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ROMANESQUE WORKS.

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HIERARCHY OF MOTIVES ANALYSIS OF DIDEROT'S  
ROMANESQUE WORKS

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HIERARCHY OF MOTIVES ANALYSIS OF DIDEROT'S  
ROMANESQUE WORKS

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## PREFACE

A dictum in psychology states that each of us arrives at being what he totally is, and at viewing the world as he uniquely does, by virtue of all his yesterdays, and that no two people have had the same yesterdays. My own yesterdays (my initial training was as a psychologist) are such that the reading of literature always calls to mind various principles of psychology. It was thus natural that my preference for dissertation topic emphasize that aspect of French literature that is one of its most fundamental---depiction of man's psychological state.

I would like to express gratitude to Dr. Melvin Tolson for the many hours he has spent, subsequent to the initiation of the study, helping in all aspects of its preparation. I am particularly grateful also to Drs. Besse Clement, Lowell Dunham, John Alley and Donald Maddox for their graciousness and recommendations. Finally, I express unique indebtedness to Dr. Seymour Feiler who introduced me to Diderot, and to my wife for her daily help.

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# HIERARCHY OF MOTIVES ANALYSIS OF DIDEROT'S ROMANESQUE WORKS

## INTRODUCTION

### LITERATURE AND PSYCHOLOGY

Most great writers have been first rate psychologists; as examples, recall Cervantes, Shakespeare, Moliere, Stendhal and Faulkner. Their special gift has tended to be insight into man first of all, and secondly the ability to record that perception and insight. Even Freud himself asserted that, "The poets and philosophers before me discovered the unconscious, what I discovered was the scientific method by which the unconscious can be studied."<sup>1</sup> Lucas, in discussing psychology and literature, similarly concluded that modern psychology may know more of Madame Bovary than Flaubert himself knew, more of Hedda Gabler than Ibsen; but it also reveals how amazingly true the intuitions of

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<sup>1</sup>Lionel Trilling, The Liberal Imagination (Garden City: Doubleday Anchor Book, 1953), p. 32.

these writers have been.<sup>1</sup> This has seemed to be true of French literature beginning as early as the Chanson de Roland and (in spite of protestations to the contrary) continuing through the New Novel. It is definitely the case with Denis Diderot. He of course knew nothing of modern psychological principles per se, but his insights into man and the human condition were impressive. His importance as a literary psychologist will undoubtedly increase in proportion to study devoted to his works. This study will emphasize some of his psychological insights as seen through the framework of Abraham Maslow's theory of hierarchy of motives. Many theories and psychological frameworks are available, but this particular one seems especially suited for placing Diderot's unique concept of man's psychological state into perspective. The following chapter will be aimed at explaining the theory and the reasons for its choice.

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<sup>1</sup>F. L. Lucas, Literature and Psychology (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1957) p. 321.

## CHAPTER I

### THE BACKGROUND THEORY: MASLOW'S MOTIVATIONAL HIERARCHY

Sigmund Freud has long been recognized as the philosophical and intellectual father of psychiatry and psychoanalysis. His pioneering insights were monumental, and set the tenor for the entire discipline. His major contributions came, however, from clinical evaluations of neurotics, and psychoanalysis quite logically came to be regarded as the probing into the psyche of a disturbed individual in search of causative experiences and associations.<sup>1</sup> Subtly, by extension, the entire field of psychoanalysis, and to a degree all of psychology, became somewhat synonymous with the study and handling of abnormalcy, or at least normalcy.

A companion feature of the late Nineteenth, and early Twentieth-Centuries, that profoundly influenced interpretations of man, was that of Darwinian theories. Darwin's

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<sup>1</sup>Richard I. Evans, "Gordon Allport", Psychology Today, IV, No. 11 (1971), p. 56.

findings and theories led away from biblical interpretations of man, his origin and development, and led toward the viewing of man as the ultimate in an evolutionary process. Man, Darwin extrapolated, was the result of eons of evolution and adaptation, wherein some species maintained themselves or progressed, while others, unable to change to meet environmental demands, disappeared. Quite naturally, these concepts found their way into psychological usage and have remained. Typical examples include: "maintenance" of self-concept, psychological "flexibility" and psychological "adaptability".

Logically enough, as with any pioneering efforts such as those of Freud and Darwin, new insights and proposals and questions were to be raised against the pioneered framework. One such theory is that of Abraham Maslow, late of Brandeis University. He has tended away from the abnormal, maintenance, adaptation-for-survival emphasis (Freudian/Darwinian); away from a stressing of the similarities between man and other forms (Darwinian Evolution, Stimulus-Response, Atomistic, Behavioristic Psychology theories), to another interpretation of Darwinism, that of total growth and realization of potential, (Holistic Psychology and Self Theory). Maslow stresses that inner forces in man exist which lead him not only to maintenance and survival but to maximal development and to positive relationships, of whose existence and possibility, the neurotic or psychotic or merely self-maintaining individual would not even be aware. Maslow does

recognize that man must first of all survive. In fact he proposes that physiological gratifications must be met before higher levels of activity can be activated. Once these basic needs have been met, however, man is released to progress by a series of steps toward an increasingly greater realization of his total potential (self-actualization). Maslow's is then a positivistic, optimistic psychology which thinks rather highly of man--which prefers to address itself to man's potential rather than to his limitations. It is the same type of psychology which seemed to motivate the Eighteenth-Century French philosopher Denis Diderot. Diderot, though atheistic, and possibly even due to his atheism, placed great emphasis on man and his innate rights and potential, which he felt the autocratic Church and the decaying feudal system were stifling. The matching of Maslow and Diderot thus seemed potentially fruitful. It will therefore be the object of this study to apply Maslow's theory of self-actualization and hierarchy of motives in a general way, to Diderot and his century, and then more specifically to Diderot's novelistic works.

What constitutes a novel is not always readily determined. In the case of Diderot this is even more of a dilemma. Benac says that Diderot himself was not consistent as regards his own works:

... il appelait le Neveu de Rameau une satire et en revanche, dans sa correspondance, qualifiait de conte le Supplément au voyage

de Bougainville. Aussi devons-nous nous contenter d'une définition très large: nous classons parmi les oeuvres romanesques de Diderot, celles dans lesquelles le récit d'une aventure vécue par des personnages animés par l'auteur tient la part la plus importante.<sup>1</sup>

For the purposes of this study the above criteria will be retained and thus included will be Le Neveu de Rameau, La Religieuse, les Bijoux indiscrets, and Jacques le Fataliste. As an initial step then, let us more fully establish the working background against which Diderot, and more specifically his novelistic works, will be placed, that is to say, Maslow's concept of human motivation. This then in general is the theory.

Man is a wanting animal, whose behavior is need-fulfillment oriented. While some of any individual's actions will be random, non-motivated, most are directed ultimately toward the fulfillment of some specific need. Further, not only are these basic needs the same for all men, they also can be arranged into a hierarchy of importance which is the same for all men, and their order of prepotency is predictable. This would mean that an individual would direct his efforts to the gratification of the more basic needs first, then to the successively less basic, each in turn. Thus if there were ten needs, being numbered from

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<sup>1</sup>Henri Bénac, ed., Diderot, Oeuvres romanesques (Paris: Garnier, 1962), p. viii.

one to ten in descending prepotency, the individual would concern himself first of all with need number one. Only after it had been partially or largely gratified would the individual direct his efforts to number two. The process would continue with the direction of effort being in the order of immediacy or urgency of need of gratification.

Logically enough, the needs that occupy the primordial category, those requiring most immediate and prompt gratification, are the physiological ones---air, water, food.

What this means specifically is that in the human being who is missing everything in life in an extreme fashion it is most likely that the major motivation would be physiological needs rather than any others. . . . For the man who is extremely hungry no other interests exist but food. He dreams food, he remembers food, . . . he perceives only food . . . . anything else will be defined as unimportant. Freedom, love, community feeling, respect, philosophies, may all be waved aside as fripperies.<sup>1</sup>

Society, the work life, family life are all designed, however, to militate against the average person ever experiencing hunger or thirst to the above extremes. In most modern societies chronic extreme hunger or thirst is a rarity. What happens then is that physiological needs are only rarely, and normally only indirectly, seen as

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<sup>1</sup>Abraham Maslow, Motivation and Personality (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1954), p. 82.

potent movers. The resulting state of chronic gratification of physiological needs results in other needs emerging, those categorized roughly as safety needs.

An understanding of safety needs is most efficiently obtained by observation of infants and children, in whom these needs are simple and obvious. Children ". . . do not inhibit this reaction at all, whereas adults in our society have taught to inhibit it at all costs."<sup>1</sup> Illness and pain are postulated as making a child fearful of his world. Children prefer undisrupted routine and rhythm. They prefer a predictable, orderly, organized world in which the unexpected, the unmanageable and dangerous do not threaten, and typically view parents as powerful persons who can protect them and help them order and control their world. The normal, healthy adult of modern society is largely satisfied in his safety needs as in his physiological needs. To the degree that he is not however, these needs may be powerful motivators. Cases where this is so tend to be limited to the neurotic and psychotic who in essence are still carrying in their make-up the needs and fears and unsolved problems of childhood.

With adequate air, water, and food, and in absence of a threat to one's safety, there emerge needs having their basis in belongingness, affection and love. The individual

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<sup>1</sup>Maslow, Motivation, p. 85.

concerned is moved to seek a more unique place in his immediate group and intimate acceptance by a specific person or persons. In certain individuals this even becomes the most basic and dominant of all needs, though generally it becomes operative only as the physiological needs have been met. Indication of its strength is the fact that in our society the thwarting of these needs is the most commonly found core in cases of maladjustment and more severe psychopathology.<sup>1</sup> It should be pointed out at this point, too, that love is not synonymous with sex. Both are generally multidetermined and involve elements and considerations often quite afield from each other. Obviously even sex itself is most often much more complex than mere physiological release. True love also involves giving as well as receiving.

Convinced subjectively that he belongs, and that some person or persons actively care for him, the individual experiences esteem needs, that is to say self-regard, as well as the regard coming from others. This goes beyond mere belonging and acceptance, and even differs from love. A person might be accepted and loved, but still not be esteemed. These esteem needs are classified into two subsidiary sets. The first involves the desire for strength,

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 91.

achievement, adequacy, mastery, confidence, independence and freedom. The second involves the desire for reputation, prestige, status, dominance, recognition, attention, importance or appreciation. Satisfaction of the self-esteem need leads to feelings of self-confidence, worth, strength, capability and adequacy, of being useful and necessary in the world. But thwarting produces feelings of inferiority, of weakness and of helplessness. It would be apropos to state that the above thwarting gives rise in turn to discouragement, to compensatory or neurotic behavior. Further, the most healthy self-esteem is based on deserved respect rather than on external fame or celebrity.<sup>1</sup>

As the individual feels himself well-regarded by those whose opinions he values, and comfortable with himself, cognitive needs arise. These needs are much more subtle, more positive and are thus easily overlooked in our clinically, pathologically-oriented psychology. These needs involve positive growth desires, those of understanding, systematizing, organizing, analyzing and looking for relationships and meanings, and of constructing a set of values. "Studies of psychologically healthy people indicate that they are as a defining characteristic, attracted to the mysterious, to the unknown, to the chaotic, unorganized and unexplained."<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Maslow, Motivation, p. 91.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

Where for some reason these needs do not become motivators, after the above-mentioned more basic needs have been gratified, one encounters boredom, deterioration of intellectual life, to include a lowering of tastes and even self-dislike. This is often applicable to the frustrated housewife, to people trapped in humdrum jobs or unfulfilling lives. A great many people in life never proceed any farther in the hierarchy than this. They become satisfied with meeting their physiological, safety and belongingness and love needs, and with experiencing a certain degree of self acceptance and positive regard.

When cognitive needs are activated, and, at least in part, gratified, aesthetic needs manifest themselves and command the attention of the individual concerned. This is seen as being repulsed by ugliness and as being an active craving for beauty. It is close to the cognitive need for order and symmetry. As with cognitive needs, aesthetic ones do not become active in all people. Yet on the other hand they may become the unique driving force. Witness the starving artist who seeks only to express aesthetically himself, or the Baudelaires who will create beauty out of other men's ugliness.

Finally, as all of the preceding needs have at least in part been successfully dealt with, the capstone of all motives emerges, that of the need for self-actualization. This manifests itself in discontent, restlessness, a seeking,

until the individual concerned feels he has become. or is becoming, that which he in total potential is most capable of becoming. "What a man can be he must be."<sup>1</sup> It is the desire to become more and more what one most fundamentally "is." It does not necessarily imply or involve renown, but it does involve maximal usage of capacity. It is this quality that most readily calls forth Diderot.

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<sup>1</sup>Maslow, Motivation, p. 91.

## CHAPTER II

### DIDEROT THE MAN AND MOTIVE HIERARCHY

With the foregoing theory of man's motivational hierarchy in mind, and at the same time recalling Diderot's astonishingly full life and his complex, sometimes paradoxical personality and life-style, it would seem only natural to superimpose the theory on the man. Such is not the major purpose of this study, but since the theory seems so fully to fit, and since he was the creator of the fictional characters to be considered, some comments are in order.

The first and most important thing that should be said concerning Diderot and motive hierarchy is that he resoundingly reached the level of self-actualization. Recall that this need is felt as other needs have been met, and that it involves a drive to become that of which one is intrinsically capable, to do that for which one is potentially most fitted, in short to accomplish the very most in life that one's potential allows. By this definition, Diderot is a self-actualized man par excellence. No man of his time, or for that matter few men of any other time, have so completely and so meaningfully filled their years.

Henri Meister in describing Diderot of the Salons says that when he recalls Diderot, the immense variety of his ideas, the amazing multiplicity of his knowledge, the rapid flight, the warmth, the impetuous tumult of his imagination, all the charm and all the disorder of his conversation, he likens his character to Nature herself. He is Nature as Diderot himself used to conceive of her---rich fertile, abounding in germs of every sort, gentle, fierce, simple and majestic, worthy and sublime, but without a master, without a God.<sup>1</sup>

Diderot had earned the degree of Master of Arts in philosophy by the age of Nineteen (1732),<sup>2</sup> led the life of a prodigal, directed the single most important philosophical-informational publishing venture in history (The Encyclopedia),<sup>3</sup> founded art criticism<sup>4</sup>, renovated the theater, and left some of the century's most vital prose. All this in addition to being a good father (if he was not the best husband it is not entirely his fault), the lion of the salons and a friend

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<sup>1</sup>Will and Ariel Durant, The Story of Civilization, Vol. IX: The Age of Voltaire (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1965), p. 678.

<sup>2</sup>Georges R. Havens, The Age of Ideas: From Reaction to Revolution in Eighteenth-Century France (New York: Collier, 1962), p. 296.

<sup>3</sup>Phillipe Van Tieghem, ed., Denis Diderot, Récits (Paris: Hachette, 1959), p.115.

<sup>4</sup>Norman L. Torrey and Otis Fellows, Editors, Diderot Studies, Vol. I (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1949), p. viii.

of royalty. If records were available so that specifics could be cited, Diderot's century, as any other century, would be seen to be replete with men who never progressed beyond physiological, safety and belongingness needs in their most rudimentary forms. It is true that the Revolution that was to follow Diderot and for which he was at least in part responsible, was largely aimed at helping fulfill men's needs. The feudal system had resulted in the fact that many men were unable to gratify even the most basic of their needs. All their time, energy and thought had of necessity to be directed to questions of physiological necessity---food, protection from the elements, and safety (the serfs or peasants very life was often threatened). It is small wonder that, given their life-conditions, they had no great esteem needs, that cognitive or aesthetic needs almost never exhibited themselves and that concern for self-actualization was for all practical purposes unknown among them. In the worst examples, even belongingness and love needs seem to have existed at practically animalistic levels. It would be difficult to conceive of a system more effective in thwarting the fulfillment of not only basic needs, but more particularly of any higher needs. These conditions had been ameliorated by Diderot's time, but vestiges of the feudal hierarchy still made it difficult for many men to fulfill even their need for self-esteem, and this of course precluded going on to higher needs. On this point the

critical concern of the Estates-General convened May 5, 1789 was that some men considered themselves intrinsically of more worth than others; that the vote of a man of the Third Estate was not equatable to that of a man of the other two Estates.

These same esteem needs were to trouble two of Diderot's contemporaries. Neither Voltaire nor Rousseau would ever quite settle within himself the question of rank and birth. Both were destined to waste much energy in this inner struggle. It is to his credit, and is another example of Diderot's self-actualization, that he never had to direct much of his energy toward his own esteem needs. He firmly believed in, and actively worked for equality for all, but he took his own for granted. He seems to have known himself to be the equal of any man and so considered the matter closed. He could move with equal ease from nobleman to artisan, from salon to cottage, to the palace of czars. So it was that the eminently well-adjusted Encyclopedist felt no compulsion to engage in the defensive behavior that on occasion beset Voltaire and Rousseau. The writings and activities of both of these latter men indicate that they never did arrive at the off-handed manner which the question seems to have always had for Diderot. An example of this quality in Diderot is eminently illustrated in the sixty-year-old Diderot's visit to Catherine II of Russia, subsequent to her purchase of his library. He was so completely at ease with her that she felt obliged to place a table

between them. Havens comments that, " . . . Catherine must have been highly astonished at the complete lack of awe manifested by this mercurial Frenchman, in such sharp contrast to the justly fearful courtiers by whom she was surrounded."<sup>1</sup> Jean- Jacques and even Voltaire would have treated a royal patron with much more deference, or conceivably, under certain circumstances, either may have acted with some disdain. The point of import is that Diderot saw her as a fellow human, neither above nor beneath him. She posed no threat to his self-esteem, so his actions with her were the same as they would have been had he been visiting an old neighbor in his native Langres.

One additional observation is in order as concerns Diderot's esteem needs. He did not have the typical author's need to have his works immediately published, to see his name in print. He was content to let history take its course and to await posterity's verdict. André Billy points out that he wrote works such as La Religieuse and Le Neveu de Rameau " ... sans intention de les publier. ..." <sup>2</sup> It is true that he drew some of his characters from real life, even to the point of retaining their names. Further, after spending time in prison, he was not anxious to print

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<sup>1</sup>Havens, Age of Ideas, p. 367.

<sup>2</sup>André Billy, ed., Denis Diderot Oeuvres Complètes (Paris: Bibliothèque de la Pléiade, 1951) p. 22.

controversial material, (though much of the Encyclopedia was just that). Nevertheless the fact remains that he was not publication-for-the-sake-of-publication oriented. Here again he displays a marked maturity. There was no question in his own mind as to his feelings of worth; he exhibits a near total lack of other-orientation. His behavioral guidelines largely came from within. " ... N'est-ce pas d'ailleurs dans cet approfondissement de soi-même que se trouve la seule vérité dont on soit certain par expérience?"<sup>1</sup>

Considering other needs in the hierarchy, and Diderot's handling of them, we again get the picture of the eminently well-adjusted, self-actualized man. Recalling cognitive needs as the desire for understanding, systematizing, organizing, analyzing, looking for relationships, and establishing a set of values, it is obvious that Diderot has few peers. On this point, even his initial bohemian existence in the capital included "ten full years of sober and undramatic reading of everything he could get his hands on . . . good books, bad books, old books, new books---so much that the printed word contained of knowledge, of inspiration, of wisdom in the difficult art of life!"<sup>2</sup> Later for some twenty-six years, ending in 1772, he was the prime mover, and often the author itself of the monumental,

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<sup>1</sup>Bénac, ed., Oeuvres, p. xiii.

<sup>2</sup>Havens, Age of Ideas, p. 301.

twenty-eight volume Encyclopedia---seventeen volumes of text and eleven volumes of finely engraved plates with more than 900 double-columned pages per volume. Had this been his only contribution one would say that he had maximized this need. His other more personal works, dealing with his attempts to give meaning to life and order to the cosmos, are too well known to mention, but they underline the degree of his cognitive needs and the maximal manner in which he fulfilled them.

More and more, Diderot is being regarded as the high point of Eighteenth-Century thought. Fellows and Torrey see him " . . . as the most profound thinker, and indeed, the most interesting and provocative figure of the French eighteenth century, . . ."<sup>1</sup> Lovejoy says he was the first convinced proponent of transformism and evolution.<sup>2</sup> For Jacques Barzun, Diderot is a finder and an initiator, not a concluder or finisher.<sup>3</sup> Even his contemporaries saw his towering cognitive processes. Voltaire called him a "pantophile", a "Socrates", a "Plato".<sup>4</sup> Rousseau, after his

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<sup>1</sup>Fellows, Studies, Vol. I, p. vii.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. viii.

<sup>3</sup>Jacques Barzun, "Why Diderot" in Varieties of Literary Experience, Ed. by Stanley Burnshaw (New York: New York University Press, 1962), p. 33.

<sup>4</sup>Fellows, Studies, Vol. I, p. vii.

years of hating Diderot, was to say that at the distance of some centuries Diderot would seem a prodigious man. People would look from afar at that universal head mingled with admiration and astonishment.<sup>1</sup>

Aesthetically, the picture of Diderot is little different. As alluded to above, he founded art criticism and single-handedly renovated drama. Peyre calls him " . . . the outstanding esthetician and literary critic of his age, . . ."<sup>2</sup> Exhibitions of paintings and sculpture, Salons, had been held in the Louvre since 1737. Thus it was that in 1759 Grimm, editor of the Literary Correspondence, persuaded Diderot, friend of artists since his bohemian youth, to write articles on the exhibitions. This Diderot was to continue until 1781. He reported some nine Salons. Current critics may not agree with Diderot's evaluations or tastes but one is obliged again to recognize the degree to which he was aesthetically moved. His work in the theater is a companion feature of the same need. His appreciations and insights led to the genesis of method-acting, bourgeois drama and greater realism in the theater. He was aesthetically one of the most developed of men, even authoring the article on "Beauty" in the first volume of the Encyclopedia.

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<sup>1</sup>Durant, Age of Voltaire, p. 679.

<sup>2</sup>Fellows, Studies, Vol. I, p. viii.

One might reply that this is natural since he was the editor. However, the fact is that he made every attempt to have those people best qualified in each discipline write specific articles. The likelihood was that he was best qualified to speak on this aesthetic question.

Belongingness and love needs in Diderot's life are closely related to his esteem needs. In both cases he seems to have felt secure to the point that gratification was assured. By this is meant that Diderot seems to have had a self-concept such that he just assumed people would like and respond to him. This is not to imply arrogance. There is nothing that would lead one to suspect any sort of inflated feelings of self-worth. Rather he seems to have been able to assess his strengths and weaknesses and accept himself as he was. Once this is done, as any current theory of personality will attest, acceptance by others is decidedly easier, if not automatic. Diderot was comfortable with himself and most everyone was comfortable with Diderot. This is in marked contrast to his contemporary, Rousseau, whose lack of self-acceptance led him to a life of tension and despair, and to little personal peace. Rousseau was destined to remain the eternal Saint-Preux. To make such observations detracts nothing from Rousseau as a writer; many of his best pages came from his probing for belonging and love, and the necessity he felt to justify past behavior. Typical are his Confessions (1770), and Rousseau Judge of

Jean-Jacques (1776), two of his last works, wherein he attempts a justification of his behavior.

It is this very quality of complete self-integration that is so striking in Diderot. He seems to have had no unmanageable, loose ends in his personality. This is not to deny him his emotive qualities or his mercurial, sometimes paradoxical thought process. " ... Un sage et un fou, c'est bien ce qu'a été Diderot."<sup>1</sup> As a matter of fact, the unhesitating manner with which he tackled paradox tends to reinforce the completeness of his self-integration. Diderot recognized contradiction in himself and seemed to welcome paradox. He made no attempt to hide his emotion or his "instability" and dynamism. All these elements were part of him, he recognized them and accepted them, and got on with the process of "becoming" and living; whereas, Jean-Jacques spent much of his energy trying to "shore up" his image and make himself acceptable. Rousseau spent much time attempting to show himself to be consistent. Diderot had such inner strength that he didn't care whether he appeared consistent or not. Rousseau's retreat from society is merely a negative manifestation of his lack of self-integration and self-acceptance.

As has been implied, each of these areas considered thus far in Diderot's motive hierarchy could be expanded and

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<sup>1</sup>Billy, ed., Oeuvres, p. 26.

detailed were that the major intent of the study. Of none of these motive areas is this more true than belongingness and love needs. He seems to have had an unusual capacity for giving warmth and drawing it from others. Witness the depth of his long-standing relationship with Sophie Volland. At the time of their first encounter (1756) he was forty-three and she was the forty-year-old unmarried daughter, Louise-Henriette Volland, (Diderot added "Sophie" due to her wisdom) of a salt merchant, Jean-Robert Volland. "Elle était sèche, malingre ... entichée de philosophie et de morale. ... Que Diderot ait été son amant, ses lettres ne permettent pas d'en douter, mais quelles singulières amours."<sup>1</sup> Of this relationship Julien Teppe writes: "Admettons-le, non sans retorquer que son sentiment envers Sophie Volland, méritait bien l'adjectif 'grand' tant par sa qualité que par sa constance, puisqu'il se manifesta trente années d'affilée."<sup>2</sup>

Among other things it was on the strength of friendship that he wrote the Salons for his great and good friend Grimm. He remained a true friend, though Grimm was not always deserving. "Drôle d'homme que ce Grimm, froid et dur, compliqué mais si intelligent! Quel est le secret de l'attachement que lui avait voué le Philosophe? Comme

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<sup>1</sup>Billy, ed., Oeuvres, p. 23.

