to put the emphasis more on the fact of the inevitability of change than on the change itself. In the *Second Discours*, for example, he characterizes the various stages of the evolution of man from a presocial state to the discovery of metallurgy and agriculture as "les révolutions que le temps amène nécessairement" (III, p. 148); in a note to the *Contrat social*, he praises Calvin as follows: "Quelque révolution que le temps puisse amener dans notre culte, [...] jamais la mémoire de ce grand homme ne cessera d'y être en bénédiction" (III, p. 382); and, adopting Montesquieu's position on the relationship between climate and forms of government, he argues that Nature, in time, inevitably triumphs: "Il y a des exceptions, je le sais; mais ces exceptions-mêmes confirment la règle, en ce qu'elles

produisent tôt ou tard des révolutions qui ramènent les choses dans l'ordre de la nature" (III, p. 416). Indeed, the sobering lesson of the *Contrat social* is that systems of government, like individuals, however good or bad, have their periods of growth, maturity and decline, and that no institution or constitution can resist the dictates and the ravages of nature and time.

Of the use of the word "révolution" to apply to purely political changes there are 35 occurrences of which 21 are employed in the sense of civil war. Some of these refer to recent events such as the struggle for power in Turin at the beginning of the eighteenth century (I, pp. 131 and 176), the revolt of the Corsicans in 1729 (III, pp. 911 and 942), and the uprisings in Russia in 1740-41 that are supposed to account for M. de Wolmar's decision to leave that country (II, p. 349). Other references are to more distant revolutions that, according to Rousseau, must have taken place during the long struggle for political supremacy. In the *Second Discours* he traces "le progrès de l'inégalité dans ces différentes révolutions" (III, pp. 187, 190 and 191). In the *Contrat social*, Rousseau cites a number of notable revolts including the foundation of Sparta by Lycurgus, the overthrow of the Tarquins and, in more recent times, the expulsion of the Spanish by the Dutch and the formation of the Swiss confederation as an independent entity. In the *Émile*, he uses the Roman revolutions as an opportunity to pay homage to the moral force of women: "Toutes les grandes révolutions y vinrent des femmes; par une femme Rome acquit la liberté, par une femme les plébéiens obtinrent le consulat, par une femme finit la tyrannie des Décemvirs, par les femmes Rome assiégée fut sauvée des mains d'un proscrit" (IV, p. 472).

Although Rousseau approves of these uprisings in the name of freedom, he does not entertain the illusion that their benefits are of any lasting value. On the contrary, his position seems to be that civil war serves only to worsen the plight of the people. In the *Second Discours*, for example, he observes that: "Les peuples, une fois accoutumés à des maîtres, ne sont plus en état de s'en passer. S'ils tentent de secouer le joug, ils s'éloignent d'autant plus de la liberté; [...] leurs révolutions les livrent presque toujours à des séducteurs qui ne font qu'aggraver leurs chaînes" (III, p. 113). This attitude is in keeping with Rousseau's general policy of dissociating himself publicly from revolutionary enterprises, whether political or religious, and of consistently portraying himself as a law-abiding citizen of whatever country he inhabits. This is why, in the *Dialogues*, he is so upset that the reputation of being "un promoteur de bouleversements et de troubles" should be attached to "l'homme du

monde qui porte un plus vrai respect aux lois, aux constitutions nationales, et qui a le plus d'aversion pour les révolutions et pour les ligueurs de toute espèce" (I, p. 935). In the *Contrat social*, however, he does prophesy, with what appears to be some satisfaction, that the Russian empire, and eventually the whole of Europe, will one day be overthrown: "L'Empire de Russie voudra subjuguier l'Europe et sera subjugué lui-même. Les Tartares, ses sujets ou ses voisins, deviendront ses maîtres et les nôtres. Cette révolution me paraît infaillible. Tous les rois de l'Europe travaillent de concert à l'accélérer" (III, p. 386).

