The lapse of years has not diminished the singular potency of the romanticism as a concept which excites acrimonious controversy. The offspring with which Romanticism is credited are as strangely assorted as its attributes and its ancestors. However, the movement that started in Germany in the seventeen nineties can be indisputably described as “Romanticism”, a term coined for its own use, but which influenced similar movements in England and France.

There are elements in Rousseau which adequately show how much the Romantic Age owes to Rousseau’s unconscious thinking. It is not that all Romantic poets and story-tellers wished to imitate him; we are not considering here an ordinary literary influence but what first flowered in him, soon came with many individual differences and developments, to find expression in them. Therefore, the age represents first the reaction and then the triumph of the unconscious, challenging and then defeating the rational conscious mind.

Every thing released by the explosion of Rousseau’s unconscious created romanticism that was necessarily and intensely private and never general and public. So the romantic writer, like Rousseau, is not at home in society. He must discover himself in solitude; far from saloons and cities, musing in the forest, lost in reverie among the mountains or on the sea-shore. He is not trying to express what men in general are thinking and feeling; not seeking any common denominator. It is what arises from the depth of his own being. So the Romantics, following both Rousseau’s practice and precept seek solitude and reverie. A Romantic is a wanderer. Nature, especially when remote from industry and its concomitants, responds like a devoted mistress to his every mood. Oceans and
mountains, forests and heaths provide the enchanted scenery for his unending drama of the defiant, lonely spirit.

William Wordsworth was greatly impressed by Rousseau. When he returned to France in 1802, he was very different from the passionate lover and the youthful advocate of the Revolution. It was traumatic for the poet to see the growing destruction of the libertarian idealism with which the Revolution had begun. Indeed, he shared the trauma with many of his contemporaries. But even in the early stages of the war between France and England that began in 1793, he remained loyal to the French cause inspite of the bitter personal conflict, as expressed in the following line

..... I rejoiced

Yea, afterwards - truth most painful to record :-

Exulted in the triumph of my soul

When Englishmen by thousands were O’ erthrown,

Left without glory on the field, or driven,

Brave hearts! to shameful flight (1).

To this period also belongs the letter to the Bishop of Llandaff, the most fervent statement of Wordsworth’s Republican principles of the time. In February 1793, the Bishop of Llandaff published a sermon with an appendix defending the British constitution under the title “Strictures on the French Revolution”. Wordsworth’s letter was an outspoken defence of the French Revolution and an attack upon all the established British institutions. It demanded votes for all men and equitable distribution of wealth. The letter throbbed with genuine political passion, but Wordsworth wisely perhaps, decided not to publish it. In 1794, he wrote to a close Cambridge friend, William Matthews, with whom he was hoping to collaborate in a monthly magazine to be called The Philanthropist. In these
letters one can effortlessly trace Rousseau's hold on him. His republican sympathies were as strong as ever.

I solemnly affirm that in no writings of mine will I ever admit of my sentiment which can have the least tendency to induce my readers to suppose that the doctrines which are now enforced by banishment, imprisonment, etc., etc., are other than pregnant with every species of misery. You know perhaps already that I am of that odious class of men called democrats, and of that class I shall ever continue (2).

In a later letter he goes even further:

I disapproved of monarchical and aristocratical governments, however, modified. Hereditary distinctions, and privileged orders of every species, I think must necessarily counteract the progress of human improvement; hence it follows that I am not amongst the admirers of the British Constitution (3).

In those days politics mattered so much to him that his own reference to his concern for nature must shock all those who have known him all along as a nature poet. "I began to wish much to be in town, cataracts and mountains are good occasional society, but they will not do for constant companions" (4). The accents here are undoubtedly that of a pragmatic man of the world.

However, the ideal of Rousseau's state was crumbling in the tyranny of the new Napoleonic regime. Rousseau's conviction in the destructive and negative aspects of civilisation was proved right by the aftermath of the revolution. In A Discourse, he envisages an ideal society, "a state in which all individuals being well known to one another, neither the secret machinations of vice, nor the modesty of a virtue should be able to escape the notice and judgement of the public, and in which the pleasant custom of seeing and knowing one another should make the love of country rather a love of the citizens than its soil" (5). The
citizens of Rousseau's France are supposed to enjoy equality arising out of the ideal situation of every citizen getting involved with the work he deserves. Jobs are to be assigned on the basis of one's knowledge and qualification in the particular area. An individual handles only that task that comes within his purview, where he is obliged neither to delegate his function to anybody, nor to take another strange occupation; there is absolute absence of the need for one to shirk his responsibility. In such a state citizens know one another too well to draw daggers at or nourish suspicions against one another. Knowing one's countrymen in this way will develop a love for the land more out of fellow-feeling and brotherhood than mere ethnic love of the country. Rousseau thought, perhaps, that the passionate followers of Liberty, Equality and Fraternity, his countrymen would be pioneers in accomplishing his ideal society and nation. The country, however, got divided among several revolutionary groups; the moderate Girondin Party could do nothing but play the role of a mute spectator to the atrocities of the more radical Jacobins, led by Robespierre. The September massacres and the eventual execution of the king, with power falling into the hands of an aggressive tyrant, Napoleon, were direct promises vouchsafing Rousseau's conviction that barbarianism functioned most effectively and commonly among the so-called civilised societies. The contradictions of civilisation are amply evident in the context of the French Revolution, when the movement that stood for equality and liberty culminated in a society of inequalities and slavery.

Rousseau must have suffered from nausea to witness the final travesty of his dreams in post-revolution France. So was Wordsworth:

To Paris I returned, Again I ranged,
More eagerly than I had done before,
Through the wide city, and in progress passed.
The prison where the unhappy Monarch lay,
Associate with his children and his wife,
In bondage;

When on my bed I lay, I was most moved
And felt most deeply in what world I was.
My room was high and lonely, near the roof
Of a large mansion or hotel, a spot
That would have pleased me in more quiet times,
Nor was it wholly without pleasure then.
With unextinguished toper I kept watch,
Reading at intervals; the fear gone by
Pressed on me almost like a fear to were
I thought of those september massacres,
Divided from me by a little month,
And felt and touched them, a substantial dread (6).

The above extract makes clear the poet's growing foreboding about the effects of the developing power of the more radical Jacobins, led by Robespierre. Wordsworth did not see the cause of the people and that of Robespierre as identical. Even as late as 1821, he was defending his consistency of position in respect of the revolution.

It is generally assumed that Rousseau recommends a return to a state of Nature because according to him mankind is born free and good but becomes corrupted due to social pressures and habits. But Rousseau's state of nature is not primarily one of automatic virtue; he is more concerned with the belief that man is nor essentially and organically a social being: his natural impulses are self regarding, his natural desire in conflict with the society. In such a society man has
to live unless he retreats into *an artificially primitive seclusion*. What Rousseau is concerned to demonstrate is that each modern man like his savage ancestors, has to learn to be social, and that the learning process must be suited to the nature of individual human beings. Rousseau says that primitive man had in his instinct alone everything necessary for him to live in a state of nature. He could act solely by ‘animal impulse’. When Rousseau demands the ‘return to nature’ and when he distinguishes between what man is and what he has artificially made of himself, he makes this contrast neither from the knowledge of nature nor from the knowledge of history. It seems to him a strange self-deception to hope that man may be changed and brought nearer to his ‘natural state’ by historical or ethnological knowledge.