<sup>2</sup>Julien Teppe, Histoire libertine des grands écrivains français (Paris: Editions Belleville, 1961) p. 162.

l'amour, l'amitié a ses mystères."<sup>1</sup> Other observations concerning Diderot and belongingness and love needs, reinforce the picture of Diderot as a man unusually capable of deep relationships. One observer says he counted his friendships to be the chief solace and inspiration of his life.<sup>2</sup> Another says his devotion in friendship and his selflessness in the name of a cause constituted a habitual way of life.<sup>3</sup>

He felt paternal love also in a degree that was marked for the time. His wife Antoinette was by disposition dour and by intellect unendowed, so Diderot showered affection on his daughter, the future Mme de Vandeuil. "Il avait pris son parti des inconvénients conjugales et s'en consolait en donnant des soins vigilants à l'éducation de sa fille,..."<sup>4</sup> He even sold his most precious possession, his library, to be able to see her well married. One should also add that much of the reason for his having mistresses, notably Mme de Puissieux, Sophie Volland and Mme de Prunevaux, parallels that of his attention toward Angelique.

Safety needs were for Diderot almost non-existent. This again is in contrast to the haunted Rousseau who at times

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<sup>1</sup>Billy ed., Oeuvres, p. 23.

<sup>2</sup>Durant, Age of Voltaire, p. 677.

<sup>3</sup>Herbert Josephs, Diderot's Dialogue of Language and Gesture: "Le Neveu De Rameau" (Ohio State University Press,

<sup>4</sup>Billy, ed., Oeuvres, p. 25.

acted as though he feared for his very life. The latter was, in point of fact, in flight for his psychological life. An autocratic government and church did pose some threat to Diderot. The following example shows, however, that safety needs were minimal among Diderot's prime motives. In 1758 D'Alembert had written to Voltaire expressing the conviction that the editors should abandon the Encyclopedia and complete it at a more favorable time, which he admitted would perhaps never come. D'Alembert subsequently withdrew on October 10 of the same year.<sup>1</sup> Even Voltaire urged that the enterprise be transferred to Lausanne. Further, on March 8, 1759, the King's Council officially revoked the privilege which had been granted in 1746.<sup>2</sup> In spite of all this, Diderot urged going right ahead at Paris. A more safety-conscious man would have hesitated, since conditions were such that he could have abandoned the project without loss of face. One other incident illustrates Diderot's actualization and cognition needs preempting safety needs. In 1764, Le Breton, publisher of the Encyclopedia, had taken it upon himself to censor some of the more "dangerous" elements of Diderot's work prior to printing. Diderot was furious. Billy comments:

Ainsi, la plus grande entreprise littéraire  
qu'il y eût eu depuis l'invention de l'imprimerie  
fut livrée par la persécution à l'imbécilité  
et à la timidité d'un imprimeur qui s'en

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<sup>1</sup>Billy, ed., Oeuvres, p. 18.

<sup>2</sup>Havens, Age of Ideas, p. 316.

rendit l'arbitre en dernier ressort avec une hardiesse dont je ne crois pas qu'il y ait d'exemple.<sup>1</sup>

Diderot had known the dungeons at Vincennes. He was arrested 24 July 1749 and was not released until 3 November. Interestingly, Andre Billy characterizes Diderot's behavior at Vincennes as "pusillanime." However, he does go on immediately thereafter to say:

Toutes les faiblesses qu'on peut lui reprocher s'effacent devant le courage et l'acharnement qu'il mit à poursuivre son oeuvre. Il y apporta une ardeur véritablement mystique. Son caractère fut, au moins dans ce domaine professionnel, à la hauteur de son intelligence.<sup>2</sup>

The first level on the hierarchy of needs, physiological, is as illustrative of Diderot and of his paradoxical personality as any. One observer recounts that in his early Paris years, " ... Diderot mena une vie de sacripant. Il était porté vers le sexe et n'y regardait de trop près."<sup>3</sup> Henri Bénac says, " ... Il aimait la bonne chère, le plaisir, l'amour. ... Dans sa Jeunesse il n'a guère cherché de sens à ses actes, emporté qu'il était par son ardeur sensuel." Bénac adds that " ... en un mot il aimait la vie et en jouissait pleinement."<sup>4</sup> Though Maslow in his hierarchy

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<sup>1</sup>Billy, ed., Oeuvres, p. 19.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid. p. 22.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 10.

<sup>4</sup>Bénac, ed., Oeuvres, p. vi.

placed sex more akin to love than to physiological need, it would appear that sex was almost strictly sense gratification for the young Diderot. He was destined, due to his regard for the "natural" man and "natural" appetites, to retain somewhat this same evaluation. His deeper self, however, did not permit that this be completely true of his relationship with Sophie Volland. Though he would have liaisons with, among others, Mme de Maux, when his relationship with Sophie became more nearly only platonic.

Considering another facet of physiological gratification, most introductions and notes accompanying Le Neveu de Rameau point to the fact that the nephew is, at least in part, one facet of Diderot, and that he took the descriptions of the ever-hungry nephew from his own earlier bohemian life. He has the nephew say that there are some men who are gorged with everything while others, who have a stomach just as importunate as theirs, a recurrent hunger like theirs, haven't a bite to put between their teeth. This is, says Havens, reminiscent of Diderot's youth, when he had with difficulty dragged himself home due to hunger-caused weakness.<sup>1</sup> In all probability, Diderot had known lean days. In his later years in the salons, Diderot was to know the best of foods and wines. He could appreciate them as well as

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<sup>1</sup>Havens, Age of Ideas, p. 359.

any man and likely more fully than most, but still he did not seem to have become a slave to the physiological. He was to have Moi tell Rameau that only the philosopher who wants nothing is able to escape this humiliating subservience. By subservience he was referring to people who must strike attitudes in order to survive. By extension, however, he seems to be also implying that man should remain free of any form of slavery, even that of the senses. Diderot's sensuality (used here in the broad sense) seems to have been studied and controllable. To this point, an incident related by Madame de Vandeul is recounted by Havens, which illustrates that this was the case even during his moneyless years. He seems to have operated by a law higher than adequacy of food and shelter, or even than gourmandism. In order to provide for himself, his allowance from his practical father having been cut off, Diderot acted as tutor. He had been employed in this manner by a certain Brandon de Boisset. Wearying of the routine, Diderot announced his demission:

Mais, monsieur Diderot, quel sujet de mécontentement avez-vous? Vos appointements sont-ils trop faibles? Je les doublerai. Etes-vous mal logé? Choisissez un autre appartement. Votre table est-elle mal servie? Ordonnez votre dîner: rien ne me coûtera pour vous conserver. - Monsieur, regardez-moi; un citron est moins jaune que mon visage. ... Je suis mille fois trop riche et trop bien dans votre maison, mais il faut que j'en sorte; l'objet de mes désirs n'est pas de vivre mieux, mais de ne pas mourir.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Denis Diderot, Oeuvres Complètes, ed. Assézat-Tourneaux. 20 Vol. (Paris: Garnier, 1875-77), I, xxxiii.

Had Diderot been a slave to the senses he would not have thus reacted. His shelter would have been assured, he could have had the most delicate of foods and with the doubled salary could have entertained any young lady of his choice. Motives other than sense-gratification were operative in Diderot even as a young bohemian. This is corroborated by the fact that regardless of his financial condition, he never appeared to be overly concerned for the meeting of his bottom-of-the-hierarchy needs. For example, he never returned to Langres to become a rich and comfortable cutler. Freed of any emotional concern as regards fulfilling physiological, safety or even belongingness needs, Diderot at a very early age directed himself to needs of cognition and estheticism and to self-actualization. Few men seem to have so completely and so successfully followed their own drummer. As time passed, Diderot more and more " ... vit une aventure personnelle qui le conduit à chercher de plus en lui-même le sens de la vie."<sup>1</sup>

Even this brief analysis has shown Diderot to have been operative largely in the area of higher motives. He was in no wise ascetic. He could enjoy, and accept as good, what was natural to man, whether that be appreciation of a fine soup or a voluptuous woman; but, at the same time, he

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<sup>1</sup>Bénac, ed., Oeuvres, p. xiii.

could philosophically do without. If he was no ascetic, neither was he a lower-need-gratification slave. One might propose that the press and tenor of the Encyclopedia disciplined him and gave direction to what might have become simply another self-directed Eighteenth Century intellectual. In any event, the totality of his effort markedly points to someone striving, as few have, to realize his potential, and his potential appears to have been monumental.

One other prime characteristic of Diderot should be pointed out; this has to do with his general quality of goodness, naivete and positive orientation. Mme D'Epinau says his contemporaries admired his genius, but that his character was the object of their particular enthusiasm. Some felt him to be the most perfect mortal. To his friends, his faults were those of a child naively frank.<sup>1</sup> Loy says: "Few authors have been so humbly and good-naturedly sincere with themselves."<sup>2</sup> André Billy says of him: "Il voulait rendre service à l'espèce humaine, ..." <sup>3</sup> He rather straightforwardly went about rendering this service by clearing away centuries of prejudice and falsehood. His great service was, as Roland Desné says, to have been " ... une machine de

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<sup>1</sup>Durant, Age of Voltaire, p. 674.

<sup>2</sup>John Robert Loy, Diderot's determined fatalist: a critical appreciation of "Jacques le fataliste". (New York: Kings Crown Press, 1950), p. 109.

<sup>3</sup>Billy, ed., Oeuvres, p. 26.

guerre contre l'absolutisme et l'obscurantisme."<sup>1</sup>

It will be immediately evident that Diderot the man, viewed from the point of view of motive hierarchy, could be the object of much more extensive study. It will suffice for the purposes of this study to have applied in a general way the same hierarchy to the author that will now be applied to his creations. It will thus be the intent of the remainder of this study to analyze Diderot's major romanesque creations, to see what kinds of motives move the characters of one of the most insightful and self-actualized men of any age. The general grouping of motives used for Diderot will be retained: self-actualization, aesthetic, cognitive, esteem, belongingness and love, safety and physiological. Diderot, of course, never heard of the concept of motive hierarchy but therein lies a good deal of the charm of the task.

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<sup>1</sup>Roland Desné, ed., Denis Diderot, Satires (Paris: Club des amis du livre progressiste, 1963), p. ix.

### CHAPTER III

#### MOI VERSUS LUI: ACTUALIZATION VERSUS ESTEEM FIXATION

It has been frequently observed that Diderot, as early as 1747, came to discover in the dialogue the most effective vehicle for conveying the dynamism of his thought process.<sup>1</sup> As much as anyone whose thoughts have been recorded and subjected to study, Diderot reserved the right to let his ideas evolve. He would not allow himself to be trapped, as was his compatriot Rousseau, into endlessly defending a thought he might have uttered or a position he might have at one time taken. Diderot's sparkling mind was dynamism itself. This accounts for the obvious conclusion by most writers on the subject that, able to see all sides of any given question, he simply could not neatly package his conclusions into one character and let him be his mouth-piece. He gave his thoughts full freedom to evolve and so of necessity needed at least two minds at work in any given

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<sup>1</sup>Herbert Josephs, Diderot's Dialogue of Language and Gesture, "Le Neveu de Rameau" (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1969) p. vii.

treatise, in order to make the result have a semblance of logic for the reader. For Diderot himself there was no difficulty in entertaining opposing positions on any given question. To help his readers, however, and probably to help clarify his own thinking, he turned to dialogue. Further, Diderot was capable of such an inconceivable array and depth of thought patterns that even he could see it would be necessary to create at least two fictional characters to contain them. This he has done admirably well in Le Neveu de Rameau, utilizing Lui, Rameau's nephew, hereafter called Rameau or the Nephew, and Moi, the philosopher or Diderot.

It is important for comprehension of the work to determine what Rameau and the philosopher represent. Do they in fact represent disparate elements of the enigmatic author as is frequently stated? Jean Fabre in his critical, definitive edition of Le Neveu says he feels this is so.

Rameau est, au naturel, un autre Diderot, un Diderot sans politesse, ni conséquence qui ne songerait pas à se surveiller. Mêmes poumons, même gesticulation forcenée, mêmes sautes d'humeur ou d'idées. Plus précisément encore, Rameau, compagnon de jeunesse et de bohème, est resté ce que Diderot a été, ce qu'il a failli devenir, ce qu'il se félicite, mais aussi regrette parfois, de n'être pas devenu.<sup>1</sup>

Herbert Dieckmann comes to similar conclusions that the two represent elements, albeit superficially disparate, of

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<sup>1</sup>Jean Fabre, ed., Denis Diderot "Le Neveu de Rameau" (Genève, Droz, 1950), p. lxvi.

Diderot past and present. Speaking of what Rameau might represent for the mature Diderot, Dieckmann says:

Comme lui il a mené une existence de bohème pendant une bonne partie de sa vie; il est cet être aux passions fortes, il est ce turbulent personnage dont Catherine II écrivait à Mme Geoffrin: "J'ai été obligé de mettre une table entre lui et moi pour me mettre à l'abri de sa gesticulation"; il a ce don de mime qu'il attribue au Neveu; il est celui dont il dit: "J'avais cent physionomies diverses, selon la chose dont j'étais affecté, j'étais serein, triste, rêveur, tendre, violent, passionné, enthousiaste. ..."<sup>1</sup>

Dieckmann adds "N'a-t-il pas voulu se dépeindre lui-même?" He then answers, "Non pas tel qu'il était, mais plutôt tel qu'il aurait pu être tel qu'il serait si on isolait un de ses multiples aspects pour le soumettre à un fort grossissement?" Thus Dieckmann sees Rameau as being at least somewhat exaggerated but still part of a dynamic self portrait coming from the interior of the author.

Henri Coulet, in a recent work, envisions the basic elements of the novel/satire as being " ... le personnage connu qu'était J. F. Rameau et les conversations qu'il avait pu effectivement avoir avec Diderot; ..." He adds, however, that they might have been " ... puissamment métamorphosés par l'imagination créatrice de l'auteur."<sup>2</sup> Lionel Trilling in a

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<sup>1</sup>Herbert Dieckmann, ed., Diderot Le Neveu de Rameau (Paris: Le Club du meilleur livre, 1957), p. xxxv.

<sup>2</sup>Henri Coulet, Le Roman Jusqu'à la Révolution (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1967), p. 505.

somewhat similar interpretation gives a Freudian explanation.<sup>1</sup>

Herbert Josephs, in an excellent recent critical work, stresses that there can indeed be found a parallel in Diderot's other writings for every thought, sublime or perverse, uttered by the Nephew. He states, however, that there is no want of evidence to support the idea that the fictional Rameau is very close to the real Jean-Francois Rameau. Any attempt, Joseph says, to identify Rameau too closely with Diderot disregards the facts. He was a professional parasite in bondage to Diderot's avowed enemies, the anti-philosophes. Any attempt at satire was aimed at these anti-Enlightenment financiers and tax-collectors such as Bertin, Rameau's protector.<sup>2</sup> Somewhat akin to this idea is that offered by Georges May that Diderot's anguish from attacks against the philosophes and from his sense of failure as a dramatist led to orienting the work in the manner that he did.<sup>3</sup> Finally the narrator serves to amalgamate the two interlocutors and in fact is closer to representing Diderot, if in fact Diderot is not represented by all three combined.

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<sup>1</sup>Lionel Trilling, "The Legacy of Sigmund Freud", Kenyon Review, II (1940), p. 153.

<sup>2</sup>Josephs, Dialogue, p. 108.

<sup>3</sup>Georges May, "L'Angoisse de l'échec et la genèse du 'Neveu de Rameau'", Diderot Studies III (1961), pp. 285-307.

Rameau would then seem to be at origin a real person with whom Diderot did in fact converse. There would also seem to be ample evidence to support the thesis that he is so closely reminiscent of elements of an earlier Diderot that it is very probable that the real Rameau was much like the Diderot of his early Paris years or that Diderot added these qualities to the real Rameau.

There would seem to be less cause for doubt concerning Moi, the philosopher half of the dialogue. This has seemed to be such a foregone conclusion that few critics in writing on the work even give it much place in their analyses. Obviously this stems in large measure from the fact that even beginning with the title, the central character is Rameau. Four or five times more space is devoted in the work to Rameau than to the philosopher. Even Josephs, whose handling and analysis of the philosopher exceeds that of most other critics, lets the philosopher share a chapter with Rameau while devoting three additional chapters to Rameau alone. The reason for the above seems to be that observers have simply felt that the philosopher merely represents the solid bourgeois elements of society, and that he is there to serve as contrast with the strikingly unique Rameau. Josephs says that in the philosopher, Diderot has reduced himself to conventional respectability and rigid intellectualism, and characterizes the philosopher's counsel to young

Rameau as simplistic solutions.<sup>1</sup> Goethe in his translation of the work into German, gave it as title Rameau's Neffe Ein Dialog von Diderot.<sup>2</sup> It seemed clear to him that the dialogue had been authored by Diderot, but he did not go so far as to use mit instead of von. It would seem reasonable to assume that Moi does in fact represent Diderot himself as closely as any one character can at all. This rests on the fact that Diderot, not intending to be published in his lifetime, took no pains to give pseudonyms or to alter circumstances. Even though he used Lui and Moi, he immediately tells us who Lui represents, and does not even consider it necessary to comment on Moi. Further support of this idea comes from the fact that throughout the dialogue, the Neveu refers to Moi as monsieur le philosophe, and Moi often says of his ideas or attitudes that they are those of the philosophers. If there was anything Diderot was wont to consider himself it was a philosopher, in both the traditional as well as Eighteenth-Century connotations. The analysis that this study will present will be based on the obvious parallels between Diderot and Rameau's philosopher.

One final factor concerning the interpretation of Moi's personality seems in order. As noted, many observers see him as conservative bourgeois. One possible explanation

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<sup>1</sup> Josephs, Dialogue, p. ii.

<sup>2</sup> Dieckmann, ed., Neveu, p. xlix.

as to why so many have in somewhat a priori fashion made this judgement may rest in the chronology of the genesis of the work. Diderot had begun writing the work in 1761 and 1762. He was retouching and revising it until 1774.<sup>1</sup> He was thus sixty-one at the time of its completion. It would be very natural to assume that whatever representation a sixty-one year old would give of himself, would be that of a conservative bourgeois. This does not, however, take cognizance of the individual with whom one is dealing. Our century has the tendency to assume that one is conservative, and past real mental growth, by age sixty or at least by age sixty-five. Consequently, average sixty-year-olds react in the same way that children do who continue to hear through their growing years that adolescence is a trying period. When they come to that age they subconsciously feel they must go about fulfilling the expectations. The average sixty-year-old will react similarly, and become conservative and less productive. However, Diderot of all men was not average. He in no wise patterned his life to fit any popular norm. He was an unusual adolescent and an unusual oldster. The masterpiece Jacques le fataliste was even to come from the same period in his life. It is the thesis of this study that Diderot was experiencing complete self-actualization at

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<sup>1</sup>Josephs, Dialogue, p. viii.

the time Neveu was composed and that consequently, any representation he would fictionally make of himself would not be that of a fixated bourgeois dispensing simplistic solutions to Rameau, but would rather be that of a vitally alive self-actualizer. It would appear that he was reporting himself as he most fundamentally was.

In hierarchy-of-motives terms then, what seems to be at play is the bringing together on the same stage of a self-actualized individual who has fulfilled all the lower need requirements and is now self-directive, and an individual who is still struggling with the most basic of needs. They can then represent two separate individuals or can in fact be a before-and-after treatment of the same person. It could well be that this is Diderot self-actualized, giving a last look at his former lower-need-centered self. An important point in this regard would be that though Diderot disapproves of being totally lower-need-centered, he does not reject lower needs. He is thus disapproving of Rameau's emphasis, but is not disapproving of any legitimate lower-hierarchy gratification. If we make the assumption that Rameau is what Diderot would have been had he not adequately responded to and adequately fulfilled each of his need levels in succession, what we have at hand is something of a controlled study. We could pose a hypothetical situation and say, "What would happen in hierarchy-of-motives terms if we keep the heredity and early child-rearing constant and vary

the early-adult pattern of need fulfillment?" In the case of subject A, that is to say Diderot or the philosopher, he gratified each need in succession, including esteem, aesthetic and cognitive needs and moved on to self-actualization. In the case of subject B, Rameau, (and assuming that here we have Diderot had he made different need-gratification decisions as a young man), we have someone who never felt as though his physiological and esteem needs were adequately gratified. We have someone who never got to the business of fulfilling higher needs. Interestingly enough then, the Neveu de Rameau portrays characters operative at both extremes of Maslow's hierarchy.

The following analyses will be in exemplification of the above summaries of the philosopher and Rameau. The philosopher proves to be so close an example of Maslow's self-actualizing group that the procedure employed in his analysis will be that of a point by point comparison of him with Maslow's characteristics. In the case of Rameau, much of his analysis will be incidental to and necessarily implicit in that of the philosopher. Points that remain unfinished or untreated will be handled following treatment of the philosopher. First then to the self-actualizing philosopher.

Acceptance of self, others and nature is one of the qualities par excellence of Maslow's self-actualizers. They can accept themselves in the stoic style and can accept what they are becoming without justification or complaint.

" . . . they can take the frailties and sins, weaknesses and evils of human nature in the same unquestioning spirit with which one accepts the characteristics of nature."<sup>1</sup> Likewise they do not argue with nature for having done things as she did. In this characteristic, Rameau's philosopher is a decided self-actualizer. After Rameau has inveighed against the inequalities he has encountered in life, the philosopher counsels:

Acceptons donc les choses comme elles sont. Voyons ce qu'elles nous coûtent et ce qu'elles nous rendent, et laissons là le tout que nous ne connaissons pas assez pour le louer ou le blâmer, et qui n'est peut-être ni bien ni mal, s'il est nécessaire comme beaucoup d'honnêtes gens l'imaginent.<sup>2</sup>

This is stoicism, and acceptance of things over which one has no control, in the best Montaigne tradition. He seems to be saying exactly what Maslow says he found to be true of his select group. Another excellent example comes as the philosopher is describing his daughter of eight and her adjustment to life. The entire situation here, to include the daughter, is of course reminiscent of Diderot himself.

Puisque la nature a été assez ingrate envers elle pour lui donner une organisation délicate avec une âme sensible, et l'exposer aux mêmes peines de la vie que si elle avait une organisation forte et un coeur de bronze, je lui apprendrai, si je peux, à les supporter avec courage.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Maslow, Motivation, p. 206.

<sup>2</sup>Bénac, ed., Oeuvres, p. 405.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 420.

This is at one and the same time evidence of the philosopher's wholesome acceptance of life, quite removed from pathological pessimism, and is a beautiful example of a self-actualizing parent. The philosopher's greater maturity gives him a vision of life that his young daughter cannot grasp alone. He will thus help her to see things in a way that will make her years on earth more realistic.

Concerning the characteristic of acceptance of others, time and again the philosopher shows himself accepting of Rameau. In the following example there is admirably shown the tendency of the self-actualizing to make a distinction between the person and the deed. One can dislike the act, but still be accepting of the doer. The philosopher tells Rameau that, " ... en dépit du rôle misérable, abject, vil, abominable que vous faites, je crois qu'au fond vous avez l'âme délicat."<sup>1</sup> The adjectives here chosen by the philosopher to characterize Rameau's actions show that he considers them to be among the most base imaginable. Nevertheless he accepts Rameau as having a delicate soul. Somewhat God-like, (for Maslow's self-actualizers are in a way rather God-like), the philosopher distinguishes between Rameau as a person and the quality of his deeds. In the same vein, after Rameau has listed his sins for shock effect, the philosopher's reaction is still that of understanding and acceptance:

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 444.

"La faute que vous avez commise est-elle si impardonnable?"<sup>1</sup>

One additional instance, and also one of the most charming parts of the work, shows the philosopher's complete yet honest acceptance of others. Rameau and the philosopher have just noticed each other and the philosopher greets him by saying: "Je ne pense guère à vous quand je ne vous vois pas. Mais vous me plaisez toujours à revoir."<sup>2</sup> This greeting shows the rare combination, at least in adult behavior, (it would be more observable in children), of complete acceptance along with absolute sincerity. Normal adult behavior would not allow for one to say to another that in his absence he does not think about him. The obvious result would be shattered friendships and offended egos. Here, however, there is complete absence of sham; there is the freshness and naivete of a child, another quality definitional of self-actualization.<sup>3</sup> The philosopher can be so forthright because he is totally accepting and knows that Rameau knows this. No self-respect or self-concept is threatened when one is dealing with a self-actualized individual. By very definition, they have as one of their aims the promotion of other's feeling of self-worth. Being completely comfortable with themselves and self-accepting,

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 409.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 398.