Of the six instances in which "révolution" is not used to imply civil war,¹³ four refer to the fall of Constantinople that brought an end to the tyranny of Scholasticism and initiated a revolution in the arts and sciences, known as the Renaissance: "Il fallait une révolution pour ramener les hommes au sens commun; [...] Ce fut le stupide Musulman, ce fut l'éternel fléau des lettres qui les fit renaître parmi nous. La chute du trône de Constantinople porta dans l'Italie les débris de l'ancienne Grèce" (III, pp. 6, 101, 102 twice). The other two instances in which "révolution" refers to uprisings not specifically internal in origin, are found in references to the wars between the Greek city-states (III, p. 10) and to the awful possibility of some cataclysm that would result in the demise of Europe. This is envisaged by Rousseau as "quelque grande révolution presque aussi à craindre que le mal qu'elle pourrait guérir, et qu'il est blamable de désirer et impossible de prévoir" (III, p. 56).

It will come as no surprise to Rousseau specialists that these apparently neat and tidy classifications into non-political and political categories break down on closer examination. Rousseau warns us to pay attention to his vocabulary and reminds us that, because of the deficiencies of the French language, he is obliged to use the same word to mean different things.¹⁴

13. In the *Fragments sur la Polysynodie*, Rousseau distinguishes between revolutions caused by internal and external forces: "2 causes générales des révolutions. 1. L'invasion d'une puissance étrangère. 2. L'usurpation d'un sujet devenu trop puissant" (III, p. 650).
14. "J'ai fait cent fois réflexion en écrivant qu'il est impossible dans un long ouvrage de donner toujours les mêmes sens aux mêmes mots. Il n'y a point de langue assez riche pour fournir autant de termes, de tours et de phrases que nos idées peuvent avoir de modifications. La méthode de définir tous les termes et de substituer sans cesse la définition à la place du défini est belle mais impraticable, car comment éviter le cercle? [...] Malgré cela, je suis persuadé qu'on peut être clair [...] non pas en donnant toujours les mêmes acceptions aux mêmes mots, mais en faisant en sorte, autant de fois qu'on emploie chaque mot, que l'acception qu'on lui donne soit suffisamment déterminée par les idées qui s'y rapportent [...]" (*Émile*, p. 345n).

His use of the term "révolution" is no exception. One of the clues to the complexity of the word in Rousseau's vocabulary is found in his observation that: "On trouve souvent dans une bataille gagnée ou perdue la raison d'une révolution qui, même avant cette bataille, était déjà devenue inévitable. La guerre ne fait guère que manifester des événements déjà déterminés par des causes morales que les historiens savent rarement voir" (IV, p. 529). This very important remark reveals that, for Rousseau, the word "révolution," in certain contexts, really implies a kind of change that is superficially political but that is, in a more profound sense, moral. This dual sense of the word is entirely consistent with his conviction that all political questions are fundamentally moral ones. Such is the case in the *Contrat social* where Rousseau argues that even a State administered according to the "volonté générale" must eventually decay because man's self-interest cannot forever be held in check.

Another ambiguity arises with regard to Rousseau's supposed prophecy of the French Revolution. In the *Émile*, he states: "Vous vous fiez à l'ordre actuel de la société, sans songer que cet ordre est sujet à des révolutions inévitables, et qu'il vous est impossible de prévenir ni de prévenir celle qui peut regarder vos enfants. Le Grand devient petit, le riche devient pauvre, le monarque devient sujet; les coups du sort sont-ils si rares que vous puissiez compter d'en être exempt? Nous approchons de l'état de crise et du siècle des révolutions" (p. 468). It would, of course, be possible to interpret this passage, retrospectively, as predicting a violent uprising but, at the time Rousseau penned it, he was clearly thinking of revolution in the non-political sense of the changes effected by a combination of the passage of time, the wheel of fortune, and the periodic crises occasioned by man's inhumanity to man. A similar prediction was pronounced by Voltaire, two years later, in 1764: "Tout ce que je vois jette les semences d'une révolution qui arrivera inmanquablement, et dont je n'aurai pas le plaisir d'être témoin." In this example, Voltaire is referring not to a political revolution but to a revolution in the hearts and minds of Frenchmen that, he fervently hopes, will lead to the overthrow of the Church and the suppression of "l'infâme." This is confirmed by a letter to Voltaire from Frederick of Prussia in which the king, referring to the Church, exclaims: "Quelle révolution! À quoi ne doit pas s'attendre le siècle qui suivra le nôtre![...] Cet édifice sapé par ses fondements va s'écrouler, et les nations transcriront dans leurs annales que Voltaire fut le promoteur de cette révolution qui se fit au dix-huitième siècle dans l'esprit

humain."¹⁵ Finally, Rousseau's remarks in the *Jugement sur la Polysynodie*, unless one takes them as ironic, leave little room for doubt that, in his view, a revolution in France would be counterproductive:

En effet: ce n'est rien moins qu'une révolution dont il est question dans la Polysynodie; [...] il faudrait commencer par détruire tout ce qui existe pour donner au gouvernement la forme imaginée par l'Abbé de St. Pierre; et nul n'ignore combien est dangereux dans un grand État le moment d'anarchie et de crise qui précède nécessairement un établissement nouveau. [...] Qu'on juge du danger d'émouvoir une fois les masses énormes qui composent la monarchie française! qui pourra retenir l'ébranlement donné, ou prévoir tous les effets qu'il peut produire? [...] Que le gouvernement actuel soit encore celui d'autrefois, ou que durant tant de siècles il ait changé de nature insensiblement, il est également imprudent d'y toucher. Si c'est le même, il le faut respecter; s'il a dégénéré, c'est par la force du temps et des choses, et la sagesse humaine n'y peut plus rien (III, pp. 637-638).

A shift of emphasis in the meaning of "révolution" occurs in Rousseau's proposals for the reform of Poland. Discussing the advisability of changing the constitution, he writes: "Il ne serait en ce moment ni prudent ni possible de la changer tout d'un coup; mais il peut l'être d'amener par degrés ce changement, de faire sans révolution sensible, que la partie la plus nombreuse de la nation s'attache d'affection à la patrie et même au gouvernement" (III, p. 1024). Later on, he talks of expanding the franchise, "sans révolution sensible" (p. 1027) and points to "l'avantage inestimable d'avoir évité tout changement vif et brusque et le danger des révolutions" (p. 1028). In the first two cases, Rousseau employs the word to mean political and social change, much as he might have used the word "evolution" as opposed to revolution, if such a use had been available to him at the time.¹⁶ In the third case, however, the reference is clearly to civil war. And the example cited earlier of the revolution that brought about the fall of Constantinople embodies another kind of shift of emphasis in that it refers less to the war than to the subsequent cultural, artistic and scientific revolution that the war brought about.

15. Quoted by Georges Mailhos, art. cit., 84-85.

16. The only 18th-century example offered by Littré of the use of the word to imply political evolution is found in Sterne's *Tristram Shandy* (1760-1767) where, in reply to Shandy's father's use of the word, uncle Toby exclaims: "[...] évolution, qu'est-ce ce mot? — Révolution, j'ai voulu dire, reprit mon père, par le ciel! j'ai voulu dire révolution; évolution n'a pas de sens. — Il a plus de sens que vous ne croyez, repartit mon oncle Tobie [...]."

What can one tentatively conclude about Rousseau's revolutionary tendencies from this brief look at his use of the word "révolution" in a variety of contexts? We have seen that most of his references to revolution as civil war apply mainly to remote but sometimes to more recent successful uprisings that time has rendered, or will render, futile. Only the Corsican revolution still inspired Rousseau with some optimism when he was writing the *Contrat social*: "Il est encore en Europe un pays capable de législation; c'est l'île de Corse. La valeur et la constance avec laquelle ce brave peuple a su recouvrer et défendre sa liberté, mériterait bien que quelque homme sage lui apprit à la conserver. J'ai quelque pressentiment qu'un jour cette petite île étonnera l'Europe" (III, p. 391). However, when France took over Corsica in 1768, Rousseau's last hope for a revolution leading to genuine reform faded, just as his earlier hopes for reform, if not for revolution, in Geneva, had ended in disillusionment.