And Rousseau’s open declaration that peace is impossible so long as the state remains, and that the only way to gain peace is to return to the State of Nature, influenced Wordsworth a great deal. For instance, in most of the sonnets and other poems on Liberty, Wordsworth instinctively associates liberty with the country side and rural life. To him liberty connotes a sense of free will and free action. The Cumberland Beggar should be allowed to find solace and strength in nature. Wordsworth never tires of praising a life led in rural natural surroundings away from the madding crowd. Most of his personal lyrics, odes and poems of relaxed personal experience, express love for liberty of this type. Narrating the above act of a ten year old girl who jumped into the flood to save a lamb, Wordsworth declares her close intimacy with nature as the reason not only for her boldness, but for her compassion and love towards the helpless lamb. In part II of the poem he writes:

> Now, to a maturer, Audience,
> Let me speak of this brave child
> Left among her native mountains
With wild nature to run wild (7).

Talking of the way she grew after the death of her mother, he says:
Like a Spirit of air she moved,
Wayward, yet by all who knew her
For her tender heart beloved. (8).

Wordsworth is so impressed by the selflessness, courage and freedom enjoyed by the rural folk even as little children that the Westmoreland Girl is thus commemorated:
Watchful as a wheeling eagle,
Constant as a soaring lark,
Should the country need a heroine
She might prove our John of Arc. (9)

Man is free in 'State of Nature' in an extreme sense, that is, primitive man as an animal is exempted from 'servitude and domination' since he has no necessary need of other males to satisfy his basic needs. It means independence from other beings and absence of any means to force others to do one's will.

Is there a man whose strength is, in addition, depraved enough, lazy enough, and wild enough to force me to provide for his subsistence while he remains idle ... he is obliged to expose himself voluntarily to much greater trouble than he wants to avoid and gives to me (10).

Rousseau was neither the only, nor the first, man in eighteenth century to coin the motto 'Back to Nature'. Rather its reverberations were heard everywhere, in inexhaustible variations. Descriptions of the customs of primitive people were eagerly snatched up; there was mounting urge to acquire a wider view of primitive forms of life. Hand in hand with this new knowledge mainly derived from travellers' reports - went a new feeling. 'Diderot made a report of Bougainville during his trip to the south seas, his starting point for celebrating with lyrical
exaggeration the simplicity, the innocence, and the happiness of primitive peoples.” (11). In Raynal’s *Histoire philosophique et politique des établissements et du commerce des Européens dans les deux Indes*, the eighteenth century found an inexhaustible mine of information about “exotic” conditions and an arsenal for their enthusiastic praise. When Rousseau wrote the *Discours Sur L’origine de L’inegalité*, this movement was already under way; but he himself was hardly touched by it. He made it unmistakably clear right at the beginning of that essay that he neither could, nor wanted to describe a historically demonstrable original state of mankind. The ‘nature of things’ is present to us everywhere—to understand it we need not retrace our steps through the millennia, to the sparse and undependable evidence of prehistoric times. As Rousseau puts it in the preface to *Discours Sur L’inegalité*: “The man who speaks of the ‘State of nature’ speaks of a state which probably never will exist. It is a state of which we must, nevertheless, have an adequate idea in order to judge correctly our present condition.” (12).

Rousseau’s greatest teacher was not any book. His master was nature. He loved her passionately from his childhood; and this passion was not expressed in his writings by cumbrous descriptions; nature imbued his whole being, she expressed herself by certain sober traits. She plunged him into ecstasies which were accentuated in his later days and which made him strangely akin to the great mystics of the Orient. Rousseau wished for nothing so much as to bid farewell to the public and to the world as he found himself carried away by the spirit of revolt burning within him and by the implacable logic of his thought, to denounce the idea of property, which gave rise to inequality, the necessity for the regulation of this inequality by the State, and the fatal deterioration of States, wherein power was arbitrarily usurped by rich men who ended up by reducing the human race to slavery. Many philosophers of the eighteenth century had already touched on these daring ideas; but none of them had applied the slightest will power to give active
form to their speculations. Rousseau did nothing by halves. For him thought was not a game, but a serious matter. He left Paris and retired into nature. He availed himself of an invitation extended to him by the wife of a ‘Fermier-general’, Madame d’ Epinay, to come and live in a ‘Hermitage’ in the forest of Montmorency. Here he took up his abode. “It was only on that day”, he said, “that I began to live”(13).

His erstwhile friends, his colleagues could understand nothing of this. They accused him of acting only to make people talk and Rousseau thought it necessary to explain himself in his letter to Malesherbes the real cause of his retirement. He said: “that unconquerable spirit of liberty, which nothing could overcome, and before which honours, fortune and even reputation were as nothing”. He added with sincerity that “this spirit of liberty sprang in him, moreover, less from pride than from indolence; but this indolence is incredible; everything terrifies him; the slightest duties of civil life are unsupportable; a word to say, a letter to write, a visit to be made, when these are necessary, are a torture for me . . . . . ”(14).

In that ‘Hermitage’, he abandoned himself to his erotic dreams ‘It was June beneath the shady groves, there was the song of the nightingale, the babbling of brook . . . . . ’ He surrounded himself ‘with a sergalio of houris’. He called himself ‘the extravagant shepherd’ of this band. Soon his dreams took shape; there appeared to him the heroines of his immortal romance - La Nouvelle Heloise - blonde Julie and brown-haired Claire. He wandered with them in the forest of Montmorency. To make himself master of his dreams, he began by writing, without any plan, the first two parts of the book. He was immersed in this work, when a passion for Madame d’ Houdetot, Madame d’ Epinay’s sister - in - law, set him on fire. But in those hours when he again assumed control of his work, he blushed, he was ashamed of perpetrating by his Julie, so flagrant a denial of all his fine sermons against the world and literature of love. After the severe principles
which he had proclaimed with such vigour, after so many biting invectives against effeminate books, inspired by love and indolence, he gave himself over to the enemy. He tried in vain to free himself by turning his erotic reveries to a moral end and in this he succeeded to the extent that it is not possible to dispute the high morality of his works. The mixture of free passion and of sermonising morality which today appears to us to make his romance weighty and stiff, added in his day to its indescribable success. Writers of his day attacked him from jealousy. Voltaire descended to the lowest outrages - but the public opinion was intoxicated, and above all to the ladies of the court, Julie caused the shedding of torrents of tears. All criticism was swept away in a great wave of enthusiasm.