<sup>3</sup>Maslow, Motivation, p. 208.

they have no need to debase others in order to elevate themselves. It is small wonder then that Rameau felt safe in pouring out his inner self to the philosopher.

A second characteristic of the self-actualizing is that they will, more often than people in general, feel a sense of duty, of obligation and responsibility toward their fellow beings. They will have a mission, a task-orientation outside themselves.<sup>1</sup> In this characteristic, Rameau's philosopher seems to be in direct juxtaposition to Rameau. Rameau feels duty only to self, to the ensuring of his own gratification and well-being. The philosopher on the other hand feels a duty to his country, " ... défendre sa patrie?"; to friends "Servir ses amis?"; to society, "Avoir un état dans la société et en remplir les devoirs"; to one's family and offspring, "Veiller à l'éducation de ses enfants?".<sup>2</sup> The philosopher is obviously other-oriented in the wholesome sense of the term. All of the above bespeak someone who is growth, rather than deficiency motivated. The philosopher is altruism and growth in action.

In a later discussion of what Rameau should be absorbing from his reading, the philosopher declares: "La connaissance de ses devoirs, l'amour de la vertu, la haine

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<sup>1</sup>Maslow, Motivation, p. 211.

<sup>2</sup>Bénac, ed., Oeuvres, p. 429.

du vice."<sup>1</sup> It may be only happenstance that the philosopher should have placed the learning of one's duties as the first of things one should learn from one's reading, nevertheless he did place it there and it is obviously of prime importance to him. He again shows what Maslow says his self-actualizers showed--problem and task-centering rather than ego-centering. Here the philosopher's id, ego and superego seem to be more collaborative and synergistic than divided. Conversely, Rameau is largely id-centered. What ego-orientation he displays is merely the guise that experience or reality (ego) has shown him are necessary to ensure id gratification.

A characteristic of self-actualization which somewhat overlaps the two already considered is that of gemeinschaftsgefühl. This is a term coined by Alfred Adler. The person exhibiting this quality feels toward humanity a

. . . deep feeling of identification, sympathy and affection in spite of occasional anger, impatience or disgust. . . . However far apart he is from them at times, he nevertheless feels a basic underlying kinship with these creatures whom he must regard with, if not condescension, at least the knowledge that he can do things better than they can, that he can see things that they cannot see, that the truth that is so clear to him is for most people veiled and hidden.<sup>2</sup>

This is in essence an older more insightful person compassionately attempting to convey to someone less insightful and possibly even unwilling, truths and facts that will ameliorate.

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid. p. 447.

<sup>2</sup> Maslow, Motivation, p. 218.

It is rather like Diderot, through love and a sense of obligation, struggling to place in the hands of the people beclouded by superstition, information in the form of an Encyclopedia that would greatly improve their condition. Carried to its logical extension, gemeinschaftsgefühl characterizes a tolerant Deity attempting to instruct a wayward people. Rameau in this analogy is not unlike what one would expect from a personification of the attributes of the Children of Israel. They, like Rameau, are bent on immediate gratification. They cannot await Moses' message from an unseen distant God, but must rather fashion a golden calf which will more strikingly, more immediately fill the need they are experiencing. Like Rameau, they do not learn from their teacher. Rameau does not profit from the philosopher's counsel, nor do the Children of Israel heed Moses. Thus in a sense, in Rameau and the philosopher, Diderot has produced a sort of two-person Old Testament.

On a more prosaic level concerning Rameau and the philosopher, the latter continually attempts to show the former the obvious advantages of more forthright behavior. The following is typical of Rameau's replies: " ... Je ne m'accorde point de votre félicité, ni du bonheur de quelque visionnaire comme vous." The philosopher replies in a manner reminiscent of Maslow's gemeinschaftsgefühl: "Je vois, mon cher que vous ignorez ce que c'est, et que vous n'êtes pas même fait pour l'apprendre."<sup>1</sup> Here the philosopher realizes

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<sup>1</sup>Bénac, ed., Oeuvres, p. 435.

that Rameau has not understood and is in fact incapable of understanding. Still he is compassionate and will try some other approach, aware that he has understandings that could prove helpful to the wayward Rameau. Without citing further examples, suffice it to say that the entire relationship between the two is evidence of gemeinschaftsgefühl in the life of the philosopher.

Time and again in the course of their conversation, admittedly rather extended, the philosopher exhibits signs of a democratic character structure. This is another of the traits common to self-actualizers, and is akin to those of acceptance and gemeinschaftsgefühl. In the first place the very fact that he would so extendedly converse in public with a person of the bizarre appearance of Rameau indicates a democratic soul. By the time of this writing, Diderot was rather established and was a person of note. From this we can infer that the philosopher was as well. A lesser man would have avoided, like the social plague, anyone even approaching Rameau's appearance and actions. The philosopher is totally above such nonsense and will befriend whom he will. The point of importance here is that the philosopher is not merely amusing himself nor passing an interesting afternoon at the expense of a social oddity. He democratically accepts Rameau as a human being worthy of the respect due any member of the race. Maslow says of his self-actualizers that they tend " . . . to give a certain quantum of respect to any

human being just because he is a human individual."<sup>1</sup> They attempt to see that no one is robbed of his dignity and individuality, even a scoundrel.

An exemplary case in point comes as Rameau wishes he had the philosopher's talents in order to more effectively carry on his vices. He praises the philosopher, all the while coveting his talents for evil purposes. The philosopher could have very readily railed against him, decrying his evil. Instead he chose to criticize in a positive way, allowing Rameau to retain a dignity of sorts. "Et tout cela, vous le savez mille fois mieux que moi. Je ne serais pas même digne d'être votre écolier."<sup>2</sup> Obviously he in no wise wants to learn what Rameau might have to teach, and has no intention to become his pupil; but even so, he has demonstrated his democratic attitude and has also shown himself, in a manner of speaking, to be teachable.

A few additional comments at this point will bring to light one additional quality of self-actualization manifested by the philosopher. Not only does his afternoon spent with Rameau show his democratic character structure, it also gives evidence of a quality of interpersonal relationship of which few people are capable. It is difficult to imagine that Rameau would enter into the type of relationship he has

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<sup>1</sup>Maslow, Motivation, p. 220.

<sup>2</sup>Bénac, ed., Oeuvres, p. 478.

here with the philosopher, with any other person. Rameau trusts and respects him. Ego boundaries are virtually eliminated. The relationship is decidedly profound, given the facts of the infrequency of their meetings, and the disparity of their lives and value systems. The philosopher seems to have effortlessly established a rapport that would be the envy of the most accomplished of psychiatrists. He seems to care in a very meaningful way, and communicates this to Rameau who responds by baring his soul. They have communicated as artlessly and unreservedly as children.

As has been evident of the prior indicators of self-actualization, none are mutually exclusive nor totally independent. This was acknowledged by Maslow and is true of the following which are not unlike a syndrome. Self-actualizing people are resistant to enculturation and maintain a certain detachment from the accepted and common. They have a need for privacy and have an intense concentrational capacity which might lead to absent-mindedness. They retain an autonomy and find satisfaction based on inner rather than social criteria. They are not dependent on opinion nor even on affection, though they are themselves capable of giving and receiving love in a very profound way.<sup>1</sup> They tend to hold to their own interpretation of a situation, rather than to

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<sup>1</sup>Maslow, Motivation, p. 241.

rely upon what might be a more popularly held opinion, and do not "need" other people in the same way that most men do. Their determinants of satisfaction are inner-individual and not social.<sup>1</sup> An excellent example of this quality of self-direction and offhanded detachment in Diderot's philosopher is offered on the book's initial page, as the philosopher describes some of his personal habits.

Qu'il fasse beau qu'il fasse laid, c'est mon habitude d'aller sur les cinq heures du soir me promener au Palais Royal. C'est moi qu'on voit toujours seul, rêvant sur le banc d'Argenson. Je m'entretiens avec moi même de politique, d'amour, de goût ou de philosophie. J'abandonne mon esprit à tout son libertinage. Je le laisse maître de suivre la première idée sage ou folle qui se présente.<sup>2</sup>

This sounds surprisingly like what Maslow has just proposed. It is descriptive of a man content (not the same as self-satisfied) with life and with himself; of a man who has a quiet assurance of his own worth. In a way it is like an intrapersonal salon. The above is supremely indicative of psychological good health. Our philosopher has been able to let Rameau completely speak his mind and never felt as though he had to answer defensively. By the same token, the philosopher is able to step somewhat aside in this intrapersonal salon, and let his own thoughts take their course,

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 214.

<sup>2</sup>Bénac, ed., Oeuvres, p. 395.

completely unthreatened by what might be the possible outcome. Like the truly self-actualized man, he is unthreatened by the bizarre or the unknown. The philosopher counsels somewhat the same action for Rameau when Rameau seems to be unsure of his place in society. The philosopher proposes toward the end of the novel, that rather than debasing himself in order to obtain a rich table, Rameau should " ... se renfermer dans son grenier, boire de l'eau, manger du pain sec et chercher soi-même."<sup>1</sup> This sums up much of what the philosopher (i.e., Diderot) has probably done to arrive at his state of self-discipline, self-integration and self-knowledge. Obviously it is reminiscent of another stoic and philosopher, Michel de Montaigne, who had a profound influence on Diderot. All elements of the proposed regimen are aimed at self-mastery: foregoing of luxurious accommodations, eating and drinking to sustain life rather than as ends in themselves, and most importantly, forcing oneself to discover who and what he is. In discussing his self-actualized individuals, Maslow asserts he is in total agreement with Erich Fromm " . . . that the average, normal, well-adjusted person often has not the slightest idea of what he is, of what he wants, or what his own opinions are."<sup>2</sup> It is evident that the philosopher has the same opinion of Rameau and hence offers his regimen for

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 482.

<sup>2</sup>Maslow, Motivation, p. 210.

change. Like Fromm's average individual, however, Rameau will likely continue on, ignorant of his real self and equally ignorant of his potential.

When Rameau shows no inclination to master himself and to modify his life-style to the point of becoming independent of servitude and servility, (a characteristic par excellence of self-actualizers), the philosopher explodes: "Je veux mourir si cela ne vaudrait mieux que de ramper, de s'aviler et se prostituer."<sup>1</sup> To be abundantly clear he spells it out in slightly different terms for the unteachable Rameau. He points out to him the great price he is paying in order to fill his stomach in the manner that he does; and that this price, self-regard, is too great a sacrifice to make for the mere meeting of lower needs. He implies rather directly that Rameau would do infinitely better to see reality more clearly and pay the price that he, the philosopher, has paid: hard work and self-mastery.

Les choses de la vie ont un prix sans doute mais vous ignorez celui du sacrifice que vous faites pour les obtenir. Vous dansez, vous avez dansé et vous continuerez de danser la vile pantomime.<sup>2</sup>

This is probably the first time the above state of affairs had been put to Rameau in terms of his own sacrifice. He seems to have concluded previously that his own means of

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<sup>1</sup>Bénac, ed., Oeuvres, p. 489.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 490.

obtaining life's goods was infinitely less expensive than the means employed by others. The philosopher straightens out his muddled thinking.

Diderot was obviously familiar with the humor of Moliere and Voltaire. Both of them had ends beyond humor alone and this was of course even more the case with Diderot. He employs humor much less than did either of the above two, and in a sense what humor he does use is more intrinsic than superimposed. This would be obviously true of his more philosophic works, and would be less so of works such as Les Bijoux indiscrets. Further, his humor, as with Voltaire's, tended to be an ally to his philosophy. This is probably even truer of Diderot than Voltaire who was at moments superficial in his desire to be humorous. Diderot's humor elicits a smile rather than a laugh, generally because the tenor of all that has preceded has been rather weighty. A good example, and one which places the philosopher in Maslow's self-actualization category, is the following: Rameau has been attempting to make the philosopher see that he (the philosopher) has talents that could very well be put to "better" use such as making money or seducing women. The philosopher counters with soft philosophical humor that makes his point but at the same time shows that no hostility is intended. "Mais c'est qu'il y a des gens comme moi qui ne regardent pas la richesse comme la chose du monde la plus

précieuse: gens bizarres."<sup>1</sup> The humorous addendum is reminiscent of Voltaire, but it is less biting and more humanistic than it would have been coming from him. All in all the philosopher is not a humorous individual in the accepted sense. He rather fits Maslow's description of this quality in his subjects. He says that, "It should not be surprising that the average man, accustomed as he is to joke books and belly laughs, considers our subjects to be rather on the sober and serious side."<sup>2</sup> This is very true of the philosopher. He is capable of humor, but he would rather influence by the cogency of his thought, than by a humorous twist imposed on his material.

The self-actualizer, says Maslow, does not confuse means and ends and is ethically strong.<sup>3</sup> Diderot has the philosopher consistently show his long-range adherence to nature and truth. " ... Je crois que si le mensonge peut servir un moment, il est nécessairement nuisible à la longue, bien qu'il puisse arriver qu'il nuise dans le moment."<sup>4</sup> One other example serves to show the ethical strength of the

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 478.

<sup>2</sup>Maslow, Motivation, p. 223.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 221.

<sup>4</sup>Bénac, éd., Oeuvres, p. 401.

philosopher. The following is especially interesting considering the state of morals and integrity during the eighteenth century. Rameau asks, "Mais à votre compte il faut donc être d'honnêtes gens?" The philosopher replies, "Pour être heureux? assurément."<sup>1</sup> The philosopher's reply is an extremely important one. He did not infer that one should be honest in order to avoid a confrontation with police or legal authorities or even in order to have better relations with one's neighbors and peers. All of these are of course somewhat implicit in his answer but they are only a fraction of the totality of his reply. Nor does he reply that one should do good or be honest in order to obtain a celestial reward. Post-earth-life rewards of course were not at all part of Diderot's, nor of his philosopher's, motives. What the philosopher seems to be saying is that for a man to be truly what he most fundamentally can be, and to be most fundamentally true to himself, he must be honest and ethically strong. Here, the philosopher is at one and the same time realistic and idealistic. He realizes that ultimately human relationships must be based on certain predictables, on certain laws and precepts on which one and all can rely. If nothing that any man says can be taken at face value, if no man is honest, much of the reliability and predictability of life is lost. This leads immediately to apprehension and

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 432.

despair. Thus he avers that man's natural state, that state which will lead to happiness, involves honesty. It is small wonder then that this is characteristic of Maslow's self-actualizers as well as of Diderot's philosopher, as an integral part of their total self.

Another example comes as Rameau recounts all the untruths he tells and the insinuations he makes in order to mislead his protectors into thinking he is something he is not. He tells the philosopher how he drops names to make others think he is being awaited here and there. The philosopher asks:

Moi: Et cependant vous n'êtes attendu nulle part?

Lui: Il est vrai.

Moi: Et pourquoi employer toutes ces petites viles ruses-là?<sup>1</sup>

As insightful as he is, the philosopher finds it difficult to see why Rameau would want to live a lie. The philosopher has to remind Rameau, on one occasion, that he wants their relationship to have none of the sham that Rameau's relationships with others seem to have. "Je suis un bon homme; ayez la bonté d'en user avec moi plus rondement et de laisser là votre art."<sup>2</sup> The philosopher practices himself, and wants from Rameau, predictability and honesty.

It is readily evident that in the final analysis, truth is a more correct and efficient perception of reality,

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 424.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 443.

given that the perception of reality involves perceiving and interpreting things as they most actually are. Truth assumes a perception of reality which is free from the falsity of judgement that comes when perception is influenced by the perceiver's needs or fears. In this characteristic, the philosopher is again juxtaposed with Rameau. All Rameau's decisions and perceptions are made through the distortion created by his own needs. He can no longer accurately interpret reality. The philosopher on the other hand has mastered himself to the point that his own needs no longer distort. In a manner of speaking the philosopher is no longer personally involved. He is committed in the Sartrean sense but his personal involvement is nil because he is now growth oriented rather than need oriented.

Along the same general line of correctness of perception, the philosopher points out that often men of genius, i.e. the philosophers and others, with their greater capacity, will see a truth which remains hidden from the common man. In a word, the genius has had a clearer, more complete perception of reality. Time will eventually exonerate the genius, i.e. the man with clearer perception, but it will often be the case that in the meantime he will be the " ... victime du préjugé et des lois."<sup>1</sup> Maslow implies that the genius (self-actualized man) will also be able to more

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 401.

accurately perceive reality because he is unfrightened and unthreatened by the unknown. He will be more in the real world than in the man-made world of concepts and stereotypes. Again this seems to be definitional of the genius of which the philosopher speaks.

Two characteristics of those proposed by Maslow as definitional of self-actualizing people remain to be applied to our philosopher. As with others mentioned, they tend to be overlapping. These include the quality of creativeness, here defined by Maslow as a child-like, naive way of viewing the world.<sup>1</sup> The second is that of continued freshness of appreciation, of still feeling wonder and awe from the everyday experiences of life.<sup>2</sup> Suffice it to say at this point that these are intrinsic in all the philosopher says and does. Everything we know of him bespeaks a man who could still find beauty in a sunset or amazement at another birth. The very fact that he habitually takes walks and that he seems to derive so much pleasure from them implies he is a man who finds joy in the natural and in the commonplace. His totally direct and naive acceptance of Rameau attests to the same kind of freshness. One final but decidedly important citation will be made in this regard. It

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<sup>1</sup>Maslow, Motivation, p. 223.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 214.

points out the philosopher's guilelessness, his freshness, and his spontaneity. It exemplifies all that has been said concerning the total self-integration that can be realized by men of this type. Here there is no chagrin or embarrassment at fulfilling his lower needs; he has them, fulfills them, and then gets on to caring for higher-level ones. It is an extremely felicitous passage for someone attempting to exemplify the fulfillment of Maslow's hierarchy. It is written almost as though its author had first consulted Maslow before sitting down to write. It is the example par excellence of total self-integration, of total self-acceptance and of a man who is now growth rather than deficit motivated. The philosopher here summarizes himself freshly and candidly for Rameau:

Je ne méprise pas les plaisirs des sens: j'ai un palais aussi, et il est flatté d'un mets délicat ou d'un vin délicieux; j'ai un coeur et des yeux, et j'aime à voir une jolie femme, j'aime à sentir sous ma main la fermeté et la rondeur de sa gorge, à presser ses lèvres des miennes, à puiser la volupté dans ses regards, et à en expirer entre ses bras; quelquefois avec mes amis, une partie de débauche, même un peu tumultueuse, ne me déplaît pas. Mais, je ne vous le dissimulerai pas, il m'est infiniment plus doux encore d'avoir secouru le malheureux, d'avoir terminé une affaire épineuse, donné un conseil salutaire, fait une lecture agréable, une promenade avec un homme ou une femme chère à mon coeur, passé quelques heures instructives avec mes enfants, écrit une bonne page, rempli les devoirs de mon état, dit à celle que j'aime quelques choses tendres et douces qui amène ses bras autour de mon col. Je connais telle action que je voudrais avoir faite pour tout ce que je possède. C'est un sublime ouvrage que Mahomet, j'aimerais mieux avoir réhabilité la mémoire des Calas.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Bénac, ed., Oeuvres, p. 432.

A final word concerning the philosopher. It would seem that any number of the preceding examples, even this last one cited, would serve to point out that the philosopher is infinitely more than a mere symbol of bourgeois ethics. As concerns Trilling's evaluation, it would also seem appropriate to say that the foregoing examples point out the philosopher to be much more than a Freudian ego representative. The philosopher goes much beyond the reality principle and is, in a sense, operative at a stage even beyond the superego. The counsel he offers to Rameau is not merely simplistic, it is vital and philosophic in a very meaningful way. If there is anything a present-day psychiatrist would propose to Rameau it would be to reevaluate his value system, and to define for himself more exactly who and what he is, in a cosmic, as well as in a limited sense. The philosopher in almost no way resembles a security-oriented, esteem-oriented bourgeois.

It remains now to complete and broaden the analysis of Rameau. Obviously, he was absorbed in lower-hierarchy needs; in this he is almost a complete pole apart from the philosopher. He is possibly what Diderot, unbridled, and lacking self-control and direction, could have become. It seems highly likely that Diderot on "creating" him, could have felt constrained to say to himself that there, but for some insight and self-discipline, was he. Rameau seems at first glance almost physiologically fixated. These lower

needs have taken on an importance for him out of all proportion to their normal value. Immediately after their having encountered each other, the philosopher inquires as to what he had been doing. Rameau answers in terms that make him appear dedicated solely to fulfilling immediate physiological requirements. " ... J'ai eu faim, et j'ai mangé, quand l'occasion s'est présentée; après avoir mangé, j'ai eu soif, et j'ai bu quelquefois. Cependant la barbe me venait, et ... je l'ai fait raser."<sup>1</sup> Later the philosopher seems to interpret Rameau in terms not unlike those one would use for a boa constrictor or a lion. The philosopher has been encouraging him to write down some of his ideas. Rameau argues he does not have time for that. The philosopher presses further, asking him about his " ... heures perdues, lorsque l'angoisse de votre estomac vide ou la fatigue de votre estomac surchargé éloigne le sommeil. ..." <sup>2</sup> The philosopher here implies that there would logically be only two reasons why Rameau might lie awake at night. Both of these reasons have to do with a stomach that sounds like either a hungry or a bloated carnivore. He infers that, like a boa constrictor, Rameau would respond to hunger pangs, and when opportunity presented itself he would eat to satiation. Then, stomach painfully distended, he would lie down to await digestion.

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 399.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 442.

Though this is probably part of the truth concerning Rameau's physiological needs, it does not seem to account for all the ramifications of his eating habits. Rameau is not merely fulfilling the need for nourishment, he is rather fixated on filling the need in a specific way, on filling it as he would if he were famous and rich as had been his uncle. This would seem to imply then that Rameau's eating and drinking habits unconsciously fill esteem needs, not physiological needs alone. One gets the impression that Rameau, even desperately hungry, would not just eat any type of nutriment. He must eat in a sumptuous surrounding at a sumptuous table, of the best of foods. When asked what he would do were he rich he shows that his tastes decidedly tend toward the exquisite: " ... boire de bon vin, se gorger de mets délicats, se rouler sur de jolies femmes, se reposer dans des lits bien mollets. Excepté cela, le reste n'est que vanité."<sup>1</sup> On another occasion he makes nearly the same wish list: " ... bonne table, bonne compagnie, bons vins, belles femmes, plaisirs de toutes les couleurs, ..." <sup>2</sup> From the adjectives employed here it is evident that not any old table or just any wine will do. Thus, to merely conclude that Rameau is carnally and sensually oriented is to miss the idea that his emphasis here has been

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 429.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 404.

on the quality of each item, not on their mere availability. To eat and live in this manner fills esteem as well as nourishment needs. One senses that this is the case in the following instance. The price Rameau had to pay for remaining at the table was to remain silent. This is of course a direct assault at his need for recognition. Rameau on these occasions " ... se taisait et mangeait de rage." If on occasion he were put in his place, " ... la fureur étincelait dans ses yeux et il se remettait à manger avec plus de rage."<sup>1</sup> On both occasions the inner reaction is evident. He is not eating the food merely to gratify some caloric or vitamin need, rather it symbolizes for him those who are trampling on his esteem needs, and he is symbolically attacking them. There is no possibility of a wisdom-of-the-body interpretation of his eating. Like all else he did, it was symbolic of his frustrated need for prestige, recognition, and accomplishment.

In his more lucid moments, Rameau shows himself capable of understanding the very heart of this need of all men. "Il faut qu'il y ait une certaine dignité attachée à la nature de l'homme, que rien ne peut étouffer."<sup>2</sup> Not even a Twentieth-Century psychologist could say it more

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 397.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 411.

clearly. Fundamentally, he wants to walk with his head erect so that " ... la conscience te rendrait témoignage à toi-même de ton propre mérite, ..." <sup>1</sup> Like all men he needed to feel " ... qu'on ne pouvait se passer de moi, que j'étais un homme essentiel." <sup>2</sup> Had Rameau been able to retain some portion of this insight for any extended period, his troubles would have been minimal. His Achilles heel, however, was his name. He could not graciously bear it. His interpretation of what it forcedly imposed upon him was his demise. "Rameau? S'appeler Rameau, cela est gênant." It became impossible for him to make any sort of reasonable compromise between what he was, and what his name inferred he should be. What he had hauntingly, continually in front of him, was that he ought to " ... avoir fait ou faire quelque chose qui excitât l'admiration de l'univers." <sup>3</sup> He felt he must in some way live up to the family name. The genius and power of his pantomimes and mimicry show how closely he could come to a masterful creation. An equal talent and an equal energy expended on a real clavecin or violin would have made him a virtuoso. His problem was that he was not clear-headed enough to see how close he was to artistic genius, and yet he was too clear-headed to accept what he

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 406.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 451.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 481.

did do as adequately meeting his need for achievement and recognition.