It is generally accepted that Rousseau, like many of his contemporaries, had a cyclical or spiral view of history.¹⁷ He combined this view with the belief that a return to the golden age of politics, as exemplified by Sparta and the Roman republic at its height, was impossible: "on n'a jamais vu de peuple, une fois corrompu, revenir à la vertu" (III, p. 56). In the light of this attitude, it must have appeared to him that revolutions were inevitable, necessary and pointless. If this is so, the question of whether he was in favour of revolutions is equally pointless. Political changes were probably as natural to him as earthquakes and floods, as unforeseeable as such catastrophes yet, at the same time, as inevitable and almost as predictable as the motion of the heavenly bodies and the cycle of the seasons. Doubtless he would have preferred revolutions without violence but he obviously thought there was little chance of this, at least not in Europe where despotism had reached the stage that historically precedes its downfall, through either external or internal causes.¹⁸ If Rousseau was a revolutionary, he was so, not in an active and warlike sense but rather in the sense of one who wanted to reawaken

17. See, for example, J.Schlobach, "Pessimisme des philosophes? La théorie cyclique de l'histoire au 18^e siècle," *Studies on Voltaire and the Eighteenth Century*, vol. 155, 1976, 1971-1987.

18. "Je tiens pour impossible que les grandes monarchies de l'Europe aient encore longtemps à durer; toutes ont brillé, et tout État qui brille est sur son déclin" (*Émile*, p. 468).

the natural goodness in man, and incite him to try to realize, even if only on an individual basis, and even if only temporarily, his potential for virtue.¹⁹

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19. It is worth noting that, in his *Discours sur la vertu du héros*, Rousseau excludes certain revolutionaries from the category of virtuous men: "Tant s'en faut que la valeur soit la première vertu du héros, qu'il est douteux même qu'on la doive compter au nombre des vertus. Comment pourrait-on honorer de ce titre une qualité sur laquelle tant de scélérats ont fondé leurs crimes? Non, jamais les Catilinas ni les Cromwells n'eussent rendu leurs noms célèbres; jamais l'un n'eût tenté la ruine de sa patrie, ni l'autre asservi la sienne, si la plus inébranlable intrépidité n'eût fait le fond de leur caractère. Avec quelques vertus de plus, me direz vous, ils eussent été des héros; dites plutôt qu'avec quelques crimes de moins ils eussent été des hommes" (II, p. 1266).

I am most grateful to Professor D.W. Smith for his comments on this paper.

Appendix

Classification and Distribution of the Word "Révolution" in the Writings of Rousseau

Motion of the heavenly bodies (3)	Cycle of seasons (3)	Medical term (2)	Natural events (2)	Non-political change (40)	Political change (35)
PD (18) LV (1066) E (433)	E O L (131) SD (144) E (434)	C (227) NH (331)	E O L (133) SD (168)	C (70, 272, 286, 396, 417, 418, 474) R (996, 1010, 1015, 1018, 1076) D (941, 953, 988) DR (76) SD (148, 167, 171 twice) CS (382n, 412, 416, 444, 448) NH (177, 215, 354, 355, 363, 364, 374) E (376, 394, 468 twice, 489, 529, 800) LF (1146)	C (131, 176, 384) D (935) PD (6, 10) RS (56) LL (101, 102 twice) FD (1053-54) SD (113, 187 twice, 190 twice, 191) Co (911, 942) CS (385 twice, 386) P (1024, 1027, 1028) NH (349) E (350, 526, 634, 742) SP (570 twice, 637, 639, 650)

Abbreviations: C - *Confessions*; Co - *Corse*; CS - *Contrat social*; D - *Dialogues*; DR - *Dernière Réponse*; E - *Émile*; EOL - *Essai sur l'origine des langues*; FD - *Fragments sur Dieu*; LF - *Lettre à Franquière*; LL - *Lettre à Lecat*; LV - *Lettre à Voltaire*; NH - *La Nouvelle Héloïse*; RS - *Réponse à Stanislas*; SD - *Second Discours*; SP - *Écrits sur l'abbé de Saint-Pierre*.

N. B. In cases where it is not clear if Rousseau is referring primarily to political or non-political changes, the word has been arbitrarily assigned to a column. See, for example, SD (148), and the discussion in the text.