But his quarrel with Madame d' Epinay compelled him to move into another house in the forest of Montmorency where members of the highest nobility - the Duke and Duchess of Luxembourg - offered him the most generous hospitality. Again he became a target for the envious slanders of the literary men, who did not fail to deride bitterly this hermit, this man of nature, this scorn of society who always managed to find lodgings with the master of finance or members of the court. Rousseau himself suffered from these contradictions, but he could not refrain from accepting, with affectionate gratitude, the benefactions which his noble friends offered him with such generosity. During the four or five years which he passed under their wing, he wrote his greatest works: 'La Nouvelle Heloïse', 'the Lettre ad' Alembert Sur Les Spectacles', 'the Contract Social' and 'Emile', were completed there.

Rousseau influenced Wordsworth to such an extent that for Wordsworth true liberty included freedom from "the darkness that dwells within", the achievement of which required self discipline, recognised by the poet late in life. In his youth, freedom meant only free vent of emotions and access to the open air. The inner discipline necessary for experience of enjoying freedom is, however,
what Rousseau had argued for in his *Social Contract*. The true freedom which is demanded by the inner nature of man is utterly incompatible with the externally imposed authority of the State. This was precisely the state of affairs in France. France was then governed by men and not by laws; her people were subject to the authority of despotic masters who issued commands and denied liberty. Rousseau believed that in a rightly organised society there would be no despots and no commands; all men would be genuinely free. In his attempt to raise an ideal political organisation, Rousseau raised a pivotal issue, the fundamental problem of political science: Is it possible to find a form of association which will protect and defend the whole force of the community, the person and property of each associate and in which each, while uniting with all, may nevertheless obey himself alone and remain as free as before? Rousseau’s key to the solution of this difficult problem is the idea of a social pact: only a society based on contract, as he defines the term, is in a position to provide its members moral liberty. Moral liberty is a result of submission to the law of reason, and of security and protection which result from civil law and order. The ethical question of the use of force by the state is Wordsworth’s own preoccupation in his “‘Sonnets Dedicated to Liberty and Independence’”, especially the first twenty six poems written mostly between 1802 and 1807. These were written out of his observations and reflections concerning the military movement of Napoleon. The first sonnet is an address to the Evening Star - “‘Star or My country’” as he calls it, and is taken to be an emblem of England’s banner. The sonnet begins with his love for the star and soon transforms into his love for England. He is away from his land in Calais and the star kindles longings in him:

There that dusky spot
Beneath thee, that is England; there she lies
Blessings be on you both! (15).

England is the poet’s only hope. Yet he is worried for her integrity,
especially when thinking of her from an alien place, amidst people who do not love his country:

\[
\ldots I \text{ with many a fear} \\
\text{For my dear country, many heartfelt sighs} \\
\text{Among men who do not love her, linger here (16).}
\]

Men of muscles and merciless acts are never those which the humane society loves. One must wield influence on people by virtue of one's tolerance and interest in various aspects of life.

- Thoughts motherly, and meek as womanhood.
- Books, leisure, perfect freedom . . .
- . . . there are the degrees
- By which true sway doth mount, this is the stalk.

True power doth grow on (17)

Wordsworth expresses here his love for "simple living and high thinking", where man has the time to take long walks in leisure, and the spontaneity to converse with any humble wayfarer he happens to meet. His belief in the value of humanity is also poignantly expressed here.

"Sonnet V" tells us of the rejoicing at Bonaparte's natal day. In "Sonnet X" the poet rejoices at seeing the boys playing in the meadow, waves breaking on the chalky shore which he never felt while he was in Kent. He hails his country in the following lines against the European States falling into bondage.

\[
\text{Thou art free} \\
\text{My country! and' tis joy enough and pride.} \\
\text{For one hour's perfect bless, to tread the grass} \\
\text{Of England once again and hear and see}
\]
With such a dear companion at my side (18).

The poet contrasts the people of England with those of France in "Sonnet XV". He praises England for producing hands that penned, tongues that uttered wisdom and "moralists" who knew how to act and comprehend. People like Sidney, Harrington, Vane and Milton knew the qualities and virtues of a country coronated with glory. They taught the English the right way to achieve fame and power and this was achieved in deserving manner by their nation that "Shone in Splendour". They also taught the true connotation of strength as may be seen in the magnanimity of England. England possessed power and fame, yet never lost her soul to political oppression. France was unfortunate, as she had no great souls to lead her in the right direction, to inspire her:

.......France, 'tis strange,
Hath brought forth no such souls as we had then
Perpetual emptiness! unceasing change!
No single volume paramount, no code,
No master spirit, no determined road;
But equally a want of books and men! (19).

All along, the poet censures the despots and his sympathy is for the oppressed and enslaved. In a sonnet composed in October, 1803, he calls Bonaparte "one man, of men the meanest too" (20) who has nothing in him to deserve either veneration or obedience.

In his sonnet "To Men of Kent - 1803", the poet expresses unveiled bitterness against the French suzerain. He appeals to the people of Kent, in a spirited manner to goad them into action. He calls them 'Vanguard of Liberty', reminding them of their glorious history. He asks them to relive their past valour:

Left single in bold parley, ye, of yore,
Did from the Norman win a gallant wreath;
Confirmed the charters that were yours before. (21)

He assures them that the whole England is with them in their struggle for liberation. "we all are with you now from shore to shore/ye men of Kent 'tis victory or death !" (22).

Wordsworth pays tribute to Toussaint L' Ouverture whom the poet calls "Miserable chieftain" because he resisted Napolean's edict of re-establishing slavery in St. Domingo and died in prison. He does not hide his identity with and appreciation and sympathy for the valiant prisoner. The poet knows well that death is certain for him in his cell;

...do thou

Wear rather in thy bonds a cheerful brow;

Though fallen thy self, never to rise again. (23)

Even the spirit of the most damned and desperate man is bound to rise in exultation and renewed strength with the poet's words:

... take comfort, Thou has left behind,

Powers that will work for thee; air, earth

and skies;

There's not a breathing of the common wind

That will forget thee; thou hast great allies;

Thy friends are exultations agonies;

And love, and man's unconquerable mind. (24)

When the Venetian Republic came to an end, the poet's dismay was inexpressible. In addition to being a symbol of liberty, it was also an influential power on the East and the safeguard of the West. Venice stood for liberty, neither allowing any nation to violate hers nor violating any nations. But now to witness her own state of decay was too shocking to be real. Wordsworth expressed a truly humane passion of grief at the ruin of an ideal:
Men are we. and must grieve when even the shade
Of that which once was great, is passed away (25)

Wordworth's desire for liberty was irresistible. Till 1793, in his republican zeal he had supported Napoleon, but he soon realised the selfish tyranny and lawless ambition in the garb of a spiritual life. As Rousseau had pointed out, the poet recognised the situation exacerbated by the ego of politicians. He freely and fearlessly asserted the sanctity of man's natural birth right—the right to freedom. Hence whenever the spirit of freedom against tyranny expressed itself in Europe, he readily offered his sympathy and admiration.