His frustration turned his energies in compensatory fashion into various avenues. One of these was that of irritation at anyone else's success. "Je n'ai jamais entendu louer un seul que son éloge ne m'ait fait secrètement enrager." He would then try to bring these people down to his level since he was unable to ascend to theirs. Thus, whenever he would hear some degrading remark about a person of note, he would listen with delight " ... car cela nous rapproche."<sup>1</sup> Compensatory fancies would seize him and he would envision himself rich and powerful. " ... je serais le plus insolent maroufle qu'on eût encore vu. ... J'aime à commander et je commanderai. J'aime qu'on me loue et l'on me louera."<sup>2</sup> If fantasies did not suffice, Rameau and his types would resort to taking out their frustrations on scapegoats who were lower in the social hierarchy than themselves.

Il faut voir, quand l'humeur nous prend, comme nous traitons les valets, comme les femmes de chambre sont souffletées, comme nous menons à grands coup de pied les parties casuelles pour peu qu'elles s'écartent du respect qui nous est dû."<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 406.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 428.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 443.

Rameau's frustrated state led him to a variety of distortions of reality. For him, procuring became " ... un état honnête. Beaucoup de gens même titrés s'en mêlent."<sup>1</sup> In *Celestina* fashion, and almost with professional pride he says: "J'ai plus de cent façons d'entamer la séduction d'une jeune fille, ... Je possède surtout le talent d'encourager un jeune homme timide, ..." <sup>2</sup> He does betray later what this might mean for him. "Si cela était écrit je crois qu'on m'accorderait quelque génie."<sup>3</sup> This same frustration-induced distortion has led him to a rather unique way of arriving at greatness. When asked why he did not record his *Celestina*-like practices he likens himself to Cesar, Turenne and Vauban. He will be like these men who " ... lisent peu, pratiquent beaucoup."<sup>4</sup> This same distortion led him to set up a type of merit scale for evil. Great evil, like great good, ought to be lauded. Ordinary evil is reprehensible but " ... l'atrocité de l'action vous porte au delà du mépris." He wants to draw from the philosopher the admission that he is " ... au moins original dans mon avilissement, me placer dans votre tête sur la ligne des grands vauriens."<sup>5</sup> An additional point of import here seems

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 404.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 441.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 442.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., p. 462.

to be that for Rameau there is no point in being a good-for-nothing for its own sake. Even his baseness and loathsomeness must be aimed at securing recognition from the philosopher. The pattern continually returns to the fact that Rameau can be or do nothing for its own sake. All must eventually go toward paying off in some way his recognition needs. Coupled even with the matter of playing the fool, he makes the philosopher admit his supremacy. "Il faut convenir que vous avez porté le talent de faire des fous et de s'avilir aussi loin qu'il est possible."<sup>1</sup>

Rameau could not always be so positively forthright with his demanding of regard and esteem. Very frequently he feels unconsciously uncomfortable enough with what he is, and with what he has done, that he must shift some of the responsibility elsewhere. A frequent resort is that of saying that everybody is doing it. "Je ne m'avilis point en faisant comme tout le monde." Parallel shifting of responsibility is evident when he disavows authorship of the world's villainy. "Ce n'est pas moi qui les ai inventées."<sup>2</sup> In the following instance he shifts blame for what he is to his protectors: "On m'a voulu ridicule et je me le suis fait." As to other more vicious elements, "... nature

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 439.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 425.

seule en avait fait les frais."<sup>1</sup> Even here he must blame genetics.

One final indication of his need to protect his inner self from loss of esteem is shown by his manner of giving music lessons. Admitting first of all to knowing nothing about what he professes to teach, he justifies nevertheless his taking of the money on the grounds that " ... ils n'avaient rien à désapprendre, et c'était toujours autant d'argent et de temps épargné."<sup>2</sup> With this kind of reasoning, Rameau keeps some sort of a positive self-picture. Anyway, he says, the people from whom I steal the money have acquired it in some dishonest way from someone else and "Nous faisons justice les uns des autres sans que la loi s'en mêle."<sup>3</sup> It is evident that Rameau could here serve in almost classic fashion, as a case study of the displacement of responsibility. He does not have the fortitude to be what he knows he can and should be, nor does he have the graciousness nor psychic strength to accept himself as he is.

Rameau makes a rather succinct summary of his motive hierarchy while speaking about the happiness of his son. He gave indication of a rather profound concern for the boy, as much as one would expect from a Rameau, and seemed

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 449.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 442.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 427.

genuinely concerned for his future. He declared that he wanted his son to be happy and he then proceeded to spell out just what he envisioned by happiness. If we assume that all men seek as their major goal, happiness, this should mean that Rameau's definition of it should by and large reveal his value system. Rameau declares: "Je veux que mon fils soit heureux, ou ce qui revient au même, honoré, riche et puissant."<sup>1</sup> From all the foregoing discussion of Rameau's needs, this summary is entirely consistent. The prime element of happiness, by virtue of the fact that he has placed it at the first of his list, is "to be honored". This succinctly summarizes all his frustrated recognition needs, and shows why he must try to associate himself with people of notoriety, such as Mademoiselle Hus. By associating with notables, he partakes of some of their acclaim, and eases his battered ego. He cannot escape his uncle and his name. Rameau realizes how insignificant money or being rich is to the philosopher, and so he feels he must clarify what he means by his proposing of money as the second ingredient necessary to happiness. If his son does have money, Rameau tells the philosopher, " ... rien ne lui manquera, pas même votre estime et votre respect."<sup>2</sup> The point of importance

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 476.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

is that what money or wealth really means is more of the first ingredient, that of honor or, as he says, esteem and respect. Thus very clearly the first two ingredients of happiness are nearly parallel, and in point of fact fulfill the same need, that of esteem and recognition. The use of "même" and "votre" do show that Rameau values the philosopher's recognition above that of many others, but it is evident also that he is after a universal type of acclaim.

Item three on Rameau's list of happiness ingredients, that of "powerful", seems likewise directed at the same basic need as the first two. Power has no meaning in the absence of other people. Honor cannot be self-bestowed, it must come from others, and specifically from those whose opinions one values. Even wealth has no meaning aside from other people, since Rameau already defined it as being capable of buying respect and esteem. Power very definitely entails others since it has no meaning unless it is exercised over someone. Obviously this is a more aggressive means of gratifying the need than is that of being honored or esteemed, but the same fundamental need is being met. The goal-object group may be different. That is to say, it is usually the case that one seeks honor, (and it is even more true of esteem), from those viewed at least as one's peers; whereas, those over whom one desires power, are usually viewed at best as peers and more often as inferiors. Happiness, Rameau says very clearly, is having one's esteem and recognition needs met.

One other example helps in succinctly establishing Rameau's hierarchy, and at the same time shows that he was capable of some vision beyond esteem needs. The discussion of the moment centered on the idea of the noble savage, ignorant of civilization's ways or of education. Rameau, by using this example, shows what he considers the natural tendencies of man to be. If he were to bring in this young savage, he says, he would by nature want to be " ... richement vêtu, splendidement nourri, chéri des hommes, aimé des femmes, et rassembler autour de lui tous les bonheurs de la vie."<sup>1</sup> "Tous les bonheurs" is too broad to be helpful, but the other items of his natural-to-man list give an adequate picture. "Richement vêtu" does in part fill belongingness needs; being well-dressed could make one more acceptable to certain people from whom acceptance is sought. This is not unlike a fraternity jacket: there is a feeling of belonging that comes from what the clothing signifies, that one is part of an accepted group. In the case of Rameau's fine clothes, this would make him automatically classified as part of an accepted group, rich people. Respect and esteem needs that can be derived herefrom are obvious.

To be "chéri des hommes" seems to imply a more profound relationship. It goes beyond mere acceptance to

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 479.

a much more personal and tender association. This would seem to fulfill both belongingness needs as well as those of regard and esteem. "Aimé des Femmes" has similar implications. The former is more platonic while the latter may involve love. Contrary to what else Rameau has said elsewhere about his use of women (he lumps them together with "good wine" and "every pleasure imaginable"), he seems here to be more genuinely personally concerned. At least it shows him capable of a degree of understanding of what affection implies to others. Finally, it is noteworthy that he must qualify "nourished" with an adverb such as "splendidement". This indeed goes beyond mere sustenance. He again did not say "sufficiently" or "appropriately" or even simply "nourished." The manner and form are all important. His savage would, he feels, naturally tend toward wanting to be nourished in a manner that would also fill needs of regard or esteem. In summary, Rameau's use of the example of the natural man underlines his overpowering need for regard and acclaim. However, it does at the same time imply that he was capable of some appreciation of needs of belongingness and love.

The final comments concerning Rameau and need hierarchy are grouped around the comments most often made of him in the brief literary anthologies. This has to do with his genuineness and naturalness. Typical of critics' comments is the one by Fabre which implies that Rameau

enjoys a sort of self-directedness, that he had " ... conquis par son renoncement même, le droit d'avouer et de vivre son échec."<sup>1</sup> Such comments are based on assertions from Rameau such as the following: " ... je puis faire mon bonheur par des vices qui me sont naturels que j'ai acquis sans travail, que je conserve sans effort, ..." Another often cited is: " ... pourquoi voyons-nous si fréquemment les dévots si durs, si fâcheux, si insociables? C'est qu'ils se sont imposés une tâche qui ne leur est pas naturelle; ..." Rameau almost convinces us that he is natural and self-motivated, and thus self-actualized in a manner of speaking. He reinforces this idea by inveighing against hypocrisy while declaring his own freedom from it. "Heureusement je n'ai pas besoin d'être hypocrite; il y en a déjà de toutes les couleurs sans compter ceux qui le sont avec eux-mêmes."<sup>2</sup> He offers the picture of one who is honest with himself, of one who is true to his own nature. Again he gives the impression of self-actualization when he asserts: "Il faut que Rameau soit ce qu'il est."<sup>3</sup>

Taken in isolation, the above do allude to a sort of self-development, to a sort of self-actualization. In context, however, the picture is somewhat different. On

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<sup>1</sup>Fabre, ed., Neveu, p. lxvii.

<sup>2</sup>Bénac, ed., Oeuvres, p. 433.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 434.

the page immediately following the one which includes many of the foregoing assertions of self-directedness and naturalness, he again makes the point that hypocrisy and virtue are unnatural to him. This time however he elaborates, and his elaborations give a more complete picture; they explain some of the seeming naturalness and seeming lack of hypocrisy and show his actions to be as calculated as are those of the people he reviles. He says:

La vertu se fait respecter, et le respect est incommode; la vertu se fait admirer et l'admiration n'est pas amusante. J'ai à faire à des gens qui s'ennuient, et il faut que je les fasse rire, il faut donc que je sois ridicule et fou; et quand la nature ne m'aurait pas fait tel, le plus court serait de le paraître.<sup>1</sup>

Here Rameau plainly shows that he is what he is, not out of any genuineness from within, but from the necessity of being what is demanded or commodious or profitable. In the Eighteenth-Century, virtue is not à la mode and so he is not virtuous. Even if it is perchance admired, he will not be virtuous because with those with whom he deals, admiration is hardly an amusing quality and he must at all cost be amusing. Rameau has to do with people who have been sated, who are weary and whose senses and values have been dulled. They can be reached and drawn from their lethargy only by the extravagant, only by the bizarre, only by the

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 434.

ridiculous. Rameau considers that what they have to offer him is adequate payment for him to play the roles they demand. So Rameau's seeming genuineness does not survive close scrutiny, and his "naturalness" is calculation and sham. He even uses the verb "paraître" which alone would undercut any idea of his being true to his nature. Even if he did have some vision of self-directedness, his other needs preclude any real success. He will not, he says, become " ... un homme vertueux, rongant sa croûte de pain, ..." <sup>1</sup> He might just as well have said that he could not stand the threat to his unique self-concept if he were to be reduced to eating crusts of bread. His needs here are reminiscent of the impoverished but proud "hidalgo" of Lazarillo de Tormes who had to fill his esteem needs in spite of the cost to other needs in his hierarchy.

In conclusion, Diderot has depicted two men whose motive levels make them a pole apart. The one is fixated at a lower need level, largely that of concern for esteem. He would seem to be hopelessly entangled. The other has mastered all the lower needs and is now in the process of growth toward total realization of his potential. He is an excellent example of Maslow's actualizing man. One conclusion should be drawn as a logical consequence of the analyses---the question as

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 435.

to identity of Lui and Moi . There seems to be little doubt that Moi is Diderot. It is of course not the total Diderot and it is not Diderot as he always was. He was much too dynamic to be amenable to easy definition or characterization. The picture presented, however, does seem very consistent with what one would expect a sixty plus year old actualizer to be. He is still dynamic and vital, still growing; but he is a Diderot mellowed by all that the Encyclopedia was and represented, and by all that his unique insight into men and life over a sixty-year span would produce. Is the nephew Diderot as he was as a young man? Yes and no. Yes he was dynamic, filled with a myriad of energies that needed expression, Yes he loved food, conversation and beautiful women; in a word he allowed himself free physiological expression. But no, Diderot was not physiologically fixated. Recall his leaving the tax-farmer because he considered himself too well cared for and because he had to get on with things more important in life than mere delicate food or wine or even women. As much as Diderot loved all these he showed too much self-mastery to be classified as physiologically fixated. Finally, no, as a young man he was not esteem-fixated as was young Rameau. He did want ultimate renown as his letter to Falconet shows; however, it was not a devouring, blinding passion as it seems to have been for young Rameau. It would seem safe to say that application of Maslow's hierarchy of needs to Lui and Moi

substantiates the thesis that there is more at play in his depiction of these two than merely an older Diderot, (the philosopher), looking back on his younger, materialistic self, (Rameau).

## CHAPTER IV

### JACQUES: A SELF-ACTUALIZER IN THE MAKING

Jacques le fataliste was the last novel Diderot wrote. He composed it in 1773, some twelve years after he had begun the novel just studied, Le Neveu de Rameau.<sup>1</sup> The two protagonists, Jacques and his Master, are in many ways reminiscent of the philosopher and Rameau. The philosopher is operating at a self-actualization, growth level, while Rameau is still struggling with deficiency motivations. In somewhat like manner, Jacques is in the process of becoming self-actualized while his Master is still struggling with basic deficiency needs. It might be said of Jacques, in comparison to Rameau's philosopher, that he is an apprentice self-actualizer. His stoicism is borrowed; he has obtained it second-hand from his captain who, as the author says, had read Spinoza.<sup>2</sup> It will obviously take more time, and modification, and integration, for Jacques to personalize

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<sup>1</sup>Bénac, ed., Oeuvres, p. ix.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 671.

his Captain's philosophy. It soon becomes evident in fact, that Jacques does not in actuality closely follow his Captain's determinism. For all the times he discourses on the " ... grand rouleau,"<sup>1</sup> for all his contention that everything that happens of good or ill " ... était écrit là-haut,"<sup>2</sup> he nevertheless conducts himself " ... comme vous et comme moi."<sup>3</sup> Jacques talks determinism but in no wise slavishly lives it. As often as not, he relies on his brain rather than on destiny. On one occasion he is confronted with a reasonably insurmountable danger and so he " ... consulta le destin dans sa tête, il lui sembla que le destin lui disait: Retourne sur tes pas: ce qu'il fit."<sup>4</sup> Thus he talked reverence for his Captain's determinism but it was reason that guided his action. Jacques is in the process of fashioning a personal philosophy. He is a dynamic being, as was his creator, Diderot, who is trying on determinism, stoicism, and other approaches to the human condition, to see qualitatively and quantitatively, what can best be integrated into his own motive hierarchy. Jacques is, however, near the point of being self-directive. He is

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 503.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 493.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 671.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 543.

near to the stabilizing of a philosophy, and near acquiring a value system which will make him largely independent of external circumstances. He has largely solved his basic-need demands. He is not fixated on food nor sex nor esteem needs as was Rameau. Belongingness and love needs in no wise occupy him. He is secure in being loved by Denise and is obviously absolutely essential to his Master. His cognitive needs are continually being met as he ponders the cosmos, man's role in it, and the role of nature in man's daily affairs. It now rests for Jacques to create himself and his unique value system and to grow into self-actualization.

The Master on the other hand is reminiscent of Rameau in that he is stymied with lower-hierarchy needs. The Master does not have Rameau's vitality nor his lusty pursuit of lower needs. He is in fact outdistanced by Rameau in any measure. For example, both have strong esteem needs, and give evidence of frustration; but where Rameau actively pursues and improvises fulfillment, the Master passively and tiresomely invokes precedent and the quality of his birth to fill his needs. Rameau's life style is despicable, and he is often vile; but he is nevertheless fascinating and forgivable. The Master, by contrast, is weak, routine-ridden and completely unimaginative. He commits no offense, but his life style is so colorless and repetitive, and his actions are so weak and lacking in self-directedness that he not only does not invite empathy, he rather invites complete

disinterest. He exists, but only a devoted Jacques could care, and even Jacques seems to weary of him frequently.

Are we confronted in Jacques and his Master with more elements of the multi-faceted Diderot? Is he again exposing portions of himself in these two characters? Was it again impossible for him to integrate them into one character? Many writers interested in Diderot seem to think that this is the case. Mornet considers the Master to be the moralist and sensitive Diderot and Jacques to be the moralist philosopher. The Master would represent that aspect of Diderot concerned with liberty and responsibility while Jacques stands for determinism.<sup>1</sup> Loy says that Diderot is very much Jacques; the very hesitations of Jacques are Diderot's hesitations, his reactions to the strong things he has said in Le Rêve de d'Alembert. He is, in a lesser degree, the Master, for the Master is basically interested in safeguarding a workable and necessary morality. But from the standpoint of complete espousal of either doctrine, he is neither of them.<sup>2</sup> Elsewhere Loy summarizes his impression that "Diderot is both Jacques and the Master and yet still Diderot."<sup>3</sup> Similarly, another author feels

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<sup>1</sup>Daniel Mornet, Diderot, l'homme et l'oeuvre (Paris: Boivin, 1941) p. 140.

<sup>2</sup>John Robert Loy, Diderot's Determined Fatalist, A Critical Appraisal of "Jacques le fataliste" (New York: Kings Crown Press, 1950), p. 149.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 90.

the two Diderots act in the presence of a third who is judge and arbiter.<sup>1</sup> For some, Diderot is in both, but hates himself equally for being identifiable as one or the other. With his usual frankness, he has represented all of himself graphically to convince that self.<sup>2</sup>

What of the relationship between Jacques and Diderot alone? For B  nac, Jacques is in very fact Diderot.<sup>3</sup> B  nac elsewhere says that Jacques " ... incarne les deux aspects antagonistes de Diderot: la croyance du savant dans le d  terminisme, et l'int  r  t personnel de chaque   tre humain."<sup>4</sup> Loy says that for some he represents anti-Spinoza elements in the way that Candide represented anti-Leibnitz elements.<sup>5</sup> He is also seen as the ill-disguised Bordeau of Le R  ve de d'Alembert.<sup>6</sup> For Crocker, Jacques represents a theory of determinism so radical as to shade into fatalism.<sup>7</sup> Grimsley sees him less as a facet of Diderot's personality, than as an essentially human figure.<sup>8</sup> And Fabre concludes

<sup>1</sup>Mornet, Diderot, p. 140.

<sup>2</sup>Loy, Appraisal, p. 151.

<sup>3</sup>B  nac, ed., Oeuvres, p. 892.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. xvi.

<sup>5</sup>Loy, Appraisal, p. 187.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid., p. 89.

<sup>7</sup>Lester G. Crocker, "'Jacques le fataliste', an Exp  rience morale ", Diderot Studies, III (1961), p. 75.

<sup>8</sup>Ronald Grimsley, "Morality and Imagination in 'Jacques le fataliste'", Modern Language Quarterly, XIX (1958) p. 287.

"Nous ne saurons sans doute jamais (le savait-il lui-même?) quelle était l'intention de Diderot quand il s'attachait à l'écrire."<sup>1</sup> It should be said that Jacques embodies many elements of the picaresque. He has had a variety of masters, similar to Gil Blas or to Quevedo's Buscon. Like them also, he is extremely enterprising, and is, as they often are, a better man than his Master. Similar also to the picaresque novel in general, particularly similar to Don Quijote, much action takes place in inns and in route on horseback. Finally, some writers see in him a character out of Rabelais. This is due to his love of his gourd (drink) which he consults ad nauseum, and because of certain traits of independence and love of life.<sup>2</sup>

What specifically of the Master? Loy sees him as the careful traditionalist both by social position and state of mind; as the routine-ridden editor of the Encyclopedia.<sup>3</sup> He also says that the Master is convinced, without any cogent reason for his stand, that there is a usually accepted code of moral values; that virtue exists and is the only merit of human action. Jacques' dangerous doctrine frightens him, for it questions for the first time the traditional

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<sup>1</sup>Jacques Smietanski, Le Réalisme dans "Jacques le fataliste", Préface de Jean Fabre (Paris: Nizet, 1965), p. 5.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 38.

<sup>3</sup>Loy, Appraisal, p. 88.

attitudes toward crime and law which he had presumed to be the basis of every decent man's judgements. His reactions to Jacques' unorthodoxy are naive, Loy says, but impulsive and natural.<sup>1</sup>

Grimsley suggests that the Master is the type of person who passively accepts everyday conventions and values. He readily acquiesces to traditional views of vice, virtue and free will. He lacks individuality and it is significant that he is known only as the Master.<sup>2</sup> He was the type of person with whom Diderot suspected, with too much justification for liking, that he had become identified.<sup>3</sup>

It now remains to analyse in more detail the two protagonists from the motive-hierarchy point of view, and to draw some conclusions from that analysis that will add to what is already known of Diderot and his created characters. The approach will again be, as it was with Rameau and the philosopher, to assume, as do motivational psychologists, that all men experience the same basic needs, that all men work to fulfill those needs as effectively as possible, and that no two people will go about the process of filling any given need in exactly the same way. The attempt then will be to try to determine specifically which need any given

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>Grimsley, Morality, p. 287.

<sup>3</sup>Loy, Appraisal, p. 58.

action seems to be fulfilling. First then as to Jacques.

It was suggested above that Jacques is in the process of achieving self-actualization. He should be thus in comparison, somewhat like an adolescent, where, in the analogy, deficiency motivation or lower-need motivation would be represented by childhood, and self-actualization by adulthood. As with adolescents, Jacques will not be totally consistent because he is trying out various roles, philosophies and behaviors, in his search to know himself, in his search to see what will, with consistency and harmony, integrate into his self-image. Jacques is trying out honesty, morality, determinism, independence, possible marriage and family life in this search for self-integration. Likewise, in the same way that adolescence is characterized by vestiges of childhood and even occasionally infantile behavior, so Jacques should exhibit vestiges of deficiency motivation. What are the indications that Jacques does appear to be a self-actualizer in the process of becoming?

Concerning this point, it is interesting that Jacques should practically say this of himself. He and his master have been discussing a point made by Jacques' captain. The Master, confused, asks if Jacques has made any sense of the point in question, that of prudence arrived at by experience. Jacques answers, "Assurément, peu à peu je m'étais fait à sa langue."<sup>1</sup> Here he gives the impression

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<sup>1</sup>Bénac, ed., Oeuvres, p. 504.

of a process, whereby, little by little, he came to understand, and then to internalize, his Captain's principles. The Captain, not surprisingly, was a stoic similar to Rameau's philosopher. In commenting on Jacques toward the end of the novel, the author himself seems to paint a picture of Jacques in the process of finding himself. "Souvent il était inconséquent comme vous et moi, et sujet à oublier ses principes, excepté dans quelques circonstances où sa philosophie le dominait évidemment."<sup>1</sup> Another incident shows Jacques groping to find himself, attempting to master himself, but finding it to be somewhat difficult to accomplish. Like Maslow's self-actualized people or Rameau's philosopher, Jacques does not seek asceticism, but rather for being what he most fundamentally is. Here Jacques gives a near definition, albeit general, of many aspects of the self-contained man. Jacques wanted to get to the point where he was no longer dependent on deficiency motives. He wanted to become " ... parfaitement maître de moi, à me trouver aussi bien la tête contre une borne, au coin de la rue, que sur un bon oreiller." He sees, however, that he still has a way to go "Tel je suis quelquefois; mais le diable est que cela ne dure pas, et que dur et ferme comme un rocher dans les grandes occasions, il arrive souvent qu'une

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 671.

petite contradiction, une bagatelle me déferre. ..." This is a description par excellence of someone in the process of self-actualization. Jacques ends by declaring that he has finally decided to be himself. "J'y ai renoncé; j'ai pris le parti d'être comme je suis; et j'ai vu, en y pensant un peu, que cela revenait presque au même en ajoutant: Qu'importe comme on soit?"<sup>1</sup> This sounds very much like decisions that Maslow's self actualizers have probably made. They have, more than most people, arrived at the point of being comfortable with what they do and are. They are trying to impress no one; their esteem needs, even those of self-esteem, are comfortably filled. They are now in the process of becoming more and more truly themselves. They strike no poses; to whom would such behavior possibly be directed? They seem to ask "Why be anything other than genuinely yourself?" This is exactly what Jacques is saying when he says " ... j'ai pris le parti d'être comme je suis ... qu'importe comme on soit?"<sup>2</sup>

A specific example of his acting mid-way toward actualization occurs when Jacques is explaining how he paid the peasant and his wife in advance for caring for him following his knee wound. Having thus paid in advance, he soon found that the peasants, their motives for helping him

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid. p. 574.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

removed, left him to fend for himself. The Master chides that this should be a lesson to Jacques not to pay in advance. Jacques replies somewhat as a young wounded soldier. "Non, mon maître; ce n'était pas le temps de moraliser mais bien celui de s'impatienter et de jurer."<sup>1</sup> Jacques hadn't quite arrived at the philosophical point of accepting this injustice without malice or complaint. (Self-actualized people do accept others' shortcomings.) He implies that this may come later but for now he will 'jurer'. Another "in process" example is evident as Jacques, in a moment of self-analysis, says: " ... j'oublie mes principes ou les leçons de mon capitaine et ... je ris et pleure comme un sot."<sup>2</sup> There does thus seem to be substantial evidence that Jacques is a man in the process of becoming. He is a man who has thought much about himself and the condition of man, and is in the process of integrating into his self-concept, those things which most harmoniously belong. He regresses at times but is becoming more and more self-directive. The next portion of the analysis will explore those areas in which he does give evidence of the fact that what he is becoming, is a self-actualized man.

One of the most obvious examples of Jacques' self-actualization tendencies concerns the area of acceptance

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 568.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 656.

of nature, of self and of others. This would be expected in a book which purports to deal with determinism, but it has already been shown that Jacques is not a determinist automaton. Similar to Rameau's philosopher, Jacques begins by accepting the universe as it is, realizing he cannot change it. The Master, however, is concerned about who writes on the great scroll which dispenses happiness to some and misery to others. He vows he would give anything to know the answer. Jacques counters that he doesn't even care to know " ... car à quoi cela me servirait-il? En éviterais-je pour cela le trou où je dois m'aller casser le cou?"<sup>1</sup> Here he accepts Nature and whatever she might have in store because he realizes he can do nothing to alter cosmic, natural events. He seems to conclude "Why expend energy in a useless cause? Rather, make the best of life as it is."

Jacques' acceptance of others parallels that of his acceptance of Nature. It is continually evident that he is aware of his master's shortcomings; but just as he is accepting of Nature, even knowing her to be at times hostile, so he accepts his Master in his profoundest weakness. Time and again the master's ineptness or cowardice could have been seized upon by Jacques as a means of exposing his master as

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 503.

a dolt. Jacques does not succumb. Even after the Master has childishly allowed his own horse to be taken from under his nose, Jacques merely comments: "Eh bien, monsieur, n'y pensons plus, c'est un cheval de perdu, et peut-être ... qu'il se retrouvera."<sup>1</sup> What good would it have done to rail against a man such as the Master, since he would not have been capable of profiting from the lesson. The Master is what he is, and Jacques accepts him at face value.

In the area of self-acceptance Jacques is nearly definitional of self-actualization. Maslow says actualizers tend to be good hearty fellows who enjoy themselves without regret, shame or apology.<sup>2</sup> Jacques does this marvelously well. He is in no wise fixated at physiological-need levels, though he heartily enjoyed fulfilling these needs. He considered them a normal part of life, and a normal part of himself. They were to be enjoyed along with all other facets of life. Thus, when the hostess brings up some wine as a peace offering after the two of them had had a falling-out, "Jacques la prit par le milieu du corps, et l'embrassa fortement; sa rancune n'avait jamais tenu contre du bon vin et une belle femme."<sup>3</sup> Jacques' acceptance of himself, like

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 521.

<sup>2</sup>Maslow, Motivation, p. 207.

<sup>3</sup>Bénac, ed., Oeuvres, p. 611.

his acceptance of the universe, is complete. He gives no evidence whatsoever of overriding guilt or shame. Nor does he exhibit the smugness that typically accompanies a lesser man's self-satisfaction. Jacques is no saint, he is no ascetic. He gratifies normal needs. Yet, he so follows rationality and goodness and natural law, that he emerges from each day, able to accept unreservedly what he has done and been, what he currently is, and what he is becoming. Jacques as a consequence can live life serenely and effortlessly because he does not need to protect vulnerable spots nor be alert to covering up for anxiety-producing frailties. Like Maslow's self-actualizers, Jacques is somewhat child-like. This is to use "child-like" in the sense of uncomplicated, candid, without poses, and without guile or guilt. Again this does not imply sanctity to all Jacques is or does. Rather, it implies that what he is and does is meant to be wholesome and good, and that he can accept his best effort without shame or self-recrimination.

Typical of this quality, in our "in-process" self-actualizer, is his recovery of his master's watch. Jacques had returned for a forgotten purse and for his master's watch when he recognizes the watch among the wares of a roadside peddler. Jacques explains to the peddler that the watch is his master's, and that he will return it to its owner. Following this explanation he simply takes the watch and then proceeds saunteringly toward town to get the forgotten

purse, even after the peddler begins to cry out to workers in anearby field that he has been robbed. Jacques is so forthright and basically good that he considers all other men will readily understand. The peddler is much more devious and complex however, and hopes to recover his ill-gotten watch by making Jacques appear to be the villain. Jacques is so completely guilt-free and serene that when the workers arrive to help the peddler they refuse at first to believe his story. How could anyone, sauntering casually along the road toward town, have just robbed this shouting peddler. Here Jacques' inner serenity and guilt-free self-acceptance become manifestly visible. Later, at the place where they had lodged, the purse is found on the person of a young girl. She claims that Jacques had given it to her for favors she accorded him during the night. Jacques had never seen the girl before but instead of fearing for his esteem or feeling guilt, he says nothing and allows the host to pay the girl a reasonable amount from his purse. Thus not only does Jacques never lie to simplify a situation to save face, he can even accept what would appear to a lesser, unactualizing man, to be a loss of face or self-regard. One could even propose that Jacques' self-acceptance is so healthy, that it can stand repeated attack. The difference between this realistic self-acceptance and that of the genuinely self-centered or even defensively self-centered man is obvious. Neither of the latter two types of individuals

can withstand analysis or even implied attack. They immediately react defensively in order to protect and preserve their image. Jacques is so healthily accepting of self and nature as to make defensive reaction completely foreign to his life-style.

A companion feature of acceptance of others is that of gemeinschaftsgefühl, or a feeling of identification with, and empathy for, human-kind. An incident recalled by Jacques demonstrates this quality in himself and also reads somewhat like a New Testament parable. (As a matter of fact a good case could be made for Jacques' similarity to New Testament persons. Diderot didn't accept the philosophical basis of Christianity but he, more than most, accepted the day-to-day principles of justice and goodness of the New Testament.) Jacques came upon a group who were surrounding a grief-stricken woman. She had been returning with a jug of oil on her head (obvious New Testament flavor) which she had purchased for her master. Tripping, she had broken the jug. She would have to repay the oil and was grief stricken because she had no money. Like Pharisees, the crowd bemoaned her fate but did nothing to help. "Tout le monde la plaignait; je n'entendais autour d'elle que «la pauvre femme» mais personne ne mettait la main dans la poche."<sup>1</sup> Jacques, like

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 571.

the Good Samaritan, was in the least likely position to help. He was on crutches and far from home. Yet he was the one moved by enough compassion to give her his money. His compassion, is even more striking considering the fact that the surgeon would be expecting money, and that Jacques would be unable to pay. A further New Testament similarity is noted when some ruffians who witnessed his generosity, robbed him, later on his way home, of what little money he had remaining. This incident shows Jacques' gemeinschaftsgefühl. He gives evidence of feeling that all men are of the same family, that they are here together and must assist each other through life's harsher moments. In New Testament fashion, Jacques said of the incident, " ... mes entrailles s'émurent de compassion, ..." <sup>1</sup> The same incident, however, points up that Jacques was still just in the process of self-actualization. He was unable to live comfortably with his compassionate act for very long. This indicates it was not yet a completely integral part of him. In speaking of his act to his Master he says: "Je fis une sottise, ne vous déplaie. Je ne fus pas à cent pas du village que je me le dis; ..." <sup>2</sup> Evidently his own needs for the now-given-away money struck him with full force and drowned out the

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid., p. 571.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

compassion of a few minutes before when he had been confronted with the grieving woman. This is a purely normal reaction on Jacques' part; however, a fully self-actualized Jacques would not have reverted so readily back to his own needs. Still, in spite of his afterthoughts, Jacques acted more compassionately than did anyone else, and evidences signs of an individual on the route to self-denial and self-fulfillment.

We even see here some evidence that Jacques' Master is capable of some compassionate insight. After Jacques has doubted the wisdom of his compassion, his Master vacillates momentarily, ready to agree, then says: "Non non Jacques, je persiste dans mon premier jugement, et c'est l'oubli de ton propre besoin qui fait le principal mérite de ton action."<sup>1</sup> One might then be tempted to say that here at least the Master was more compassionate than Jacques. In after-the-fact fashion possibly this is true in this instance. It is inconceivable, however, that the Master would have given the money in the first place, whereas Jacques' entire life-style is one of acceptance of duty toward mankind. The Master, rather than identifying closely with, and being committed to mankind, isn't even wholeheartedly committed to anything. He is not even healthily

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 571.

id-oriented as was Rameau. His only commitment seems to be to exist. He is a rather weak specimen.

Closely related on a more intimate basis to the characteristic of gemeinschaftsgefühl in the self-actualized, is that of interpersonal relationships. The self-actualized tend to be capable of deeper and more profound relationships than other people. They seem capable of greater love, more perfect identification, and more complete obliteration of ego boundaries.<sup>1</sup> Application of this to Jacques explains why the innkeeper's wife showed obvious preference for him over his Master. It explains why Jacques, rather than any of his rivals, won the affection of Denise, even considering the fact that these rivals included men of rank and means. It also helps to explain why dame Marguerite and dame Suzon were not only willing but anxious to risk their husbands' anger and even possible loss of face in order to win Jacques' regard and teach him about life. It seems evident that they recognized qualities and depths in Jacques that they did not find in their husbands. It would also give some explanation for the obvious affection and trust Jacques' Captain must have shown him. The implication is that Jacques and the Captain dealt on personal terms. It seems to have been much more than merely a wise Captain educating

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<sup>1</sup>Maslow, Motivation, p. 218.

a young member of his unit. Jacques' actions and his references to the Captain give evidence of a real bond of understanding between them.

Along with a greater capacity of love, the self-actualized desire to help other people improve, to help others more nearly live up to their potential. Therefore, the criticism that the actualized make of others is never vindictive but rather for the good of the individual. They are saddened when people do not become what their potential implies they could have been and they abhor men's injustice.<sup>1</sup> Commenting on Jacques' attitudes toward men's errors, the author says:

Il se mettait en colère contre l'homme injuste,  
et quand on lui objectait qu'il ressemblait  
alors au chien qui mord la pierre qui la frappe:  
Nenni, disait-il, la pierre mordue par le chien ne  
se corrige pas; l'homme injuste est modifié par le  
baton.<sup>2</sup>

Discipline as administered by Jacques obviously does not mean exacting payment for a crime or a weakness but rather re-education. His goal was to change behavior, not to demand expiation. His motives stemmed from his much greater capacity to enter into deep relationships with his fellowmen.

Maslow says of his self-actualized subjects that he has found none of them to be "chronically unsure about the

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid... p. 219.

<sup>2</sup>Bénac, ed., Oeuvres, p. 671.

difference between right and wrong. . . . they rarely showed in their day-to-day living the chaos . . . so common in the average person's ethical dealings."<sup>1</sup> In this regard again Jacques is like his author and Rameau's philosopher. Without being maudlin, Jacques just naturally shows ethical strength. A series of incidents leads the Master to conclude that Jacques' end is near; that some evil committed in his past will probably soon result in his death. He therefore counsels Jacques to set his affairs in order. Jacques replies there is nothing in his past that has to do with men's justice. "Je n'ai ni tué, ni volé, ni violé."<sup>2</sup> Even more indicative of his basic goodness is the incident where Jacques is being transferred to the great chateau from the doctor's house. As he is about to leave, the doctor's wife asks him to help get her husband installed as the surgeon at the chateau. Jacques asks if there is not already a surgeon there. She answers that there is, but that Jacques owes something to her husband. Jacques' reply shows the depth of his ethical strength. He could have merely replied that he would do what he could; then, once at the chateau, he could have just conveniently forgotten the entire affair. Or, out of gratitude to the surgeon for helping him save his leg, he could have used his influence to oust the existing chateau surgeon

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<sup>1</sup>Maslow, Motivation, p. 221.

<sup>2</sup>Bénac, ed., Oeuvres, p. 548.

and install the one who had operated on him. Jacques, however, replies in a way that shows his unbiased commitment to all of mankind and to universal justice: "Et parce que votre mari m'a fait du bien, il faut que je fasse du mal à un autre? Encore si la place était vacante. ..."<sup>1</sup> Jacques' reply not only shows his strength at being able to clear up a question on the spot rather than allowing himself the easy route, but also places him alongside the self-actualizing people who feel kinship and empathy for all. Jacques will not violate basic ethics to incur favor nor to ameliorate his position. He has taken a decision to not confuse means and ends, and seems to have the strength of character to carry out that aspect of his value system. It is in ways such as these where Jacques no longer even slightly resembles the picaro. The latter have no scruples and invent right and wrong as circumstances dictate. For all of their other admirable qualities, picaros were by definition fixated at the lower-hierarchy level of self-preservation. Jacques has progressed infinitely beyond self-preservation to concern for all men.

Another facet of ethical strength, of discrimination between ends and means in the self-actualized, revolves around the belief in God. Do they exhibit ethical strength

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 588.

out of orthodox religious belief, or are they in fact associated with any given religions? Maslow says none of his subjects is orthodoxly religious. They enjoy doing good for the doing itself. What is merely a means to an end for others, such as doing good to get to heaven (the good action being the means to the goal, heaven) is an end in itself for the self actualized. This seems eminently true of Jacques. None of his good actions was accompanied by any comment of reward. As a matter of fact when his master asks if he believes in life after death, Jacques answers: "Je n'y crois ni décrois; je n'y pense pas. Je jouis de mon mieux de celle qui nous a été accordée en avancement d'hoirie."<sup>1</sup> For Jacques then, the act had to be its own reward.

"Self-actualizing people have the wonderful capacity to appreciate again and again, freshly, naively, the basic goods of life. . . . however stale these experiences may become to others."<sup>2</sup> Jacques has this quality of naively and freshly looking at life. His view is of course coupled with a sagacity unawaited in a soldier-valet, but considering that Jacques represents the vigorous, rising Third-Estate, he is believable. Illustrative of this quality in Jacques

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 685.

<sup>2</sup>Maslow, Motivation, p. 215.

is the following: Jacques' Master asked him to tell an incident just the way it happened. (Not unlike the current "Tell it like it is".) Jacques could have simply replied that it is not always that simple. But he showed the depth of his perception of the human condition with a pleasant freshness. "Dis la chose comme elle est! Cela n'arrive peut-être pas deux fois en un jour dans toute une grande ville."<sup>1</sup> Continuing his fresh commentaries and perceptions he says: "Mon cher maître, la vie se passe en quiproquo."<sup>2</sup> He adds: "Si l'on ne dit presque rien dans ce monde, qui soit entendu comme on le dit, il y a bien pis, c'est qu'on n'y fait presque rien, qui soit jugé comme on l'a fait."<sup>3</sup> These perceptions are simply not within the possibility of the Master. It probably suffices for him to reflect that no one is concerned enough about anyone else to really understand what they are saying or doing. Jacques goes freshly and wholesomely beyond that, and what is more, does so without overtones of rejection and pessimism. After Jacques has said it, one does not feel that he implies life or its people are to be disparaged. He seems rather to be matter-of-factly, freshly stating a truism of the human condition.

Other incidents are representative of this quality and of Jacques' philosophical sense of humor. While Jacques has a sore throat the Master has agreed to relate tales of

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<sup>1</sup>Bénac, ed., Oeuvres, p. 544.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 545.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 544.

his own. Jacques, who found himself frequently interrupted by his Master, now becomes the interruptor. When the Master complains, Jacques reminds him of what he used to do himself, then adds some humorous philosophical amplifications. "Une mère veut être galante et veut que sa fille soit sage; un père veut être dissipateur, et veut que son fils soit économe; un maître veut ..." Here Jacques allows his Master to fill in the remainder of the phrase for himself, basing it on the prior examples. Here again, the Master shows his limited capacity for humor, his inability to grow, and his reliance on an archaic value system as he answers: "Interrompre son valet, l'interrompre tant qu'il lui plaît, et n'en pas être interrompu."<sup>1</sup> Again he shows himself as operating on lower need levels. While Jacques is busy growing, his Master is busy fighting battles of esteem that he should have won long since. In all the above, Jacques shows his naivete and freshness. Each day is a new experience for him. Not that he plunges into each day at a gallop, he does not; rather he enters each day at a saunter. However, each day he is ready to find experiences and people worthy of his attention. The Master on the other hand imposes on each new day and each new experience, his tired and stale acquiescence.

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 737.

One of the qualities of self-actualized people that Jacques most strikingly exhibits, also brings him into sharpest contrast with the Master. This is the area of clarity of perception of reality. Jacques, along with self-actualizers, can more realistically judge situations, conditions and people than can the Master. An excellent example of the clarity of Jacques' perception as contrasted with the inaccuracy of that of his Master is shown in their assessments of the quality of their relationship, indeed he wants the reader to generalize to all men. As for Jacques, it is clear that he is " ... un homme comme un autre; ..." <sup>1</sup> and that the Master has no innate right over him. For Jacques, the Master's notion of the existence among men of a sort of quality hierarchy, wherein certain men are innately of more worth than others, wherein it is given to certain men - by virtue of the happenstance of their birth - to command while it remains to other men due to the same happenstance of birth to follow, is a senseless distortion of things as they really are. The Master can bring no logic to his position and is reduced to simply shouting his initial statement more loudly: "Jacques, tu te trompes, un Jacques n'est point un homme comme un autre." Jacques realizes reason and reality support his position, and realizes

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 659.

that by any measure he is " ... quelquefois mieux qu'un autre."<sup>1</sup> Here, Jacques is not merely guilty of the inverse of the Master's initial misconception, he is rather recognizing individual differences. To any observer of humanity, it is everywhere evident that one man is at times better than another man. An entire section of current-day psychology addresses itself to the obvious fact that any realistic appraisal of any given individual would show him to be strong in some areas and weak in others. The Master, however, sees the world in black and white. He is incapable of relativity and paradox and is not unlike the authoritarian personality. For him a thing must be this or that. One is either born into a family of "quality" or one is not. Merit and right to command others is no less absolute. These and "quality of birth" occur together in rigid correlation.

Thus the Master deals in absolutes and bases himself on precedent. His world is one of logic-tight compartments. The Master incorrectly assumes to be able to reorder Jacques' perceptual distortion by reminding him of things as he feels they are. "Jacques, vous vous oubliez. ... souvenez que vous n'êtes et que vous ne serez jamais qu'un Jacques."<sup>2</sup> The Master's perceptions are obviously distorted by the manner in which he has been reared. The Master's universe must

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 659.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

remain ordered and in place, or he experiences anxiety as does an obsessive-compulsive. When parts of this universe do not assume their rightful place, as Jacques' now do not, the Master feels compelled to apply pressure to reestablish the rigidity and predictability that are necessary to keep his anxiety level within manageable limits. The most obvious course of action naturally is to rely on Jacques' intelligence and understanding, and to assume that reminding him of their relationship of " ... supérieur à subalterne,"<sup>1</sup> will be all that is necessary to restore predictability and order. When this device fails to produce the desired effect, the Master feels he must make a test of reality with a sort of trial balloon. He thus issues an order to reassure himself that conditions have not in fact changed; to reassure himself that an order given to a Jacques today is the same as an order given to a Jacques yesterday. At the same time the order is aimed at modifying reality. Subconsciously, the Master can see the untenability of his position. One order, however, issued with the firmness "inherent in those born to command," and carried out by Jacques, would restore equilibrium. It would be oil on disturbed water. The Master must therefore issue an order that Jacques would not be opposed to carrying out, something that Jacques would

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 660.

normally do anyway. What would be more normal for Jacques than to get down. Hence the Master's order is to " ... descendez là-bas."<sup>1</sup> From his point of view, Jacques, appraising conditions, sees that his obtuse Master has not understood and so decides to be more direct: "Quand on sait que tous vos ordres ne sont que des clous à soufflets, s'ils n'ont été ratifiés par Jacques; ..." <sup>2</sup> Jacques is here continuing his attempt at rectifying his Master's reality perception. He is attempting to make clear that the world, as his Master has come to perceive it, has only survived in any degree because men such as himself have graciously allowed it to. He is telling the Master that he, the Master, has failed to see this critical point and that it is a vital oversight. The Master must, Jacques implies, integrate this fact into his concept of things as they really are.

One or two other incidents bring this same difference between the two protagonists into relief. Upon arriving at an inn, Jacques and his master secure a room. They soon learn that they are quartered next to some boisterous rogues who have absconded with all of the inn's provisions. "Jacques était assez tranquille ... et ... dévorait quelques morceaux de pain noir, et avalait en grimaçant quelques verres de

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 660.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 661.

mauvais vin."<sup>1</sup> The Master in the meantime " ... promenait son souci en long et en large, ..." Jacques has just accepted conditions and has made the best of a bad situation. An important point is that there is not in his action any useless employment of energy. The most realistic thing to do seems to be to make do with what is available. In Maslowian-actualization terms he has made a rather realistic appraisal of the situation and accommodated his own needs to it. Jacques is further correctly interpreting reality by realizing that there is no personal affront in the fact that the brigands are now eating and drinking that which would have been his and his Master's. How could the rogues have known whose supper they were commandeering? However, while Jacques realistically makes the best of a bad situation, the Master aimlessly paces back and forth. For the Master, however, it is energy expended without a goal-object. He does not take pistol in hand and demand food from the renegades; nor does he take his valet in hand and move to the next inn; nor does he take himself in hand and make the most of things as does Jacques. It soon becomes evident that the Master cannot act, due to the fact that he is immobilized between two facets of his safety needs. He wants food and drink, that is, he wants to respond to his physiological

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 499.

needs which are usually primary, but his fear, need for safety, intervenes. He wants to fulfill his need for safety by leaving, but another facet of safety needs enters in, he dare not leave without Jacques, and up to this point, Jacques is taking the entire situation in stride and has no intention of leaving. Even when Jacques, incensed by an affront made by the renegades, goes to mete out justice in Quijote fashion, the Master can bring himself to do nothing but await the outcome " ... en tremblant."<sup>1</sup>

Jacques' reaction to the brigand's affront might be interpreted as indicative that he had not as yet reached actualization and self-mastery. One could thus say he is reacting to esteem needs. On the other hand, it could be indicative of realistic interpretation of reality. Maslow says actualizers do not base their perception of reality on wish, anxiety, over-optimism or pessimism.<sup>2</sup> It could be argued then that Jacques more realistically perceived conditions as they really were. Rogues traveling in bands are usually cowardly and ineffective. He further realized he could take them completely by surprise and that making them undress and give him their clothes and arms, and locking them in their room, would render them harmless. There would

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 500.

<sup>2</sup>Maslow, Motivation, p. 204.

seem to be reason to conclude that Jacques' reality appraisal was correct and unlike his Master's appraisal, was not clouded by pessimism or anxiety.

The Master, however, still is not able to rise above safety needs. He spends the remainder of the night in fear, while Jacques blissfully snores. He does not even remove his clothes, awakens Jacques at day break and begs him to leave. We again see the Master unable to correctly assess reality and act meaningfully and independently. He dare not take his pistols and leave, putting distance between himself and the danger, nor has he enough force to profit from the situation and sleep. A victim of his lower needs, here safety, he is forced to remain at the disposal of someone who is not at the mercy of deficiency needs. As was true of Rameau's philosopher, Jacques is not fearful of the unknown, he is not fending off nor avoiding imaginary or inaccurately interpreted dangers. The Master, however, was initially fearful even though the rogues were threatening no one. Jacques can thus act infinitely more effectively.