Wordsworth is the romantic writer who resembles Rousseau the most. Both recreate the self in the poetry or in the prose—that alternative suggests the range rather than the sameness of human egotism. In The Prelude Wordsworth brings out quite different standards while telling 'the Story of my life', Wordsworth's poem offers a story and not a demonstration of veracity.

O there is blessing in this gentle breeze,
A visitant that while it fans my cheek
Doth seems half-conscious of the joy it brings
From the green fields and from you azure sky.

Whate'er its mission, the soft breeze can come
To none more grateful than to me; escaped
From the vast city, where I long had pined
A discontented sojourner. (26).

Book I of The Prelude begins as a lofty song, a prophecy of joy and freedom and high poetic service. The speaker of the opening lines is not directly announcing his intentions to the audience. He speaks only to himself and to the 'open fields'. Unlike him, Rousseau announces the character of his autobiography at the very beginning of the Confessions. "Here is only the portrait of a man,
Rousseau assumes that to judge a man truly we must see him as he sees himself. So his autobiography provides a most intimate view of himself. Rousseau with the help of his language created an extraordinary identification between writer and reader. His language encourages, even demands, total participation in Rousseau's view of his sensibility. Rousseau repudiates the artifice of composition. He vouches for the truth of his portrait due to his own interest in the spontaneous dictates of memory and feeling. While the poet in The Prelude also speaks from feeling, the self that governs the poetic style is a 'renovated Spirit'. Spontaneity of style for Wordsworth in The Prelude, therefore, sets the poet apart and above his audience, and even above his own everyday persona. The inspired poet performs his art clothed in priestly robes. He does not simply choose his garments; they come to him from the sources beyond his deliberate resolve. But by the end of the "Book I" the "genial mood" spontaneously returns. His trust in his power revives. But still the success of the song depends upon the mysterious and spontaneous grace of his muse.

The difference between the 'spontaneity' invoked by Rousseau and by Wordsworth tends to be glossed over by the familiar generalisation about romanticism. Spontaneity and sincerity are crucial attributes of style and form. The lyric therefore becomes a paradigm of literary form since it is the type of poetry traditionally associated with personal feeling. Wordsworth's idea of spontaneity owes more to Milton's epic. The heroic voice in The Prelude is not that of the poet in his proper person. Wordsworth invites us to identify the hero with the author of the poem only in a very special way. But Rousseau reveals himself in his own person. His style is uninhibited self-expression, and this very frankness is intended to have quite definite effects upon the audience.
At the end of The Prelude, Wordsworth explains that the sublime love celebrated in his poem depends upon the activity of imagination. The imagination raises human affection "from earth to heaven, from human to divine". In tracing the story of his imaginative growth, the poet has shown the meaning of spiritual love. The poem has followed the development in the poet's own life with the capacity to transcend merely human affections by a vision of man's natural and divine affinities. Wordsworth invites us to see his re-shaping of experience in The Prelude as the sign of his spiritual love. The view of the past created through the language of the poem testifies to the love that is generated by the poetic imagination.

Rousseau's autobiography also traces the history of his imagination in his own way. Rousseau also sees his imagination as the creative power in his life and work. But there is no counterpart in the Confessions to Wordsworth's heroic conclusion to The Prelude. Nowhere in Rousseau's autobiography does he envision the Wordsworthian bond between imagination and spiritual love. There is a deep connection between love and imagination for Rousseau, but the secular, erotic character of love in the Confessions keeps this connection remote from the Wordsworthian sublime. Rousseau's perception of his life does not lead him to Wordsworthian reverence for his own or any other faculty of imagination. Rousseau dissociates his truthful confession from the deception of imaginative art. Although we may regard the Confessions as well as The Prelude to be the reshaping of life by the power of imagination, it is important to remember that Rousseau himself makes a sharp distinction between a fiction like his novel La Nouvelle Heloise, and the scrupulous record of exact personal truth found in his autobiography.

The distinction between imagination and the activity of mind at work in the autobiography matters to Rousseau partly because he wants his Confessions to
extricate him from the personal predicament caused by the liveliness of his imagination at earlier times in his life. While Wordsworth cherishes the memory of those experiences which have brought him the power of writing his heroic poem, Rousseau looks back at his life from a standpoint of disappointment and disgrace. Past episodes of imaginative exultation for Rousseau, therefore, bear a different relationship to the spirit of the autobiography than for Wordsworth. Rousseau wants to show the character of his baffling inner life, so that we will be more generous and just in our judgement of him in his present misfortune. Like Wordsworth, Rousseau also tries to explain, through his history, how he has come to his present position. But Rousseau views the past with the consciousness of personal feeling, not with Wordsworth’s mixture of hope, gratitude, and self-encouragement. Although Rousseau remembers some of the trouble-making experiences in his past with delight, his nostalgia feeds on a present sense of irremediable misfortune. Nostalgia in the Confessions is always tempered by reminders that even the most rapturous experiences of the past have led him step by step, to his present plight.

The very idea of imagination in The Prelude seems to preclude Rousseau’s kind of irremediable predicament, for Wordsworth regards the imagination as a form of power, the power of mind in its most exalted state:

This spiritual Love acts nor nor can exist
Without Imagination, which, in truth,
Is but another name for absolute power
And clearest insight, amplitude of mind,
And in her most exalted mood.
This faculty hath been the feeding source
Of our long labour; we have traced the stream
From the blind cavern, whence is faintly heard
Its natal murmur; followed it to light
And open day; accompanied its course
Among the ways of Nature, for a time
Lost sight of it bewildered and engulfed:
Then given it greeting as it rose once more
In strength, reflecting from its placid breast
The works of man and face of human life. (28).

Wordsworth here reveals the heroic power of the human mind to flow beyond the boundaries of private experience. His own poem exemplifies this power in that it shows not only the bent of his individual mind but the highest attributes of Man in general.

Rousseau's Confessions call for more precise distinction between the different faculties of the mind, and also between the different times of life. Actually Rousseau shows a richer power of imagination in the writing of Confessions than he knows, or acknowledges. Rousseau maintains a critical distance from his own memories of imaginative rapture. Instead of riding a wave of power set in motion by the past, Rousseau scrutinizes his memory in order to explicate and even free himself from the pattern he discerns. The imagination that emerges from this scrutiny is different from Wordsworth's idea of holy insight. The autobiographer offers his psychological insight into the structure of his character. The history of imagination in Rousseau takes on a different shape than in The Prelude. It unfolds in an altogether different style and from basically different philosophic and psychological interests.

Rousseau did not believe in original sin— that children were born corrupt. He wrote: "Let us lay it down as incontrovertible rule that the first impulses of
nature are always right; there is no original sin in the human heart; the how and why of the entrance of every vice can be traced”’. (29)

Rousseau’s ideas of a child’s actual capacities may have been a bit wild, but his general theory was illuminating and seminal. In the preface to *Emile* he wrote:

> We are not sufficiently acquainted with a state of infancy: the farther we proceed on our present mistaken ideas, the farther we wander from the point. Even the most sagacious instructors apply themselves to those things which man is required to know without considering what it is children are capacitated to learn. They are always expecting the man in the child, without reflecting what he is before he can become a man. . . . (30)

Nature, he argued, intended children to develop their bodies before exercising their minds:

> Children are always in motion: quiet and meditation are their aversion: a studious or sedentary life is injurious to their health and growth: neither their minds nor their bodies can bear constraint (31).

This belief caused him to feel strongly about contemporary nurses as well as about undesirability of books before adolescence. Mothers who unnaturally sent their babies away to wet nurses in the country, perhaps did not realise how these babies were kept quiet.

> How often is the little innocent, when its nurse is in the least hurry, hung on a peg like a bundle of clouts, there to remain crucified . . . —Such children as have been found in this situation have been observed to be always black in the face; the stomach being violently compressed, preventing the
circulation of the blood and forcing it into the head: in the meanwhile the poor little creatures were supposed to be very patient because they had not the power to cry. (32).

Emile, Rousseau's model pupil, was to be brought up in isolation in a state of innocence and learn skills as and when they were appropriate to him. No books - except Robinson Crusoe - before the age of fifteen. Robinson Crusoe was accepted because it showed man learning social, economic and scientific skills practically from scratch, as Emile must do. Emile's natural talents were to be brought out, not imposed as ideas or techniques from outside authority - the tutor was to run races with him and allow him to evolve his own methods of winning; walls were to be decorated only with Emile's own drawings which were improved by critical comparisons with his own earlier work.

Rousseau's Emile set forth a scheme of education that could produce citizens fit to build the New Jerusalem. The book influenced Blake as well as Wordsworth. Inspite of the repudiation of the doctrine of original sin by Rousseau who believed that "God made all things good" and inspite of his Christian Orthodoxy, Blake had the objective vision to see all beings as essentially good and equal. He even went to the extent of cautioning that if there is evil in things, it is worthwhile to ponder whether evil too is a part of God's creation. Even the simplest reading of the poem "The Tyger" projects the poet's universal and fraternal attitude.

These ideas of Rousseau had a deep effect on Coleridge and Wordsworth. Wordsworth and Dorothy, who were employed to look after little Basil Montague at Alfoxden, attempted to bring him up as a child of Nature. The concept of this child haunted Wordsworth's rural poems and Coleridge's supernatural ones: the child's symbolised innocence and youthful energy as a natural power. But association with Basil gave Wordsworth a shrewd insight into the behaviour of
children. The poem “Anecdote for Fathers” recounts neatly and dramatically an encounter which is based on one between Wordsworth and Basil, in which the father persists in demanding why the child would rather live at Klive than Liswyn farm. Cornered and inarticulate, the child in the end happens to catch sight of the weather cock:

Then did the boy his tongue unlock
And eased his mind with this reply:

“'At Klive there was no weather - cock;
And that's the reason why'”. (33)

Wordsworth is nevertheless very firmly determined, that the child is not to be mortified, nor should he be preached to about his own defects, or his infancy overrun with 'books about good boys and girls and 'bad boys and girls and all that trumpery'. He goes on to supply a fascinating list of educational matter chosen on the basic criterion of being ‘interesting for its own sake; things known because they are interesting, not interesting because they are known’. Behind his list again lies his vision of the human spirit and personality expanding through contemplation of images which contribute directly to its growth and can be assimilated as personal experiences.

Rousseau's delight in his power to revive the happiness of his past brings him closer to Wordsworth and to what is generally understood as the Romantic conception of memory. Perhaps more boldly than Rousseau, Wordsworth interprets memory to signify the freedom of mind rather than the burden as portrayed by Johnson and even by Coleridge. Regret need not dominate the experience of memory, because the mind can freely choose where in the past to dwell. The review of a well-spent life does not constitute the main charm of memory for either Rousseau or Wordsworth. The deeper, more mysterious appeal of memory for Rousseau and Wordsworth resides in their sense of the mind’s
power to repossess the past as if it still existed in the inner life: "And then my heart with pleasure fills/And dances with the daffodills." (34).

In the Confessions, the desire to fill the heart with pleasure again governs Rousseau's narrative as strongly as the deliberate mind's commitment to review the past. Rousseau's attitude towards his memory is, therefore complex, if not contradictory. He wants to exercise his memory in a two-fold manner. He guarantees the truth of his portrait because his memory does not lie, yet memory consoles him because he has the gift of discarding "Le mal passe". His memory is a discipline of desire because he reconstructs the far from desirable chain of causes and consequences in the past. But memory is also a new indulgence of desire, because, like the imagination, it carries him away from present pain to a world of feeling controlled by his own mind.

Rousseau's absorption in the happy past blurs his own distinction between reality and fantasy, and between memory and imagination. Rousseau seems to come closer to Wordsworth since both writers cherish deeply affiliated sources of joy in the mind. Yet the analogy between Rousseau and Wordsworth does not go very far, for even when Rousseau's nostalgia resembles imagination, it functions like the imagination in Rousseau's own sense of the term, rather than Wordsworth's.

Memory in the Confessions is, paradoxically, both bondage and liberty. While memory frees the mind from the present, it binds the self to one's own former desires and also to the shape and texture of experience as it was. Rousseau's delight in memory comes from his sense that he can revive past feeling without essentially changing its substance. Although he may not be able to devise language that can fully contain the emotions of his past, those feelings still survive intact within him. The 'charm' of memory for Wordsworth implies the almost
magical release of new energy. To remember the past is to be "nourished", "repaired", "revived". Instead of Wordsworth's active verbs, Rousseau's key words are usually nouns and adjectives, which identify the quality of a past feeling with the mood induced by recollecting it.

Rousseau's memory of a night spent outdoor near Lyms illustrates the contrast with Wordsworhtian memory. The episode itself resembles some of Wordsworth's own cherished moments in nature:

I even remember spending one delightful night outside the town, on a road that ran beside the Rhone or the Saone - I can not remember which. On the other side of this road were some gardens built up on a terrace. The day had been very hot. The evening was most pleasant, and the dew was falling on the parched grass. There was no wind, the night was still, and the air was fresh without being cold. The sunken sun had left red wisps of vapour in the sky, and their reflection stained the water of rosy red. The trees on the terrace were full of nightingales which answered one another's song. I moved in a kind of ecstacy, surrendering my senses and my heart to the enjoyment of it all, and only occasionally sighing with regret that I was enjoying all this alone. Deep in my sweet reverie, I walked on late into the night without noticing that I was tired. I was aware of it atleast, and lay down voluptuously upon the step of a kind of niche or false door let into the terrace wall. The canopy of my bed was formed by the tops of the trees. One nightingale was perched exactly above me, and sang me to sleep. My sleep was sweet and my awaking sweeter still. It was broad day; and as my eyes opened I saw the water, the greenery, and a lovely
countryside. I got up and shock myself. I felt the pangs of hunger, and walked cheerfully towards the city, determined to spend the two small coins I still had left on a good breakfast. I was in such fine spirits that I sang the whole way; and I even remember what I sang. It was one of Batistin's Cantatas, called "At the Baths of Thomery", which I knew by heart. (35).