One final exchange between the Master and Jacques will be used to illustrate Jacques' grasp of reality. Jacques was commenting to his Master on the stratifications that exist among men and the need all seem to have for feelings of worth and mastery. He said it had been his observation that even the most abjectly poor people, though they might not have enough bread for the family, somehow

managed to maintain a dog. From this Jacques concludes that all men have a need to exercise authority over something else, a need to feel capable and of worth. Thus he concludes that since in society, animals are found immediately beneath the last class of citizens, those commanded by all other classes, these people kept a dog in order to be able to " ... commander aussi à quelqu'un."<sup>1</sup> Jacques goes further in his assessment of reality by concluding that " ... chacun a son chien. Le ministre est le chien du roi, le premier commis est le chien du ministre, ... les hommes faibles sont les chiens des hommes fermes."

It should be noted in passing that the above hierarchy in society is despicable to Diderot. He labored unceasingly against vestiges of the feudal system. Like Maslow's self-actualizers, Diderot and Jacques accord respect to all men simply because they are human beings. This democratic character structure is implicit in all Jacques is and does and underpins the entire book. It is obviously one of the main lessons to be learned about Jacques and Diderot from the exchange discussed above wherein Jacques reminds his Master that he is "un homme comme un autre", and even that he is "quelquefois mieux qu'un autre." Diderot is, however, no revolutionary. He recognizes the error and works to correct it; but Jacques shows his magnanimity and democratic character structure, combined with an unrelentingly clear

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<sup>1</sup>Bénac, ed., Oeuvres, p. 667-68.

perception of reality, by advising: "Restons comme nous sommes ... et que le reste de notre vie soit employé à faire un proverbe. ... Jacques mène son maître."<sup>1</sup>

One final observation concerning Jacques' reality perception stems from the discussion of men and their dogs. This time the implications are that Jacques had a good understanding of belongingness and love needs. Jacques' Master notes that he has seen people other than the poor surround themselves with dogs. What about the great ladies and others who surround themselves with cats and dogs and parakeets, he asks? His answer has implications for the fulfillment of belongingness and love needs. "Elles n'aiment personne; personne ne les aime: et elles jettent aux chiens un sentiment dont elles ne savent que faire."<sup>2</sup> Jacques (Diderot) again evidences marvelous insight into man's needs, realizing that if they cannot be filled in one way they will be in another. His views are worthy of a Twentieth Century psychologist.

As concerns the Master specifically, he has been in large measure already defined as a necessary adjunct of the analysis of Jacques. Some more specific comments should be made however. He is evidently operative at a rather low level, physiologically and psychically. It is common

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 665.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 668.

currently to avoid defining intelligence and speak rather of the total effectiveness with which one deals with one's environment. From this definitional base, the Master is not too effective. He exhibits qualities common to persons operative at a rather low level, that is he seems to profit very little from interaction with the world around him. He is not given to reflection, to evaluation, and cannot bring himself to a state of intensity or animation concerning any subject or condition. His lethargic state occasionally leads one to use the adjectives stupid, vegetable-like or obtuse. He is an expert at nothing and cannot even sleep effectively. ~~Thus~~ even his physiological functions seem to operate substandardly.

Il a peu d'idées dans la tête; s'il lui arrive de dire quelque chose de sensé, c'est de reminiscence ou d'inspiration. Il a des yeux comme vous et moi; mais on ne sait la plupart du temps s'il regarde. Il ne dort pas, il ne veille pas non plus; il se laisse exister: c'est sa fonction habituelle.<sup>1</sup>

In Eighteenth-Century terms, the Master is a personalization of the extremely degenerate state of men of rank in comparison to the vital, on-the-rise Third-Estate. In hierarchy-of-need terms, he is a personalization of those for whom no motive, no need, is felt very acutely. The Master can occasionally become concerned for his safety,

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 515.

and also on occasion, experiences esteem needs and their frustration. For the most part, however, he is an individual largely in a state of drivelessness. He seems to have little concern for physiological needs. His financial resources are apparently such that these drives never really manifest themselves. He has likely never known real hunger. He seems little concerned for belongingness and love. His concern for hearing Jacques' love life is less to experience any identification with people in the process of fulfilling love needs than mere boredom relief. As will be seen later, he does exhibit a sort of esteem need, but even it is of a debilitated sort. His cognition and aesthetic needs are in no wise evident. In drive-theory or motive-theory terms, the Master is drive-less and motive-less. He is merely capable of being. He can reduce himself to an almost plant-like state. He does seem to find some relief from just existing by listening to Jacques. It is doubtful however if even boredom is strongly experienced. What independent activity he does engage in supports the notion of an automaton. He could bring himself " ... à prendre du tabac, à regarder l'heure qu'il était, à questionner Jacques;...."<sup>1</sup> The inanity of these actions, and by extension their uselessness, not only for others but even for him, is shown by the

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 516.

fact that none of them even fill any basic need. Tobacco doesn't fill a physiological need; looking at his watch is pointless since he has no schedule to meet and even more so, since he doesn't even have a stated geographical, journey-goal. One might say that questioning Jacques fills a cognitive need. However most of his questioning reduces itself to merely trying to get Jacques off a philosophical subject and back to his love-life. All three of his activities do center around the core condition of someone tired of life. His continual checking on the time bespeaks someone weary of the state in which he finds himself. To the degree that he is capable of any emotion in any depth at all, the Master is weary of life. He is incapable of recognizing its challenge and promise and is wearily awaiting its end. The other two activities, taking tobacco and questioning Jacques, merely help him more painlessly pass the weary time till he does at last reach an exit. Tobacco is a sort of sedative. Even today, it is known as the most readily available tranquilizer. It will help keep him in a semi-sedated state as he tediously exists. Jacques' continual drone also helps shorten the time from waking till sleep, helps shorten the distance from where he is to the point where he will find relief in oblivion. He is not unlike the bored, sometimes alcoholic housewife who leaves the television at full volume while she wearily waits for the end of the day. A further comparison is possible. The bored housewife will likely

not watch educational television, nor does the Master want philosophy from Jacques; rather she will turn from soap opera to soap opera as the Master will incessantly bring Jacques back to his "amours." With time, any narcotic seems to lose its effectiveness. This seems to have been the case with the Master's three sedatives. It would often be that he would check his watch for " ... l'heure qu'il était, sans le savoir, ..." He would open his " ... tabatière sans s'en douter, et prenait sa prise de tabac sans le sentir; ..." He would even do it " ... trois ou quatre fois de suite et dans la même ordre."<sup>1</sup>

Thus we have in the Master a weary man leading a senseless life. He is in no wise genetically retarded; he does show adequate native capacity. He has, however, allowed himself to degenerate to an almost irretrievably low state. Maslow in discussing people who have let their cognitive awareness and cognitive needs degenerate to a low level records that he has seen cases wherein " . . . the pathology (boredom, loss of zest in life, self-dislike, general depression of the bodily functions, steady deterioration of the intellectual life, of tastes, etc.) were produced in intelligent people leading stupid lives, . . ."<sup>2</sup> The Master is almost a personification of the syndrome. He has not had

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 715.

<sup>2</sup>Maslow, Motivation, p. 95.

the insight to see that along with his privilege came responsibility. It is specifically the learning of responsibility that could have saved him: It could have given his life meaning, a "raison d'être." He has failed to see that this is not imposed magically from without but must grow from within. Jacques, in the book's final pages, finally pointedly tells him how low he has allowed himself to come. Jacques is not gloating as a victor, but is merely telling things as they are. "N'avez-vous pas été ma marionnette, et n'auriez-vous pas continué d'être mon polichinelle ... si je me l'étais proposé?"<sup>1</sup> Here it is evident from Jacques' choice of images "marionnette" and "polichinelle" that to him the Master has become virtually incapable of autonomous existence. He can only have movement, that is to say, continue to live, as Jacques gives it to him in the way that a puppeteer controls his creations. Again we seem to have a foreshadowing of the future power of the rising Third-Estate.

One other comment is apropos concerning Jacques' choice of comparing the Master to a "marionnette." The "marionnette" has no needs, drives, or motives except those given to him by someone else. In like manner the Master seems to have none except the one that has been imposed on

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<sup>1</sup>Bénac, ed., Oeuvres, p. 775.

him by virtue of the circumstances of his birth. This one need that the Master is somewhat capable of, even though it is itself borrowed, is esteem concern. By this point in time this is all that remains within the capacity of those whose families had been the leaders of the feudal system. Their only concern now is to protect and preserve their image. This is all the Master seems capable of. He is a vestige of the feudal system but has retained none of the vitality that once made the relationship of master to serf symbiotic. By the time the system arrives at the Master, symbiosis has been replaced by parasitism. The Master has nothing to offer Jacques; the valet supplies the strength and insight for them both. This is not to say that he could not, it is to merely say that at this point in their relationship he does not. It is interesting also, that it was only Jacques who has had a love-life worthy of retelling. Even here the Master's esteem needs get in his way. He at one time did love a girl named Agathe but questions of honor and esteem interceded. When asked if he loves her he says: "J'aime et beaucoup, mais j'ai des parents, un nom, un état, des prétentions, et je ne me resoudrais jamais à enfouir tous ces avantages dans le magasin d'une petite bourgeoise."<sup>1</sup> This is the firmest stand the Master makes as concerns

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 732.

fulfilling his basic needs in the entire book; and it is borrowed. He cannot even autonomously do something most anyone else is capable of, exhibit a full-blown basic need.

When he is aroused, however, it is usually in response to esteem needs. In this regard, Jacques is insightful and tries to be helpful. Sometimes however he unwittingly makes it difficult for his Master to fulfill his esteem needs. As a case in point, the Master has been relating the story of his own amours when at one point Jacques, seeing how the train of events is going, offhandedly fills in the remainder of an incident. Jacques has thought merely to please his Master with his attention to what he has been saying. The Master however, worrying about his esteem needs, curses Jacques for his insight and says " ... Je me tais."<sup>1</sup> The Master here is rather like an adolescent, who, when everything is not going his way, decides to take his ball and go home.

More often than not though, the Master's esteem concern is seen through his compensatory behavior. This is a natural consequence of the low effectiveness level at which the Master is currently operating. His ineptness often results in his being unable to accomplish successfully some goal or activity he sets for himself, or of which he

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 737.

considers himself capable. This will mean that he must then admit a lack of ability, thus suffering a loss of esteem, or must indulge in some sort of protective behavior. The Master does not have enough psychic strength to do much reality checking nor admitting of ineptness, so he establishes defenses to protect his self-picture from attack. So it is that he, like neurotics the world over indulges in excessive compensatory behavior. His protective devices do keep him functional, but at a rather limited level.

With the foregoing in mind, it is interesting to read of the Master's reaction to falling and hurting his knee. He had been making light of Jacques' insistence that a wound in the knee was one of the most painful. At that point the Master's horse rears, throwing the Master's knee against a rock. He bellows like a wounded calf. As the pain subsides and he realizes what a spectacle he has made of himself over a very minor variation of what he had just been deriding his servant for, he climbs aboard his horse and spurs it mercilessly.<sup>1</sup> This is not unlike the child who, angry at his parents, kicks the dog. The Master sees that all that he had been just previously proposing is now exposed as ridiculous. He could admit to error and say that as a result of his personal experience he now sees Jacques

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 508.

was in fact correct. This however would be too damaging to his self-esteem. Instead he turns his frustration outward from self-recrimination to hostility toward the cause of his loss of face. The horse is of course the recipient of his wrath.

Another example of the Master's compensatory behavior, as a result of thwarted esteem needs, comes as a result of his losing his horse. Through gross carelessness and by virtue of obviously lethargic physiology, the Master allowed his horse to be stolen while he dozed on the roadside. When Jacques comes back and awakens him, and asks him where his horse is, he " ... se disposait à tomber sur Jacques à grands coup de bride."<sup>1</sup> Again as before, he can realistically admit to gross ineptness and suffer esteem loss, or he can again protect his unrealistic self-picture. He of course chooses the latter course and beats his servant. By this action he wants Jacques to infer that he would not have fallen asleep and would not have lost his horse, had Jacques been more expeditious about returning. The lashing, he implies, is deserved because only Jacques' having taken so long to recover the lost watch and money could be the cause of his embarrassingly finding himself now without a mount.

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 521.

Once again the Master's unconscious guilt and subsequent protective behavior find release on Jacques' back.

One or two final comments concerning the Master. He was occasionally capable of a degree of concern for his valet. On one occasion when Jacques had been severely injured in an accident, "Son maître passa la nuit à son chevet, lui tatant le pouls et humectant sans cesse sa compresse. ..." However it soon is evident that this is not his usual behavior because upon awakening the following morning Jacques asks what he is doing. The Master replies, "Je te veille. Tu es mon serviteur quand je suis malade ou bien portant; mais je suis le tien quand tu te portes mal."<sup>1</sup> Jacques adds his surprise, showing he had considered the Master incapable of real affection, "Je suis bien aise de savoir que vous êtes humain; ce n'est pas trop la qualité des maîtres envers leurs valets."<sup>2</sup> One other incident showing the momentary and superficial nature of the Master's concern comes as Jacques is relating the incident of his being robbed after having succored the grieving woman. His master reacts with " ... j'ai l'épée à la main; je fonce sur tes voleurs et je te venge."<sup>3</sup> At the end of his account

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 559.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 572.

Jacques expresses the precariousness of his position, having medical bills to pay and no money, his master, " ... jeta ses bras autour du cou de son valet en s'écriant: Mon pauvre Jacques, que vas-tu faire: Que vas-tu devenir? Ta position m'effraye."<sup>1</sup> The point of import here seems to be that there is no more real emotion in the Master's proposed defense of his valet than in the tale Jacques is telling. It seems rather to be merely the Master's contribution to the story. His concern is no more profound than Jacques' tale.

In the two characters of Jacques and his Master, Diderot has again juxtaposed persons operative at disparate levels of the hierarchy-of-needs continuum. Jacques has not reached the integrated level of actualization of Rameau's philosopher, but he is "in process." As a matter of fact, it would be wholly consistent to propose that the logical sequel to Jacques le fataliste would be Jacques le philosophe. In the latter book, he would be somewhat freed of his Captain and would be largely self-directed. In the former novel, he has been testing reality; determining what will harmoniously fit into his unique philosophy and self-picture. He is an excellent study of someone in the process of actualization and self-integration. He is a personification of the adverbial

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 573.

en train de. It would seem wholly consistent to see in him author Diderot somewhat preceding the Diderot of Rameau's philosopher. He is dynamic, vital and growing. The Master on the other hand seems an unlikely candidate for representing any facet of Diderot at any time in his life except by carrying to an untenable extreme, some minor facet of the author. At no time in his life was Diderot ever so lethargic and apathetic. As a youth he was dynamism itself. Through the Encyclopodia years he was more controlled and less effervescent but still dynamic and vital. As a sexagenarian he was still productive and in fact wrote some of his most original and vital prose. Much of Jacques can be seen as Diderot, but it would rather seem that, in hierarchy-of-needs terms, the Master has little or nothing to do with representing his author. He is rather the death-knell of the feudal system.

## CHAPTER V

### MANGOGUL: A STUDY IN COGNITIVE DEGENERACY AND A PROTOTYPE FOR RAMEAU AND JACQUES' MASTER

From the point of view of the totality of the works, there would at first glance appear to be little in common between Les Bijoux indiscrets and the other two novels thus far discussed, Le Neveu de Rameau and Jacques le fataliste. The latter two novels have juxtaposed a self-actualizer, or near self-actualizer, with someone still fixated at a lower-need level; whereas Les Bijoux indiscrets appears solely to present the picture of Mangogul, a lower-need-fixated sultan. In this latter novel, no one seems to be self-actualizing. No one seems to be doing more than gratifying some baser drive. No one is representative of self-denial or of stoicism or of maximizing one's potential. Even Mirzoza, who is closer to self-actualization than Mangogul, is in no wise comparable to Rameau's philosopher or even to Jacques. On closer examination, however, one notes that what Diderot does do, instead of comparing an actualizer with a simple hedonist, as was the case with Rameau and the philosopher,

is to give a "before and after" picture of Mangogul. Thus we have a picture of Mangogul when he is exclusively self, and lower-need oriented, contrasted with himself when he seems to at least be approaching self-actualization. The only problem is that the natural order of things is reversed. First we have a brief, one page image of a near self-actualizing sultan/monarch, and then, virtually an entire book devoted to him as a lower-hierarchy hedonist. This is of course a logical state of affairs since Diderot was humorously, and yet somewhat pointedly, showing the degenerate state into which nobility had fallen. This paradox in the case of Mangogul will be discussed later, but it will suffice for the moment to point out that even here, in his earliest novel, (it preceded the others by some twenty years), Diderot has juxtaposed individuals operating at higher and lower levels in the hierarchy. This is the case in spite of the fact that very little attention is given in this book to higher needs, since it was largely aimed at besting Claude-Prosper Cr  billon at his own game---the licentious tale.

If we then have only a fleeting hint of self-actualization, and if Bijoux is largely a philosopher's version of a Cr  billon type work, how has Diderot handled the characters who are largely operative at lower hierarchy levels? How does Mangogul as a hedonist compare to Rameau or to Jacques' Master? At this point it would be appropriate

to recall that these latter two characters exhibit a type of motivational-hierarchy deficiency, or hierarchial retardation. If we define deficiency broadly as a below-average level of functioning, of natural (i.e., hereditary) origin, we approach an ontogenetic description of Jacques' Master. His degenerate state seems to have been the result of the progressive decline that characterized the noble class which had resulted from the feudal system. Genetic degeneracy had come largely as the result of inbreeding, which allowed debilitating, recessive, genetic characteristics to pair, resulting in various genetic inferiorities. This is even now reported as a concern of ruling houses of Europe where convention has for centuries imposed intermarriage. It is, of course, the basis for prohibitions against marriages within families or with close relatives. Possible problems include the greater tendency toward hemophilia, the tendency toward cerebral malfunction, etc.

Psychological degeneracy can be seen to result from practices such as that of forbidding nobles to exercise a profession or to engage in practical endeavors. (England, of course, was to reject this practice.) This along with other practices and attitudes, such as basing evaluations and merit on birth rather than ability, resulted in progressively weakened individuals. The above again seems nearly definitional of Jacques' Master. He is markedly weak

by almost any standard of comparison, when measured against the vigorous, third-estate Jacques.

Retardation, on the other hand, describes someone whose individual, natural capacities exceed, for whatever the reasons, his usual performance. This is quite closely descriptive of Rameau. He is obviously functioning below his native ability. His is a type of self-imposed retardation. He deliberately and consciously acts in ways that are inferior to the quality of his potential. He has, as a result, been forced to adopt rather elaborate compensatory defense systems to help him maintain a consistent self-picture. This is due to the fact that he, at least subconsciously, realizes he is operating beneath his capacity. With a change of motivation and attitude, Rameau's degeneracy could be removed. This is not the case with the Master. His degeneracy seems to have been of too-long standing and to mount through too many generations.

It is immediately evident that Mangogul exhibits both deficiency and retardation. Thus, not only does he serve as a prototype for the antagonistic elements of motive hierarchy later to be represented by Rameau and the philosopher, i.e., a self-actualized versus a lower-need hedonist, he is also a prototype of the two types of degeneracy represented by Rameau and Jacques' Master. The thesis here then is that in spite of the haste or intent with which Diderot wrote this first work, in spite of the obvious superficiality

of the literary development of Mangogul, Diderot included in the latter, from a hierarchy-of-needs viewpoint, a prototype of the four major protagonists of the two previously discussed works.

As was stated above, only fleeting reference is made to qualities that in any way approach those of the self-actualization of the philosopher or the "in process" actualization of Jacques. What qualities reminiscent of self-actualization are present, are evident primarily as Diderot paints a brief "before" word-portrait of Mangogul in the initial paragraphs. He tells the reader that in his early years, Mangogul had gained the reputation of " ... grand homme."<sup>1</sup> This was due to activities which the reader infers had been conceived and executed by a great and magnanimous, i.e., self-actualizing, sultan. Over a period of years, Mangogul had busied himself winning battles, enlarging his empire, pacifying provinces, repairing disorders in the financial structure, bringing about a flowering of the arts and sciences, raising great buildings, instituting and perfecting legislation, and establishing academies and universities.<sup>2</sup> This is an impressive list for any sultan or monarch. It exceeds the accomplishments of Louis

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<sup>1</sup>Bénac, ed., Oeuvres, p. 5.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

XIV even after one omits those things for which he is more infamous than famous. Any sultan capable of such effectiveness would necessarily be bright, energetic, democratically oriented, and enlightened. He would be akin to the enlightened despot sought by Voltaire. He would seem to be within range of self-actualization, to be in the process of becoming the best sultan of which he was intrinsically capable. One could logically expect that such a monarch would continue to display physical prowess, to evaluate and conclude with his quick and exacting thought process, to utilize his advanced aesthetic and humanistic appreciations in order to bring about a flourishing of the arts, to fight for the dignity and freedom of all men through enlightened and equitable legislation, and to promote the continued search for mastering the unknown through academies and universities. In a word, this initial picture seems to be one of Diderot himself made sultan. It is a philosopher king.

Interestingly, this hint of self-actualization is largely limited to page five of a book some 225 pages in length. Then on page six, Diderot abruptly leaves the near-actualizing sultan, and in his stead reveals a bored, degenerate one, who thereafter shows only rare moments of any degree of greatness. It may well be that Diderot intended the initial portrait as a sort of prologue, because the sub-title of chapter three, which begins on this same page six, reads: "Qu'on peut regarder comme le premier de cette

histoire."<sup>1</sup> Evidently we are to forget, or to not take too seriously, the enlightened part of Mangogul's life that had just previously been described. It could be that author Diderot included this positive portrait, less to exemplify his particular concept of what Maslow would later call self-actualization, than to satisfy a censor who would otherwise have not tolerated the rest of the book, since the overall picture drawn was less than flattering to royalty. Be that as it may, the remaining ninety plus per cent of the book deals with a type of retarded, deficient Mangogul who is largely lower-need fixated. The vigorous reformer has become a lethargic sultan whose nearly sole interest now is hearing about " ... des aventures galantes de la ville."<sup>2</sup> We have to do now with a Mangogul who has learned that it is only " ... au pied du trône qu'on trouve le plaisir, et personne ... ne savait déposer plus à propos la majesté."<sup>3</sup> This is the Mangogul that one remembers; this is the Mangogul that fills the book, even though on occasion an enlightened Mangogul makes an appearance. It seems on these enlightened occasions, that we have to do with author Diderot disserting on one of his favorite subjects. The following concerning

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 6.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 7.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 129.

the drama is typical. Here he speaks out against the tragedy as inherited from the classical era:

Ne conviendrez-vous pas ... qu'à la démarche  
empesée des acteurs, à la bizarrerie de leurs  
vêtements, à l'extravagance de leurs gestes, à  
l'emphase d'un langage singulier, rimé, cadencé,  
et à mille autres dissonances qui le frapperont,  
il doit m'éclater au nez dès la première scène  
et me déclarer ou que je me joue de lui, ou que  
le prince et toute sa cour extravaguent.<sup>1</sup>

On rare occasion he concerns himself for his subjects, and at these moments he seems exemplary of a noble, altruistic monarch. Typical is the following incident wherein he counsels a young couple, after the husband had repudiated his wife for supposed infidelity. After having determined the innocence of the young wife, Mangogul informs her husband of her innocence and advises him to pardon her. This the husband does, but Mangogul counsels the innocent wife in a Solomon-like manner. She had in very deed been innocent, but her complete honesty made it so she allowed herself to be seen in situations that resulted in the rumors. A more sophisticated, and less innocent, woman would have been more discreet. Mangogul advises her to avoid the very appearance of evil: " ... souvenez-vous qu'une jolie femme se fait quelquefois autant de tort par des imprudences que par des aventures."<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 145.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 122.