Rousseau mentions some specific details in the scene: terraced gardens, bordering the road, the water of the river reflecting the sunset. He slept upon the step of a kind of niche or false door in the terrace wall, a nightingale sang directly over his head as he fell asleep. The details of what will become the standard idyllic landscape of Romanticism are here. The details make what Rousseau calls "'unpaysage admirable'".

However, he shows no Wordsworthian eagerness to elaborate his remembered perception of the landscape; its elements are merely listed, almost like facts that keep the recollected emotion anchored in the specific experience. That was the night he slept on the step; that was the morning he sang cantata by Batistin. The rather vague emotion gains important specification by such particular details, but it does not depend on them. The mood of Rousseau's night seems to survive in memory by its own strength, separable from the "'collateral objects and appearances'"; in Wordsworth's phrase.

Wordsworth's analogous night, spent outdoors at Lake Como, has an altogether different charm:

    We left the town
    Of Gravedona with this hope; but soon
    Were lost, bewildered among woods immense,
And on a rock sate down, to wait for day.
An open place it was, and overlooked,
From high, the sullen water far beneath,
On which a dull red image of the moon
Lay bedded, changing oftentimes its form
Like an uneasy snake. From hour to hour
We sate and sate, wondering, as if the night
Had been ensnared by witchcraft
On the rock
At last we stretched our weary limbs for sleep,
But could not sleep, tormented by the stings
Of insects, which, with noise like that of noon,
Filled all the woods; the cry of unknown birds,
The mountains more by blackness visible
And their own size, than any outward light;
The breathless wilderness of clouds; the clock
That told, with unintelligible voice,
The widely parted hours; the noise of streams,
And sometimes rustling motions nigh at hand,
That did not leave us free from personal fear;
And, lastly, the withdrawing moon, that set
Before us, while she still was high in heaven:—
These were our food, and such a summer's night
Followed that pair of golden days that shed
On Como's lake, and all that round it lay,
Their fairest, softest, happiest influence. (36).

The episode is superficially similar to Rousseau's summer night in adolescence spent outdoors. The first contrast to Rousseau is, of course, in the mood of the occasion. Wordsworth's preference for the sublime over the idyllic is explicit in *The Prelude* and can be understood in various ways. It is a personal bias for the moors, mountains and headlands loved by the poet since childhood, and it is part of Wordsworth's deliberate effort to challenge and revise pastoral conventions. This reveals that the Wordsworthian sublime also presupposes and argues for a different conception of memory than Rousseau's revival of past feeling.

Wordsworth, recalling his summer night, tells surprisingly little about his feelings at the time. He says only enough to indicate that he and his friend passed an uncomfortable night. The impression emerges more from the narration of events than from the reserved statement of emotion. They left the town, then became lost and sat down. They were tired but could not sleep because of insects, so they continued to sit there all night not altogether "free from personal fear". The insects "tormented" them, but Wordsworth does not say whether this was the predominant feeling they had at the time. What matters most to the poet now is the way the experience survives in memory.

Wordsworth's emphasis is, therefore, quite the reverse of Rousseau's. The feelings of personal fear, discomfort, torment - are mentioned, but only to be relegated to the background of circumstance. What survives most vividly is a marvellous spectacle for the eye and ear. The look of the scene does not belong to the realm of fact. The details are present as vivid perceptions, revitalised now in the descriptive language of the poem:

... the sullen water far beneath,
On which a dull red image of the moon
Lay bedded, changing oftentimes its form
Like an uneasy snake. (37).

Before the advent of Rousseau, spontaneous lyric sentiment seemed to have almost completely dried up in France. The very name and genre of the lyrical species seemed consigned to Lethe by French aesthetics. Boileau's Art Poetique had carefully sought to classify all single species of poetry—tragedy, comedy, fables, the diadactic poem, the epigram—and to prescribe rules for each. But lyric poetry found no room in this classification and codification of poetic form; no individual essential quality was ascribed to it. Aesthetics seemed to be drawing only the logical consequence from this development, when it regarded poetic form more and more as a mere external ornament, an incidental appendage, which hinders rather than helps artistic truth and representation.

This spell on French language and poetry was broken only by Rousseau. Without creating a single piece of what might properly be called lyrical poetry, he discovered and resurrected the world of lyricism. It was the resurrection of this almost forgotten world in Rousseau's La Nouvelle Heloise that so deeply moved and so strongly shook his contemporaries. They saw in this novel no mere creation of the imagination. They felt transplanted from the sphere of literature into the core of a new existence which enriched with a new feeling for life. Rousseau was the first to perceive this 'vita nouva' and the also first to awaken it in others. In him, this feeling grew out of the direct communion with nature which he had cultivated from the first awakening of his spiritual self-awareness. He taught nature to speak once more, and he never forgot her language which he had learned in his childhood and adolescence. He delved into it and intoxicated himself with it long after he had become a solitary misanthrope who avoided all intercourse with men. He writes thus in the first dialogue of Rousseau Juge De Jean Jacques, "... finding among men neither integrity nor truth, nor any of the feeling... without which all society is but illusion and vanity, I withdrew into myself; and, in living..."
with myself and with nature, I tasted an infinite sweetness in the thought that I was not alone, that I was not speaking to an unfeeling and dead being. . . I have never adopted the philosophy of the happy men of this age; it was not made for me, I sought a philosophy more appropriate to the heart, more comforting in adversity, and more encouraging to virtue." (38)

Thus Rousseau's lyrical power, which he proves at its deepest and purest in the first part of the La Nouvelle Heloise, lies in his ability to depict all human sentiment and passion as if enveloped in the atmosphere of pure sensitivity to nature. Here man no longer simply stands "over against" nature - nature is not a drama which he enjoys as a mere spectator and observer; he penetrates into its inner life and vibrates with its own rhythms. And in this he finds a new source of happiness that can never dry up. Rousseau wrote to Malesherbes from Montmorency in 1762:

I cannot tell you, how much it has moved me that you think of me as the unhappiest of men. If only my fate were known to the whole world! If it were known, everyone would want the same for himself; peace would reign on earth; men would seek no longer to injure one another. But what is it, then, that fills me with joy when I am alone with myself? I rejoice in myself, in the entire universe, in all that is and that can be, in all that is beautiful in the world of the senses, the world of the imagination, and the world of the mind. (39).

Nature had such a deep effect on his mind that he always cherished those times spent in the company of Nature. It is evident from his letter, written to Malesherbes:

Which period of my life is it that I recall most gladly during my sleepless nights and to which I return most often in my dreams? Not the pleasures of my youth - they were too few,
too mixed with bitterness, and they are too far behind me - but rather the periods I spent in retreat: my solitary walks, those ephemeral but precious days I spent all by myself, with my good and unpretentious companion, with my dog and my cat, with the birds of the field and the animals of the woods, with the whole of nature and with its inconceivable Creator.

As I rose before day break, in order to behold and enjoy the awakening of the sun in my garden, and when its rising promised a fine day, my first wish was that neither letters nor visitors should come to break the spell. I hastened away - and how my heart would beat, how I would breathe in overpowering joy when I felt certain that for the whole day I would be my own master! I would choose some wild spot in the forest, where nothing reminded me of the hand of man, where nothing spoke of man's tyranny, where no irksome third person could step between nature and myself. There an ever new magnificence would unfold before my eyes. The golden broom, the purple (heather) in which the world lay clad, enchanted my eye and stirred my heart. The majesty of the trees that covered me with their shade, the delicacy of the shrubs that surrounded me, the astonishing variety of flowers and herbs - all these would keep my mind in a continuous alternation of observation and wonder. (40).

These passages characterise, with rare clarity and insight, the new epoch which Rousseau was opening in the history of the European spirit. From here on the way lay open to the era of "sensibility", of German and French Romanticism. Today, La Nouvelle Heloise as a whole is remote from us; we cannot feel the immediate impact of the force with which it moved and shook Rousseau's century. Its artistic weakness is that pure description and spontaneous expression of feeling
are pushed into the background by didacticism which motivates this work from the start. In the end this tendency becomes so strong that it completely smothers the work of art; indeed the second part of the novel bears an almost exclusively moralistic and didactic stamp. Even in the first part the tension between the two main springs is unmistakable. We can hear the tone of abstract didacticism in the midst of the most glowing and most truthful description of passion. Occasionally the poetic style lapses suddenly into the style of the sermon; not infrequently Julie describes herself in her letters to Saint-Preux as a moral preacher.

And yet, all this cannot repress the elemental force of the new feeling that here almost forces its way through. In individual pictures and scenes of the novel we immediately perceive the breath of a new era - as in that farewell scene in which Saint-Preux, compelled to leave his mistress and seized by the presentiment of eternal separation, sinks down in the tears on the stairs, which he has just descended and covers the cold stone with kisses. Here a new figure is born in literature; Goethe's Werther rises before us.

Justice cannot be done to the depth of antagonism that prevails if Rousseau is regarded as the prophet who held up the new gospel of "feeling", against the rationalist culture of the eighteenth century. Here feeling becomes a mere slogan in no way adequate to characterise the uniqueness, the true originality, of Rousseau's philosophical formulation of the problem. This formulation begins to take shape only when, not content with surrendering to the new power that inspires him and drives him forward, he inquires into the cause and justification of that power. And Rousseau by no means affirms this justification without restrictions. He becomes aware of the power of feeling too early and too profoundly to be able to surrender it without resistance. Therefore, the very point at which he describes this power most rapturously, he sets up against it another power, whose justification and necessity he defends no less enthusiastically. To
this power he entrusts the task of guiding life and creating its inner shape. When Julie in the La Nouvelle Heloise, wrests from herself, in deepest despair, the decision to renounce her lover forever, she directs a prayer to God in which she entreats him not to let her falter in her resolve:

I desire . . . the same good that Thou desirest, and of which Thou alone art the source . . . I desire everything that conforms to the order of nature which Thou hast established, and to the rules of reason which I have from Thee. I place my heart under Thy protection and my wishes into Thy hand, make all my actions consistent with my real will, which is Thine, and permit no longer that the error of a moment should undo the choice of my life. (41)

At this point the order of "nature" is equated with the order of Providence and the order of reason, and it is viewed as a constant unshakeable norm which must not be sacrificed to uncertain and fleeting impulses of feeling. The firmness, the inner security and completeness of the will is invoked against the power of passion. And this antithesis is not merely one of the elements in the construction of La Nouvelle Heloise; it is, rather, the idea on which the whole conception of the work primarily rests. For even Lal Nouvelle Heloise, in which Rousseau allowed sensual ardour and passion to flow more freely than in any other of his works, was by no means intended as an apotheosis of sensuality. The love which the books portray for us is of a different character and origin. Genuine love, the kind of love that takes hold of and fills the whole man, does not strive for mere gratification but for perfection: "Take away the idea of perfection, and you take away enthusiasm; take away esteem, and love is no longer worth anything." (42)

In La Nouvelle Heloise Rousseau did not oppose this ethical ideal of perfection to the ideal of the love; for him both were intimately and essentially intertwined. If we feel, both in the style and content of La Nouvelle Heloise
a great disparity —indeed a break —between the first and the second part of the work, we must realise that Rousseau himself was not aware of it. For even as an artist he never announced his ethical ideas and demands; he always reiterated the exalted nature of virtue and maintained it against all the assaults of feeling. It is only in this manner that Rousseau's 'sentimentality' gains its specific character, and the power and extent of its historical influence become fully comprehensible only in this context.

Wordsworth's enthusiasm for the creative power of language is quite different from Rousseau's distrustful reliance on words. Whereas Rousseau manipulates words in relation to feelings, as though he were trying to fit together separate but equally firm shapes, Wordsworth celebrates the power of the poet to melt and re-form shapes, whether of language or feeling. Rousseau insists that feelings have their own shape and quality, as apart and prior to words, and language has fixed shapes too, Rousseau seeks not to dissolve language, as to keep his sense of himself from using it. He protects his feelings by holding them always at a slight distance from language, so that we should be aware that forms of words do not coincide with the actual form of his emotion. To Wordsworth, however, poetic power is the very capacity to reshape feelings through language, as if neither emotions nor words are fixed. Like the sun, poetic genius is a creative power. The poet suffers no inevitable constraints from language; the only obstacle to his freedom is the limit of energy in his own mind.

The Phrase 'The sentiment of Being' has evoked so much veneration that the secret of Romanticism in general has been thought to lie hidden there. But the difference between "Le Sentiment de L' existence" and Wordsworth's "Sentiment of Being" is quite fascinating, though it is true that Rousseau and Wordsworth are not as vague as the interpretations that try to make the phrases interchangeable, though it is also true that Rousseau and Wordsworth both
celebrate mysterious feelings, different from the habitual experiences of the mind. Even if Wordsworth actually adapted this phrase from Rousseau he changes its significance in translation. Not only do Rousseau and Wordsworth use the phrase in different personal contexts; they also guide us to think in different ways about the meaning of their rhetoric and about its relation to their other experiences and to ours.