What is the probability that someone as vigorous as Mangogul formerly seems to have been, should become an indolent sultan with only occasional flashes of his former self? Literarily, of course, anything can happen in a book which confronts the reader with things such as magic rings, talking "bijoux", and a sultan who can, upon willing it, be wherever he desires or make himself invisible. Psychologically, such momentous change, after ten vigorous years, is less defensible. One would normally expect a sultan with such an insightful, reality-oriented beginning to continue to search for more opportunity and more challenge. One thing that does seem to be implicit in Diderot's portrayal of Mangogul is that Mangogul never was completely self-actualized. His personal role, in the initial successes of his empire, was likely more apparent than real. This, Diderot could be inferring, is not unlike the successes of any monarch. That is to say, success is more resultant from the conditions and events existing during a king's reign, than from any innate quality of the king himself. If this is in fact the case, Mangogul seems to have soon exhausted his challenge and horizon, and to have been unable to achieve auto-motivation. Being thus incapable of real self-direction, he merely remained a reactor to events; consequently he vegetated. Boredom is the first sign that needs and motives are absent or inactive. Dependent on external motivators, all Mangogul can do is " ... s'ennuie à périr, ..." Mirzoza

tells him, " ... vous êtes distrait, vous baillez." All activities and functions are at a low level. Typical is the description of Mangogul " ... étendu nonchalamment sur une duchesse, vis à vis la favorite qui faisait des noeuds sans dire mot." Activity of any type is at a minimal level. Even conversation requires more energy than they are wont to exert. When they do talk, Mangogul can only answer " ... en baillant à demi."<sup>1</sup>

The activity level that is demonstrated by the foregoing examples is in sharp contrast to that force and vigor necessary to lead an army, to unite a kingdom or to reform legislation. Toward the end of the novel there is a singular evidence of his debilitated condition. He still " ... ne songeait qu'à varier ses plaisirs, ..." He had tired of hearing the confessions of the bijoux of his court and wanted to hear some of those of the women of Paris. " ... il eût fort désiré les consulter à son aise, et s'épargner la peine de les aller chercher."<sup>2</sup> When one considers that his ring not only had the property of making him invisible while he eavesdropped, but that it also could take him, in a twinkling, anywhere he wanted to be, his wish for an even easier state of affairs shows the advanced stages of his lethargy.

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<sup>1</sup>Bénac, ed., Oeuvres, pp. 6, 7.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 172.

Considered as a prototype, Mangogul is closer to Jacques' Master than to the other protagonists thus far considered. This is in part due to the commonality of their social origin, which alludes in both cases, to a sort of genetic debilitation. In the descriptions that Diderot gives of Mangogul's education, there are strong implications of degeneracy. Diderot infers that degeneracy is the case with all nobility, and even that some are in a worse state than Mangogul.

Grâce aux heureuses dispositions de Mangogul, et aux leçons continuelles de ses maîtres, il n'ignora rien de ce qu'un jeune prince a coutume d'apprendre dans les quinze premières années de sa vie, et sut, à l'âge de vingt ans, boire, manger et dormir aussi parfaitement qu'aucun potentat de son âge.<sup>1</sup>

It is evident that, in the manner of Voltaire, Diderot need not underline "heureuses dispositions" for the reader. The fact that this "disposition", i.e., intellectual and neuromuscular potential has him capable of doing after twenty years of tutoring, what the normal youngster is doing after that many months, and that without benefit of tutors, is indicative of Mangogul's sad state. The weakened state of aristocratic heredity is underlined when Mangogul is described as being like any other "... potentat de son âge." Diderot further spoofs nobility by saying that this is all that any young prince "a coutume d'apprendre" that is to say - nothing.

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 4.

However, the way in which Mangogul seems even more to look forward to Jacques' Master is in his need for a narcotic to help him endure life's seeming endlessness. Jacques' Master had accomplished this by stifling his thought process, by intellectually turning himself off, and by, at the same time "turning" Jacques' love-life account on. In like manner, Mangogul has turned himself intellectually off and now rarely faces up to life. The theme and variations of governing, which formerly challenged him, now have no interest for him whatsoever. Mangogul does not have a Jacques who can help sedate him with tales of his love life. He does have in Mirzoza someone who possesses " ... le talent si nécessaire et si rare de bien narrer. ..." <sup>1</sup> He has resorted to her tales in the past but they no longer seem to suffice. Like a drug addict, and like Jacques' Master, Mangogul must increase the dosage to obtain the same effect. Thus it is that he turns from Mirzoza's tales, to those of the bijoux, who reveal their ladies' amorous indiscretions whenever Mangogul points the magic ring in their direction. Consequently, whenever time weighs heavily on the sultan, as it does often, he can sedate himself by magically whisking himself to some lady's chamber in order to listen to her bijoux tell of her love life.

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<sup>1</sup>Bénac, ed., Oeuvres, p. 6.

This gives him momentary respite from the heaviness life seems to impose on him, from his existential nausea. Diderot was never clear about the goal of Jacques' and his Master's journey. They end up at a village where the Master's supposed son is housed, but this seems more happenstance than purposive. In a way then, their journey is life's journey, and the Master wants to get from one end of it to the other having thought as little as possible. Mangogul, in like manner, wants to sedate himself and just exist. It is to be expected that neither of them contemplates suicide. They do not relish life as did Diderot, Jacques or the philosopher, but neither can they forcefully oppose life by way of suicide. They have opted for existence, but for existence in a semi-conscious state. Life offers no intrinsic reward as it did for Diderot, so they seek an escape that is short of complete evasion.

In hierarchy-of-motives terms, how did Mangogul get to this impasse? Following him through the hierarchy would offer some explanation of his condition, in addition to those already offered. As to physiological needs, it is inconceivable that Mangogul has even experienced them except as a small infant. In all probability his every physiological need has been immediately and completely fulfilled. They have in all likelihood never acted as motivators for him. As to safety needs, he has probably never known them in any real degree. There may have been moments on the field of

battle wherein Mangogul has experienced safety concerns but the likelihood is that even here he was surrounded by legions of his men and was as safe as if in his own chamber. He should have never experienced real belongingness or love deprivation. He was a member of the ruling class which carried with it a sort of automatic belonging. He is loved beyond deserving by a beautiful, intelligent woman, Mirzoza, and he in turn seems to love her. Thus his belongingness and love needs should be fulfilled on a general as well as on an intimate scale. As to esteem needs, one would expect that all his past accomplishments should give him complete esteem satisfaction. They should readily lead to feelings of confidence, worth and adequacy, and should have aided him to fulfill needs for prestige, status, dominance and recognition. Herein, however, may lie part of Mangogul's dilemma. Maslow states that the most healthy sort of esteem is that which is based on deserved respect and not on external fame or celebrity.<sup>1</sup> It could be then, that Mangogul was not really deserving of the credit and honors that had been bestowed upon him, and he may have been aware that he was undeserving. If this were the case, that he had been the recipient of the notoriety merely because he was sultan and not for any deserved merit, the result might be that he never adequately filled his esteem needs. It often happens

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<sup>1</sup>Maslow, Motivation, p. 91.

that public figures, in spite of much notoriety, never have their esteem needs filled because they realize that they are not being accepted or esteemed for what they personally, intrinsically are, but merely for what they have come to represent. If this were the case, it would again emphasize the commonalities already shown with Jacques' Master and Rameau.

What does seem even more definitely to be the case is that Mangogul never fulfilled to any extent at all, those needs which follow esteem, that is, those of cognition. He gives no indication of ever having posed to himself any of the cosmic questions that would plague Diderot and most of his literary offspring. The above characteristics call to mind Louis XIV. His basic needs were all met, and he was the champion of arts par excellence. His cognitive interests, however, seem to have never reached fruition due to his limited capacity, and his rather puerile interpretation of himself and the world. His cosmic inquiries seem to have accordingly been nil. Certainly they kept him from any real degree of self-actualization. This seems to be the case with Mangogul. If he ever was curious to know, to explain or to understand, he no longer is. His cosmic concerns like those of Louis XIV seem totally absent. He recalls again, as did Jacques' Master, the syndrome Maslow reports from clinical impressions of the frustration of cognitive needs---boredom, self-dislike, loss of zest for life, depression of

bodily functions, deterioration of intellectual life and of tastes.<sup>1</sup> As was the case with Jacques' Master, the above syndrome seems almost tailor-made for Mangogul. Lack of cognitive, cosmic concern then seems to have stopped Mangogul decidedly short of actualization growth levels. Again and again he shows himself to be incapable of sustained interest in a subject of any depth. "Ahi! dit Mangogul en baillant et se frottant les yeux, j'ai mal à la tête. Qu'on ne me parle jamais de philosophie. Ces conversations sont malsaines."<sup>2</sup> In cognitive matters, Mangogul seems rather like an adolescent who will embark on an intellectual query, only to tire of it and revert readily back to more juvenile interests. Mangogul had begun a discussion with Mirzoza and his intimates only to soon show signs of dis-interest. Mirzoza chides him:

Vous nous embarquez vous-même dans un entretien sur les belles lettres: vous débutez ... et lorsque pour vous obliger, on se dispose à suivre le triste propos que vous avez jeté, l'ennui et les bâillements vous prennent; vous vous tourmentez sur votre fauteuil; vous changez cent fois de positions sans en trouver une bonne; las enfin de tenir la plus mauvaise contenance du monde, vous prenez brusquement votre parti; vous vous levez et vous disparaissez: et où allez-vous encore? peut-être écouter un bijou.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 95.

<sup>2</sup>Bénac, ed., Oeuvres, p. 114.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 146.

Mirzoza here offers some excellent insight into Mangogul and his fluctuation from higher motivations to lower sense gratifications worthy of Sade or Crébillon. This assessment by the person who best knew him, and who was also of a temperament to speak her mind, is likely the most valid one offered in the novel. Mirzoza was insightful; her assessments of persons or conditions seem to have Diderot's approval. This assessment of Mangogul is then likely close to Diderot's intent. It affirms that Diderot likely did intend that this fluctuation be incorporated into Mangogul's psyche. What we do have then, and what Diderot did apparently deliberately produce, was a rather unusual admixture of high and low motivations. Mangogul would initiate the fulfilling of cognitive or aesthetic needs, or a type of self-actualization, only to find it impossible to integrate this into his self-picture. He would momentarily become the benevolent sultan, aiding the needy in his kingdom, dispensing wisdom in Solomon-like fashion, evidencing concern for the individual dignity and worth of his subjects, only to find that this did not fit his self-concept, that it was not an integral part of him. So, unable to pursue higher motives, feeling hampered and at disparity with himself, Mangogul readily reverts to lower-hierarchy levels. Thus a little in manic-depressive fashion, where instability is the key-word, Mangogul oscillates up and down in the hierarchy.

In this dilemma of oscillation, there are reminiscences of Jacques who was in the process of self-actualization, but who had not arrived at complete equilibrium. It does, however, seem relatively evident that Jacques' moments of cosmic concern and of self-actualization were much more frequent and much longer in duration than Mangogul's. Mangogul, in contrast, remained largely at a lower level with only flashes of cosmic interest or actualization motive. Mangogul realized this in himself but did not seem to have the strength to change nor did he feel the need. Following his chiding by Mirzoza, discussed above, he elaborates on these qualities in himself: "Je conviens madame, du fait; mais je n'y vois rien d'offensant. S'il arrive à un homme de s'ennuyer des belles choses et de s'amuser à entendre de mauvaises, tant pis pour lui." He continues on, showing decided self-perception: "Cette injuste préférence n'ôte rien au mérite de ce qu'il a quitté; il en est seulement déclaré mauvais juge."<sup>1</sup>

In the above reply, we see why he can oscillate from high to low motives. He recognizes the superiority of higher interests and considers that when he opts for lower need gratification it is an "injuste préférence." However, since he cannot achieve total self-actualization and feel the resulting sense of fulfillment, he is content to give lip

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<sup>1</sup>Bénac, ed., Oeuvres, p. 147.

service to those interests and merely declare himself to be a "mauvais juge." This attitude partakes somewhat of the self-justifications that Rameau so continually engaged in. He too recognized the superiority of what the philosopher proposed, but he could so readily justify why he followed his course of action, that one would not anticipate any change. On occasion Mangogul would have the reader believe that his listening to bijoux is merely the futile search for women of integrity. He occasionally bemoans the lack of fidelity and pure love he has found: " ... Ce pur amour dont on parle tant, n'existe nulle part; cette délicatesse de sentiments, dont tous les hommes et toutes les femmes se piquent, n'est qu'une chimère."<sup>1</sup> In spite of this comment on the state of morals of the Eighteenth-Century, the fact remains that the major portion of the book seems dedicated to saying that some persons' level of involvement in life and level of intellectual inquiry is so low as to give their lives little meaning. Somewhat akin to characters from a work by Sartre, these people se sentent de trop; they have little raison d'être. They are thus confronted with a life with little or no goal, but see no alternative but to live it. What they can however do, is make themselves less aware of reality and of time, and thus pass their days less

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 229.

wearily. The simplest, least effortful means of getting from one point in time to another is their answer to the problem of life. On occasion, as has been shown, Mangogul, like Rameau, has insight into the folly of his position, but does not have the force to change. He is thus condemned to sedate himself and to do his best at self-delusion. It would again be in order to point out that this is a pole apart from the philosophy of life that motivated Diderot. His was a life of total involvement, complete commitment, based on a view of life as a kaleidoscopic challenge to be met head-on.

How do the foregoing hierarchy-of-motives analyses of Mangogul and Les Bijoux indiscrets in general coincide with other analyses and previously held views? The most significant thing to be said in this regard is that Les Bijoux indiscrets and its protagonist Mangogul has been in large measure ignored. It has seemed sufficient to say, as does Venturi, that "Il appartient à une tradition qui commence avec Crébillon et qui continue jusqu'à vers le milieu du siècle, de simples jeux littéraires sur un fond oriental."<sup>1</sup> The enchantments, the emirs, etc. are drawn from this tradition. Even the idea itself of making the bijoux speak " ... est tirée d'un récit du conte de Caylus Nocrion publié

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<sup>1</sup>Franco Venturi, Jeunesse de Diderot (de 1713 à 1753) Traduit de l'italien par Juliette Bernard. (Paris: Skira, 1939), p. 120.

en 1747. ..."<sup>1</sup> It partakes of the allegorical and fantastic of A Thousand and One Nights.<sup>2</sup> Most commentators also point to the assertion made by Diderot's daughter, Mme de Vandeuil, that the book was " ... composé en quinze jours pour gagner cinquante louis afin de subvenir aux dépenses de Mme de Puisieux, maîtresse de Diderot, ..." Most also state as does Bénac that he was trying to prove that anyone could write a licentious tale " ... à condition de trouver « une idée plaisante, cheville de tout le reste »."<sup>3</sup> Comments on Diderot's choosing to write a crébillonage are typified by André Billy who said, "La galanterie n'était pas son fort, il le reconnut lui-même."<sup>4</sup> Venturi excuses it as just " ... une incursion passagère et momentaire. ..."<sup>5</sup>

How did Diderot himself feel about the book? Naigeon says Diderot never heard the book mentioned except with a feeling of "chagrin ... que donne le souvenir d'une faute. ..."<sup>6</sup> Georges May seems to feel Diderot did not regret writing the work as much for its licentiousness as

<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 123.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 124.

<sup>3</sup>Bénac, ed., Oeuvres, p. 837.

<sup>4</sup>Billy, ed., Oeuvres, p. 13.

<sup>5</sup>Venturi, Jeunesse, p. 120.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid., p. 134.

for the " ... énorme disproportion qui existe entre l'obscénité et la prédication, ..." <sup>1</sup> Venturi likewise feels it was not " ... entièrement renié par son auteur." <sup>2</sup> Probably one of the reasons that Diderot would not completely reject this book is because, as Van Tieghem says, "On y retrouve les thèmes de la pensée de Diderot telle qu'elle s'était exprimée dans ses premières oeuvres philosophiques. ..." <sup>3</sup> Bénac reminds the reader of Bijoux that even in a light work, "Diderot n'oublie pas la philosophie et essaye, sous le couvert de la fantaisie ou de la gauloiserie, de glisser la bonne parole dans les têtes légères. ..." <sup>4</sup> Another commentator says that "Les seules parties du roman vraiment notables restent celles où les idées philosophiques de Diderot font leur apparition." <sup>5</sup> Billy even feels it is the " ... point de départ de la réforme dramatique tenté dans la suite par Diderot." <sup>6</sup> For Naigeon it contains " ... connaissance très étendue des langues, des sciences et des beaux arts; des pages très philosophiques et très sages; ..." <sup>7</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Georges May, Diderot et la Religieuse. Etude historique et littéraire (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1954), p. 10.

<sup>2</sup> Venturi, Jeunesse, p. 134.

<sup>3</sup> Van Tieghem, ed., Récits, p. 19.

<sup>4</sup> Bénac, ed., Oeuvres, p. 838.

<sup>5</sup> Venturi, Jeunesse, p. 128.

<sup>6</sup> Billy, ed., Oeuvres, p. 14.

<sup>7</sup> Bénac, ed., Oeuvres, p. 838.

What of Diderot's more specific social or satirical intent? Was he in fact writing a social satire? Naigeon says it is a " ... satire des mauvaises moeurs, de la fausse éloquence, des préjugés religieux, ..." <sup>1</sup> In this regard it has been compared to Dames galantes <sup>2</sup> and is not unlike Lettres persanes in social criticism. For Ellrich it is an empirical inquiry into morality. <sup>3</sup>

Is it even more specifically a "roman à clef" with Louis XV as its chief target? Most observers seem to feel Diderot did have in mind Louis XV, though the portrait is not exact. Most are in agreement with Fernand Drujon who says the people and places represented are Kangoglou as Louis XIV, Mirzoza as Mme de Pompadour, Mangogul as Louis XV, Le Congo as France and Banza as Paris. <sup>4</sup> Bénac adds that the bramines are the clergy. <sup>5</sup> There seems to be ample evidence to support the idea that Mangogul is reminiscent of Louis XV. He did have the practice of reading each morning,

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 838.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 843.

<sup>3</sup>Robert J. Ellrich. "The Structure of Diderot's 'Les Bijoux indiscrets'" Romanic Review, 52: 279-89, 1961.

<sup>4</sup>Jean Hervez, ed., "La Religieuse," L'Oeuvre de Diderot, deuxième partie (Paris: Bibliothèque des curieux, 1920), p. 5.

<sup>5</sup>Bénac, ed., Oeuvres, p. 841.

the report of the agents of the lieutenant general of police of Paris concerning the scandalous happenings of the prior night.<sup>1</sup> Hervez says:

On sait que Berryer de Renonville d'abord et ensuite Sartines, lieutenants generaux de police, avaient formé avec soin des inspecteurs ... chargés de surveiller spécialement le tout-Paris galant et de dresser des rapports détaillés sur les scandales d'alcove, les potins de coulisses, les escapades, les adultères des gentils hommes et des nobles dames de la cour.

These reports were " ... présentés au roi qui, « satisfaisant sa lubricité, tachait de ranimer ses sens émoussés en remplissant son imagination de ces tableaux orduriers »." <sup>2</sup>

This is not at all unlike the portrait Diderot presents of Mangogul though, as has been implied, he does take some pains to make Mangogul more acceptable to his model Louis XV, than a true portrait would have allowed. For sheer survival, as well as for greater marketability, Diderot's portrait was attenuated. It nevertheless served as a prototype for elements of many of his characters that would come later.

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 839.

<sup>2</sup>Hervez, ed., La Religieuse, p. 3.

## CHAPTER VI

### SUZANNE, AN ACTUALIZER MADE WOMAN

La Religieuse, a novel indicting convent life, was written in 1760 when Diderot was forty-seven years old. It relates very closely to his concept of man and Nature, and to his concept of free agency and responsibility. Diderot had an almost religious respect for the natural; however, he did not, as did his compatriot Rousseau, conceive of the natural as having to do largely with forests and lakes and with retreat from civilization to a simpler state of existence. Rousseau was to give this concept of the natural great popularity by way of his novel, La Nouvelle Héloïse (1761). Diderot did propose less artifice and more genuineness among men, but he, like Voltaire, felt this could be achieved within the confines of an advanced, even rich, society. In La Religieuse, Diderot seems to have conceived of the natural in terms of that which is common to men or normal for the species, and to have conceived of the human body as being formed by Nature, and as maintaining its equilibrium only by the exercise of its normal functions, i.e. by engaging in normal, social interaction. He was in

principle opposed to anyone or to any practice which robbed man of his natural social character, and said that " ... quand on s'oppose au penchant général de la nature ... cette contrainte ... détourne à des affections déréglées. ..."<sup>1</sup>

One practice he particularly opposed was that of cloistering young people in convents and monasteries away from real, i.e. natural life. Gallier writes that in Diderot's time the practice of getting certain children out of the way by sending them to convents was common. Gallier continues that many times they were kept there by civil authorities, even in the absence of parental pressure.<sup>2</sup> For Diderot, this violated man's inherent rights and mocked natural law.

Diderot's concept of the aim of literature is another important consideration at this juncture. Georges May says that Diderot felt that "La littérature doit prêcher et dissenter, et tout le reste n'est que dorure du pilule."<sup>3</sup>

Diderot above all insisted that literature be committed on a moral rather than on a religious and political plane.<sup>4</sup>

So it was that Diderot, abhorring the very basis of convent

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<sup>1</sup>Bénac. ed., Oeuvres, p. 381.

<sup>2</sup>Jean Walter. ed., La Religieuse par Denis Diderot (Paris: Editions de Cluny, 1938), p. xxi. Walter quotes from an unnamed work by M. Humbert de Gallier who had studied the monastic life of Diderot's time.

<sup>3</sup>Georges May, Diderot et "La Religieuse," Etude historique et littéraire (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1954), p. 11.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

and monastic life and seeing literature as a tool for change, attacked the problem with all his vigor. Ellrich says La Religieuse unequivocally aims to demonstrate and persuade.<sup>1</sup> Jasinski says Diderot " ... attaque le fanatisme avec une indignation sincère et s'élève souvent au pathétique."<sup>2</sup> Elsewhere, Jasinski says, "Il condamne les mortifications, bannit les hypocrisies. ..." <sup>3</sup> Daix says: "Il a su qu'il fallait affranchir les femmes de toutes servitudes comme du despotisme de l'homme."<sup>4</sup> Van Tieghem feels it is also, more specifically an " ... exposé vivant et concret des conséquences douloureuses de principes religieux."<sup>5</sup> Jacques Proust says it is a defense of man and individual liberty.<sup>6</sup> Diderot underlines the same idea, that of liberty and natural law, when he pleads for good laws, which are those that do not require man to " ... s'opposer à sa propre nature."<sup>7</sup>

Diderot seems to have succeeded eminently well in doing what he intended. Georges May considers it to be

<sup>1</sup>Robert J. Ellrich, "The Rhetoric of 'La Religieuse' and Eighteenth-Century Forensic Rhetoric," Diderot Studies, III (1961), p. 130.

<sup>2</sup>René Jasinski, Histoire de la littérature française, Vol. II (Paris: Boivin, 1947), p. 208.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 203.

<sup>4</sup>Pierre Daix, ed., Diderot, "La Religieuse" (Paris: Club des amis du livre progressiste, 1966) p. xix.

<sup>5</sup>Van Tieghem, ed., Récits, p. 19.

<sup>6</sup>Jacques Proust, "Recherches nouvelles sur 'La Religieuse'," Diderot Studies, VI (1964), p. 209.

<sup>7</sup>Walter, ed., La Religieuse, p. xv.

" ... l'un des cinq ou six romans les plus importants du XVIIIe siècle français."<sup>1</sup> Walter sees in the work " ... un chef-d'oeuvre de psychologie et de vie."<sup>2</sup> According to Ellrich it is a morally beautiful tale because innocence does not flag.<sup>3</sup> Bénac considers its effectiveness to be due to the fact that the moral comes not in the form of a dissertation " ... mais à travers une aventure individuelle ... réelle." Bénac points out one other interesting and important fact when he says this allowed Diderot to study one of the "conditions" of which he had spoken in the Entretiens sur le fils naturel.<sup>4</sup> It is interesting to note, in light of the title of the work just mentioned, that another name for the book could have been, La Fille naturelle, this based on the "conditions" of Suzanne's birth. Reading Diderot's own views of the quality of his work is interesting. He believed it to be gripping and effective: " ... Je ne crois pas qu'on ait jamais écrit une plus effroyable satire des couvents." He also considered it to be filled with

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<sup>1</sup>May, Etude, p. 17.

<sup>2</sup>Walter, ed., La Religieuse, p. xxiii.

<sup>3</sup>Ellrich, Rhetoric, p. 146.

<sup>4</sup>Bénac, ed., Oeuvres, p. 869.

scenes that could be put on canvas: "C'est un ouvrage à feuilleter sans cesse par les peintres; ..." <sup>1</sup>

Daix writes that Diderot's depiction of the lesbian passion of the Mother Superior " ... se voit confirmée par les travaux les plus récents, ..." and by Simone de Beauvoir's analysis of the question in Le Deuxième Sexe. <sup>2</sup> This is understandably so because Diderot never felt that he had to cheat and make his views correspond to any preconceived ideas. He observed nature directly and so his conclusions concerning man should be as valid as those of current observers. <sup>3</sup> Nuns and convent life were not new to Diderot. His own sister Catherine joined a convent against the wishes of the family and was to meet a lamentable end. Angélique, Diderot's daughter wrote in 1816 to Meister, Grimm's successor as editor of the Correspondance littéraire that:

Une soeur de mon père voulut, en dépit de la volonté de ses parents, se consacrer à l'état religieux. ... on abusa de sa force physique: le moral s'altera; la tête s'exalta; elle mourut folle à vingt-sept ou vingt-huit ans. C'est le destin de cette soeur qui a donné à mon père l'idée du roman de La Religieuse. ... <sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Bénac, ed., Oeuvres, p. 869.