In the Confessions, Rousseau expands his account of his walking trips to evoke even more clearly the ideal of “Le Sentiment de L’ existence”. On these holidays, he does not revert to the primitive beginnings of consciousness, but he experiences the active harmony of his faculties that presupposes the presence of that foundation:

Never did I think so much, exist so vividly, experience so much, never have I been so much myself - If I may use that expression - as in the journeys I have taken alone and on foot. There is something about walking which stimulates and enlivens my thoughts. When I stay in one place I can hardly think at all; my body has to be on the move to set my mind going. The sight of the countryside, the succession of pleasant views, the open air, a sound appetite, and the good health I gain by walking, the easy atmosphere of an inn, the absence of everything that makes me feel my dependence, of everything that recalls me to my situation - all these serve to free my spirit, to lend a greater boldness to my thinking, to throw me, so to speak, into the vastness of things, so that I can combine them, select them, and make them mine as I will, without fear or restraint, I dispose of all Nature as its master. My heart, as it strays from one object to another, unites and identifies itself with those which soothe it, wraps
itself in pleasant imaginings, and grows drunk on feelings of delight. If, in order to hold them, I amuse myself by describing them to myself, what vigorous brush strokes, what freshness of colours, what energy of expression I bring to them! . . . Ten volumes a day would not have been enough. How could I have found time to write them? When I arrived, my only thought was for a good dinner. When I set out, I thought only of good walk. I felt that a fresh paradise was waiting for me at the inn door, I thought only of going out to find it. (43).

In Book II of The Prelude, Wordsworth celebrates the "sentiment of Being" from a markedly different standpoint. He is the ambitious poet, still on the first wave of confidence inspired by the memory of his past. As he summarises this past, he draws to a climax his celebration of the gifts he received from the universe up to the age of seventeen:

My seventeenth year was come;
And, whether from this habit rooted now
So deeply in my mind, or from excess
In the great social principle of life
Coercing all things into sympathy,
To unorganic natures were transferred
My own enjoyments; or the power of truth
Coming in revelation, did converse,
With things that really are; I, at this time,
Saw blessings spread around me like a sea.
Thus while the days flew by, and years passed on,
From Nature and her overflowing soul,
I had received so much, that all my thoughts
Were steeped in feeling; I was only then
Contented, when with bliss ineffable
I felt the sentiment of Being spread
O'er all that moves and all that seemeth still;
O'er all that lost beyond the reach of thought. (44)

When Wordsworth, here and at other key points in *The Prelude* wants to recollect feelings beyond the reach of images, he encounters the limitations of memory according to his own conception of the mind. The most blissful feelings of the past are subject to the same transformation as the painful ones. The very attributes of mind, which give images of a continuing life, inevitably obscure the full ecstasy of those times when the fleshly eye and ear slept undisturbed. Wordsworth ventures only tentative definition of the most extreme contentment of his youth; he relies on the imagery of Milton and the Bible to convey the sublimity carried by his own images elsewhere, and he allows a certain vagueness and ambiguity of language to mark the space of what he can not fully repossess.

Wordsworth does not define the "Sentiment of Being" in the manner of Rousseau. Though he starts in an explanatory tone, Wordsworth only frustrates our desire for clear definition. He allows alternate, even seemingly incompatible explanations to stand as equally plausible.

In the very first sentence of *Social contract*, Rousseau announces:

*Man is born free and everywhere he is in chains. Many a one believes himself the master of others, and yet he is a greater slave than they. How has this change come about? I do not know. What can render it legitimate? I believe that I can settle this question.* (45)
The first sentence is highly epigramatic. If man is born free, how can he be in chains? How can it be maintained that he is born free? He is everywhere in chains in the sense that the conventions and customs of society and the regulations of the state impose unnecessary and artificial restraints upon him, which hinder rather than promote the development of his personality. So it is better to fix eyes on Nature and follow the path traced by her. She hardens men by all kinds of difficulties. Nature teaches a man the meaning of pain and grief. Man should, therefore, live in the state of Nature in order to accustom himself to the hardships he has to face.

The economic injustices of Rousseau's times were also factors that inspired his efforts and served as a spark triggering off many of his views. In this regard, Charles Hendel observes:

When he scored the unjustified inequality, it was not simply because he, Jean Jacques Rousseau, had been made to suffer injustice, tyranny, humiliation, at the hands of his betters, but because he had been convinced by other ardent spirits, such as Fenelon, of the evil of monarchy and system of inequalities bound up with it. (46)

Rousseau feels that inequality of mankind is hardly felt in a state of nature. This ideal condition is one of 'natural independence', which he describes as a state in which a man is neither under the bonds of servitude to another, nor in the need of the aid of another but his own master.

... Every one must see that as the bonds of servitude are formed merely by the mutual dependence of men on one another and the reciprocal needs that unite them, it is impossible to make any man a slave, unless he be first reduced to a situation in which he can not do without the
help of others: and, since such a situation does not exist in a state of nature every one is there his own master. (47)

Rousseau wanted a society in which freedom and equality were reconciled, because he felt that art and culture of European society at that time were not helping man to grow and develop in accord with his true nature. Instead of making him a fuller man, they were dehumanising him taking him away from the right path as demanded by his nature. His call that man should return to nature did not mean that he should crawl on all fours, or remain a wild savage, or make natural impulse and instinct the guide of a life as they were for the lower animals. To do so would have been more unnatural for men. What was natural for him was to outgrow the state of infancy and childhood and the savagery of the primitive man, and to replace the dominance of instinct and desire by conscience and forethought. What Rousseau wanted was that man should eschew that false art and culture which developed him along wrong lines and thereby thwarted the fulfilment of his true nature, and adopt the right art and culture which aid him in perfecting it. Rousseau may be regarded as the prophet of this view that a man is ‘inherently good’, and therefore the right art consists in developing his innate goodness. Rousseau held that the evil and corruption and wickedness found in the world were not the natural outcome of the fact that man was born evil; they were wholly the product of wrong social institutions. A wrong art and culture had deflected man from his natural end and led him astray. In short, according to him, ‘man is not born evil, but grows into it as the result of wrong art’.

Rousseau with his call ‘Back to Nature’ gave a new breadth and scope to the cult of Romanticism that it might not otherwise have possessed. He was a democrat, not only in his theories, but in his tastes. For long periods of his life, he was a poor vagrant receiving kindness from people only slightly less destitute than himself. He repaid this kindness, in action, often with the blackest ingratitude, but in emotion his response was all that the most ardent devotee of sensibility could
have wished. Having the tastes of a tramp, he found the restraints of Parisian society irksome. From him the romantics learnt a contempt for the trammels of convention - first in dress and manners, then in the heroic couplet, then in art and love, and finally over the whole sphere of traditional morals.

To ignore romanticism as an aspect of life is to be blind to the rainbow; to accept romanticism as a way of life is to try and pack a rainbow in a crate. Rousseau can not be considered a poet but he was the creator of the poets, because his example helped to release the dark energy, the zest that consciousness can control but can not produce, the magical symbol that transforms verse into unforgettable poetry, all from the depths of the unconscious.
CHAPTER III

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