<sup>2</sup>Daix, ed., La Religieuse, p. xlii.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid... p. xxxiv.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. xxxii.

Undoubtedly this did have a marked effect on Diderot and served as genesis for some of his strong feelings concerning cloistered life. He had treated convent life some twelve years earlier in chapter seven of Les Bijoux indiscrets (1748).<sup>1</sup> He made the point then that though cloistered, these girls and women had the same physical needs as any other person. He even implied that their knowledge of these matters was little different from that of the promiscuous courtisanes. Jacques Proust offers one other source of Diderot's knowledge of convents. He refers to a journal, Nouvelles ecclésiastiques, which he says could have offered any number of models and incidents of convent irregularities.<sup>2</sup>

The most direct model for Suzanne Simonin, the nun of La Religieuse, is Marguerite Delamarre. She was born in 1717 and had spent the near total of her life in convents, having been sent at age three to Longchamp near Paris.<sup>3</sup> Many of the facts of her life such as approximate dates, names of convents, parental rejection and a court trial to secure her freedom, were borrowed by Diderot for his novel.<sup>4</sup> In 1758 she had brought civil suit to secure her freedom, charging that her parents had placed her in the convents

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<sup>1</sup>Bénac, ed., Oeuvres, pp. 19-21.

<sup>2</sup>Proust, Recherches, pp. 210-11.

<sup>3</sup>May, Etude, pp. 48-9.

<sup>4</sup>Proust, Recherches, p. 202.

against her will. One of Diderot's and Grimm's great friends, the marquis de Croismare, became interested in the young nun's plight. The Marquis subsequently left Paris to concern himself with his lands in Normandy. When he did not return after an absence of over a year, Diderot and Grimm composed letters, ostensibly from the nun in whom the Marquis had been interested, asking him for aid. The hope was that the kind-hearted Marquis would return to Paris. Diderot wrote La Religieuse (supposedly the real adventures of this non-existent nun) in support of the letters. He revealed the entire adventure to the Marquis, but not before having written an indictment of convents, a treatise for free agency and a literary classic.

As was stated above, Diderot seemed to have excellent information concerning lesbianism. Georges May writes that Diderot possibly had models very close at hand. At the time he was writing La Religieuse he believed that " ... les deux femmes qu'il aimait alors le plus au monde étaient unies l'une à l'autre par des liens impurs." It was a question here of Sophie Volland, the most important woman in his life, and her sister Mme Le Gendre. In a letter written by Diderot to Sophie in 1759 he told her: " ... J'approche mes lèvres des vôtres; je les baise; dussé-je y trouver la trace des baisers de votre soeur; mais non, il n'y a rien."<sup>1</sup> Of the two, it was Sophie's sister that

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<sup>1</sup>May, Etudes, p. 142.

Diderot suspected of unusual desire for Sophie. May suspects also that Diderot might even have been jealous of the sister and not simply of Sophie. He feels the tone of some letters indicates that he had more than fraternal sentiment for Mme Le Gendre.<sup>1</sup> Of even more direct relationship concerning possible models for the lesbian aspects of the convents was the fact that Diderot also suspected Mme Le Gendre of having overly passionate feelings for a nun.<sup>2</sup>

All the foregoing influences and examples were largely restricted to fashioning Diderot's ideas concerning convents in general, nuns in general, or to supplying him with the more superficial aspects of his protagonist Suzanne such as her demands to be released. However, Suzanne as a person partakes of none of the deviancy, of none of the weakness or narrow-mindedness of the typical nun as portrayed by Diderot. She is the antithesis of all they are or symbolize. She represents true religion and "naturalness" when compared to the other nuns. She is the personification of liberty, of free agency and personal dignity. She is " ... un symbole vivant, ..." <sup>3</sup> For Ellrich she is the lawyer presenting the case against convents and hypocrisy.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid... p. 143.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid... p. 145.

<sup>3</sup>Bénac, ed., Oeuvres, p. xiii.

<sup>4</sup>Ellrich, Rhetoric, p. 138.

Knowing Diderot even superficially would immediately lead to the discovery of the model he likely used for these more important facets of Suzanne. Sophie Volland embodied all the strength, all the virtue and all the true dignity of Suzanne. In writing to Grimm Diderot describes her:

Ah! Grimm, quelle femme! comme cela est tendre, doux, honnête, délicat, sensé! ... Cela réfléchit, cela aime à réfléchir. Nous n'en savons plus qu'elle en moeurs, en sentiments, en usage, en une infinité de choses importantes. ... Cela a son jugement, ses vues, ses idées, son sentiment à soi ...<sup>1</sup>

Knowing Diderot's own towering intellect and his astute perception, Sophie Volland must have been an exceptional person herself in order to deserve such an assessment from him. Proof that she was in point of fact what Diderot assessed her to be is offered by the following evaluation from Grimm:

D'où vous vient, Sophie, cette passion de la philosophie, inconnue aux personnes de votre sexe et de votre âge! Comment, au milieu d'une jeunesse avide de plaisir, lorsque vos compagnes ne s'occupent que du soin de plaire, pouvez-vous ignorer ou négliger vos avantages pour vous livrer à la méditation et à l'étude! ... la nature en vous formant s'est plu à loger l'âme de l'aigle dans une maison de gaze, ...<sup>2</sup>

Babelon assesses her as being "Instruite, d'esprit libre, son charme, sa tendresse étaient inséparables d'une

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<sup>1</sup>Babelon, ed., Lettres, p. 9.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

certaine virilité intellectuelle."<sup>1</sup> What seems evident is that Sophie Volland, like Diderot, was likely self-actualized. She seems to have been operating at a level decidedly above that of mere need gratification.

A self-actualizational assessment of Diderot's protagonist, Suzanne, shows her prime trait to center around a pronounced sense of autonomy, around an unusual feeling of being independent of her physical and social environment. She has complete assurance in her own value system and hence does not succumb to external pressures that the convent sub-culture imposes, almost universally, on other entrants. Suzanne's autonomy has evidently long been part of her life style. The most striking proof of this is the fact that she has been able to psychologically survive a family wherein she was very pointedly the rejected Cinderella. She was born of a clandestine liaison between her mother and a man for whom her mother had a temporary passion. Her supposed father suspected the truth but never openly discussed the matter because he could not bear the public ridicule that would result. Instead, his hatred for his wife's action and his own sense of loss of masculine esteem, exhibited itself as hatred for Suzanne, the living reminder of his wife's infidelity and his own inadequacy. Her mother

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 8.

likewise rejected Suzanne---the symbol of her guilt. Her supposed sisters rejected her because she was prettier, brighter and more gracious than they, and because she was always being complimented for her skills and beauty. In true Cinderella fashion, Suzanne paid a heavy price for the unsolicited attention and approval of others. " ... plus les étrangers m'avaient marqué de prédilection, plus on avait d'humeur lorsqu'ils étaient sortis." She would have much preferred to be ugly and stupid like her "sisters" in order not to be rejected. "O combien de fois j'ai pleuré de n'être pas née laide, bête, sotte ... afin d'être aimée, chérie, fêtée, excusée toujours comme elles l'étaient, dès mes plus jeunes ans j'ai désiré de leur ressembler."<sup>1</sup> Obviously she has the same love needs as anyone else. She wants to be "aimée, chérie" like her sisters. Somehow, however, her sense of autonomy is such that she survived psychologically where most children would have suffered severe personality damage due to lack of love, security and acceptance. She frequently observes that she felt " ... seule dans cette maison, dans le monde; car je ne connaissais pas un être qui s'intéressât à moi."<sup>2</sup> After having been forced into the convent she has an even more pronounced sense of

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<sup>1</sup>Bénac, ed., Oeuvres, p. 236.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 234.

rejection and aloneness. "«Hélas! Je n'ai ni père ni mère; je suis une malheureuse qu'on déteste et qu'on veut enterrer ici toute vive.»"<sup>1</sup>

It is of course unusual that any person could possibly survive a life-time of rejection and still have the healthy self-concept and the realistic ego-strength that Suzanne exhibits. We must either suppose some psychological developmental oversights on the part of author Diderot, or else infer that Suzanne was in some way able to make use of the positive regard that people other than her family members used to exhibit toward her. Somehow she may have been able to utilize this regard to fill her love and belongingness needs. What Diderot may in part be saying is the same thing Maslow says of the self-actualized, that is that these superbly " . . . healthy people are so different from average ones, not only in degree but in kind as well, that they generate two very different kinds of psychology."<sup>2</sup> That is to say, they may be simultaneously explained by seemingly incompatible syndromes. As an example Maslow suggests that the most ethical and moral people may also be the lustiest and most animal.<sup>3</sup> In the case of Suzanne we

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 237.

<sup>2</sup>Maslow, Motivation, p. 234.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 233.

might say that she has much more capacity for belongingness and love and yet, at the same time she has such autonomy that she no longer needs these ingredients to survive.

One point must be kept in mind in considering Suzanne, that is that La Religieuse is a work of art and that whatever else Suzanne might be or represent, she is a literary creation. Diderot the author, the polemicist and exponent of individual liberty was not primarily writing to show a woman's ability to resist rejection and absence of love. He above all wanted to show the "unnaturalness" of convent life and to point out how Suzanne, who embodied wholesomeness and love and naturalness, firmly resisted the attempts of the system to destroy her. He even gives the impression that the aversion Suzanne feels for unnaturalness was placed in her by Nature itself. "Je le sens, cette aversion; je l'apportai en naissant, et elle ne me quittera pas."<sup>1</sup> By extension he is saying that these aversions to the unnatural are common to all men, but that some fall victim to their environment and allow their sense of autonomy and liberty to die or to be stifled. Suzanne keeps them alive. Diderot implies that Suzanne had kept a vision of a full life that made her reject what the mothers superior were attempting to impose on her. On numerous occasions she lists her analysis of things: "Faire vœu de pauvreté,

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<sup>1</sup>Bénac, ed., Oeuvres, p. 280.

c'est s'engager par serment à être parasite et voleur; ..." Diderot felt nuns and monks were leeches and parasites and that it was not natural for man to beg and live off the industry of others. This criticism of the non-productivity of the religious orders was common to all the philosophes, especially Diderot and Voltaire. Suzanne vigorously opposed the unnaturalness of their hollow vows of chastity; " ... Faire vœu de chasteté, c'est promettre à Dieu l'infraction constante de la plus sage et de la plus importante de ses lois; ..." Suzanne refers here to God's command to Adam in the book of Genesis to multiply and replenish the earth, something which would not occur if all lived as do nuns and monks. Diderot, behind Suzanne, is saying that nothing is more natural to a man and woman than to marry and enjoy a full life including normal sexual relations. Suzanne next speaks Diderot's strong plea for human liberty and dignity: " ... Faire vœu d'obéissance c'est renoncer à la prérogative inaliénable de l'homme, la liberté." One must sacrifice this in convent life but Suzanne considers it inalienable. This was one of most basic of needs for which the Revolution would soon be waged. No man or system, Suzanne seems to be saying, has the right to deny this right to even the humblest of creatures, i.e. a young girl rejected by her family. She continues her indictment of the system by decrying its hypocrisy and fanaticism. "La vie claustrale est d'un fanatique ou d'un hypocrite." She ends this particular

attack by summarizing cloistered life as disruptive of the natural order, a place where " ... la nature révoltée d'une contrainte pour laquelle elle n'est point faite, ... devient furieuse, jette l'économie animale dans un desordre. ..." <sup>1</sup>

Suzanne remains above the disorder and unnaturalness. She obeys reasonable requests and retains complete faith in God and the Bible, but she rejects all that goes against her concept of Christianity, human dignity or liberty.

There was, however, a limit to Suzanne's force: "Ma santé ne tint point à des épreuves si longues et si dures; je tombai dans l'abattement, le chagrin et la mélancolie." <sup>2</sup> She would on occasion get to the point where, strong as she was, she could no longer live so alone and considered ending her struggle by leaping from a high window or jumping into the well. She became aware that the other sisters were subtly pushing her to take just these extreme measures. Again she resists reacting to her external environment and refuses to die: "On me dégouta de presque tous les moyens de m'ôter la vie, parce qu'il me sembla que loin de s'y opposer, on me les présentait." She continues philosophically that: "Nous ne voulons pas apparemment qu'on nous pousse hors de ce monde." She summarizes her resistance on these occasions by saying: "En vérité je ne vivais que parce qu'elles souhaitaient ma mort." <sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Bénac, ed., Oeuvres, pp. 310-11.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 269.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 270.

So, Suzanne is the personification of autonomy, of rational self-direction and resistance to enculturation. She is almost completely independent of external motivators. She is as alone as one can conceivably be. She does not know the identity of her real father; she is rejected by her supposed father and she has been repeatedly told by her own mother that she is a burden. The only way to cease being burdensome, her mother says, is to enter a convent---an act her mother knows Suzanne holds in horror. Even in the convent she is rejected because she refuses to succumb to practices she considers abominable or demeaning; as a consequence, she is mercilessly mistreated. When the sisters lead her to contemplate suicide she refuses to be dictated to and opts to live. None of Suzanne's resistance or show of autonomy seems remotely related to typical juvenile resistance to authority; rather it is an affirmation of her fundamental belief in the dignity of each individual. In self-actualization terms, she could stand as an almost classic example of autonomy and resistance to enculturation.

Suzanne's resistance is so unflagging, and, given the circumstances, so reasoned and unemotional---partaking of none of the rhetoric or emotion of the adolescent reformer---that some explanation seems in order. The explanation that seems readily applicable leads to one more characteristic of the self-actualized, that of a more efficient perception of reality. In point of fact, Suzanne is much like her

author and even like Jean-Jacques Rousseau in the sense that in the Discours (1749 and 1755) or in Contrat social (1762), Rousseau seems to have cleared away centuries of confusion concerning equality of man. On this point at least he seems to have had a lucid perception of reality, though he was not always able to keep this clarity of vision as concerned himself. Suzanne, likewise seems gifted with an efficient perception of things as they really are. She alone seems in complete contact with the more real world. She is not lost in a maze of confusion concerning this life's relationship to a post-earth life. She readily sees through the distortions of belief and religious practice. She is not caught as are the others in an inextricable and self-perpetuating web of abstractions and self-justifications. Holding uniquely to the Bible and basic Christianity, she is not blinded by the myriad fears and false hopes of the other members of the cloisters. The precursor then to her autonomy is her clear vision, her unambiguous, unblinded view of life as it most fundamentally is. She sees herself clearly: "Je me connais, et il ne me reste qu'à me conduire en conséquence de mon état."<sup>1</sup> She clearly, objectively sees herself in relationship to those she considers blind and bigoted: "J'ai souffert, j'ai beaucoup souffert; mais le sort de mes persécutrices me paraît et m'a toujours

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 252.

paru plus à plaindre que le mien." She ends by saying " ... J'aurais mieux aimé mourir que de quitter mon rôle, à la condition de prendre le leur."<sup>1</sup> She clearly assesses the unreasoned and sheep-like qualities of many of her sister nuns, particularly those who unwittingly follow: "Il y a dans les communautés des têtes faibles; c'est même le grand nombre: celles-la croyaient ce qu'on leur disait, ..."<sup>2</sup> She objectively analyzes the relationship of the basic needs of all men to vows and cloistered life and asks: " ... suspendent-elles les fonctions animales?"<sup>3</sup> Even in her condition, she did not allow her own needs to enter into her perception of other's strong points. Speaking of the lesbian mother superior she says of her piano ability: " ... elle avait la main infiniment plus légère que moi. Je le lui dis, car j'aime à louer, et j'ai rarement perdu l'occasion de le faire avec vérité."<sup>4</sup>

One other example of her clarity of perception of reality is important. On one occasion, after a change of mothers superior had taken place, Suzanne sees that the new mother is very strict and rule-bound; she decides that in order to survive she must combat the new mother on her own

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 308.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 294.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 310.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 335.

grounds. Consequently, Suzanne says: "Je lus les constitutions, je les relus, je les savais par coeur; si l'on m'ordonnait quelque chose ou qui n'y fut pas exprimé clairement, ou qui n'y fut pas ... je m'y refusais fermement."<sup>1</sup> On occasion when the mother superior would call in the archbishop to judge Suzanne's actions, Suzanne says: " ... Je me défendais, je défendais mes compagnes; et il n'est pas arrivé une seule fois qu'on m'ait condamnée, tant j'avais d'attention à mettre la raison de mon côté: ..." <sup>2</sup> Thus for all her warmth and love of humanity, and for all her efforts in behalf of fundamental dignity, Suzanne is not confused by abstractions, fears or the unknown. She sees reality with a clarity unknown to her sister nuns.

A feature of self-actualization that somewhat cuts across those already presented is that of acceptance. It goes without saying that Suzanne is self-accepting. She, like her author Diderot, has no overriding shame or guilt. She, as would be expected of a Diderot heroine who is the symbol of freedom and naturalness, accepts her own nature without chargin. She has no defenses and strikes no poses. All this is part and parcel of her autonomy. A specific example of her self acceptance is that of an occasion when,

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 267.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 268.

upon first entering a convent, some of the sisters had told her she was pretty. When she was again alone in her cell she related: " ... Je me ressouvins de leurs flatteries; je ne pus m'empêcher de les vérifier à mon petit miroir; et il me sembla qu'elles n'étaient pas tout à fait déplacées."<sup>1</sup> Without over concern for self, still she wholesomely admits to being comfortable with what she is.

Another incident shows her to be free of guilt and self-recrimination. She had reported something concerning herself to the Marquis when upon reflection she thought that it might give him a bad opinion of her. But then she rather innocently goes on to tell him: " ... mais puisque je n'ai point eu honte de ce que j'ai fait, pourquoi rougirai-je de l'avouer?"<sup>2</sup> Important here is the idea that she always behaves rationally and so has no cause to feel self-repugnance. She has happened, on one occasion, upon a group of sisters making light of some weakness of another sister. She was not aware of the characteristic at which the sisters were laughing and relates: " ... et quand j'aurais été plus au fait, cela ne m'aurait pas amusée davantage. ... et puis, qui est-ce qui n'a point un ridicule."<sup>3</sup> Obviously, however, she does not accept everything about some persons. She

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 239.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 383.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 334.

draws a line at inhumanity and injustice. " ... j'ai le caractère porté à l'indulgence; je puis tout pardonner aux hommes excepté l'injustice, l'ingratitude et l'inhumanité."<sup>1</sup>

Finally, as to her acceptance of life and Nature, it is necessary to point up the difference between accepting things over which one has some control, and which are in need of change, and those before which one is helpless. In a sense the entire novel concerns her unwillingness to accept conditions as they are; she resists where others acquiesce; she attempts change in areas that others consider immutable. In another sense, however, she had to have some qualities of stoicism, and of acceptance of her lot in life, in order to emerge with as few psychological scars as she evidences. Without an attitude of stoicism she could in no wise have survived. On one occasion she comments: "J'obéis à mon sort sans répugnance et sans goût; je sens que la nécessité m'entraîne, et je me laisse aller."<sup>2</sup> On another occasion when she has been taken back to the convent life she abhorred she states: " ... puisqu'il faut que je sois malheureuse, qu'importe où je le sois."<sup>3</sup> She resists with all her energy, but with a certain degree of stoicism--- necessary in order to help her maintain equilibrium in her darker moments.

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 324.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 261.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 255.

It goes without saying that Suzanne is problem-centered rather than ego-centered. She is not merely fighting a battle for her own well-being or for her immediate felicity; she is concerned with much more basic issues and with much more eternal questions. Her detractors conceive of life in terms of the fulfilling of rote, petty requirements which will ultimately gain for them eternal felicity; theirs is a letter-of-the-law universe wherein one survives or perishes, wins or loses, depending upon the consistency of compliance. For these people all must be reduced to shalts and shalt nots, to neat categories of black and white. Suzanne's universe is much broader, much more based on principles than upon rules and regulations. Thus it was that when she was interrogated about her submission to the rules she could answer with a wider frame of reference. "Quand on me demandait si j'étais soumise à la Constitution, je répondais que je l'étais à l'église; si j'acceptais la Bulle ... que j'acceptais l'Evangile."<sup>1</sup> Here Suzanne is reminiscent of Christ being questioned by the Pharisees. His replies to them concerning his and his disciples' observance of the letter of the law always referred them back to more eternal issues and to broader principles.

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 268.

Another example of Suzanne's broader vision is in conjunction with her mother. She had come to get Suzanne at the convent because of Suzanne's resistance to claustral vows. She sharply shoves Suzanne into the carriage causing her mouth to bleed. Rather than being angry, Suzanne goes to embrace her mother but in doing so gets blood on her mother's dress. Her mother's vision is so restricted that all she can conceive of is the inconvenience she is being put to and the blood on her dress. The loss of a soul to whom she herself gave life does not fall within the scope of her vision. Suzanne tells her mother: " ... vous êtes toujours ma mère, je suis toujours votre enfant ... et elle me répondit (en me poussant encore plus rudement, et en m'arrachant sa main d'entre les miennes): « Relevez-vous malheureuse, relevez-vous. »"<sup>1</sup>

This quality in Suzanne's make-up leads directly to another that she manifests in abundance, that of an abiding identification with all human beings in general; a feeling of older brotherliness or older sisterliness. This is Maslow's characteristic of gemeinschaftsgefühl. The most frequent examples of this characteristic occur in the convent. In spite of her anger with their lack of love, lack of insight into life, and treatment of her, Suzanne can still be magnanimous. At one point, when her lawyer

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 247.

has arranged for her to be transferred from one convent to another due to merciless treatment, the archdeacon asks her to tell him of irregularities that should be punished. She has no fear of reprisal but still answers: "Je n'en connais point."<sup>1</sup> One might question the wisdom of Suzanne's seeming magnanimity. The prime point seems to be, however, that Suzanne was so above pettiness, and felt such a strong need to help others, in the sense that an older, wiser sister is desirous of helping a younger, foolish one, that vindictiveness is foreign to her. She wants to help others; she does not seek to exact payment. This is not unlike Christ on the cross asking that his father pardon those who do not know what they are doing. Obviously one only does this from a position of strength---psychological strength not physical or authoritarian.

On another occasion Suzanne shows her gemeinschafts-gefühl to its full extent. She was preparing for the trial to secure her liberty. It meant life itself to her, and she should have given carte-blanche to her lawyer to bring out whatever facts were necessary in order to secure her release. She is so insistent, however, on guarding every one else's dignity and rights, that she loses her case. Thus in spite of her parents inhumane treatment, her instructions to her lawyer were that she does not want him to

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 325.

impugne " ... la réputation de mes parents." Further, even though she had received extreme abuse at the convent, she instructed her lawyer that "Je voulais qu'il ménageat l'état religieux et surtout la maison où j'étais." Finally, even though her sisters had rejected her, and even though her brothers-in-law would do nothing to help her, she still recalls having instructed her lawyer: "Je ne voulais pas qu'il peignit de couleurs trop odieuses mes beaux-frères et mes soeurs."<sup>1</sup> Even in her prayers she conveys somewhat this idea of magnanimity and of being not unlike Christ: "Mon Dieu, je vous demande pardon des fautes que j'ai faites comme vous le demandâtes sur la croix pour moi."<sup>2</sup> One might argue that Suzanne was a little dramatic and self-righteous, but she nevertheless embodies magnanimity and concern. Even on her death-bed, Suzanne's mother is incapable of going beyond her own needs to those of others---here notably to those of Suzanne. She tells her daughter: "Priez-pour moi ... que Dieu me pardonne de vous avoir mise au monde. ... Surtout ne troublez point la famille; ..."<sup>3</sup> Her mother here shows herself so restricted that even in death she cannot be accepting and gracious. It remains for Suzanne to be a sort of magnanimous big sister to all those of lesser vision who surround her.

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 309.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 277.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 265.

Three additional actualization characteristics are closely related to each other and to the quality of gemeinschaftsgefühl, these include (1) a democratic character structure (2) deep interpersonal relations and (3) discrimination between ends and means. Suzanne evidences all three of them though they are less striking than are the qualities already discussed. She does have a pronounced democratic character structure; she seems totally unaware of the differences of class, of ability level or even of quality of belief. Recall that she has said she can accept all men for what they are but that she cannot condone " ... l'injustice, l'ingratitude et l'inhumanité."<sup>1</sup> Her list of exceptions is extremely limited. What is more, her rejection is one based on the quality of acts or attitudes rather than on individuals as such. Like Jacques and Rameau's philosopher, she distinguishes between the person and deed. She does not reject people, she rejects inhumanity. Again, as with Jacques, one senses she has respect for all her fellow creatures, even for despicable mothers superior, simply because they are human. She resists condemning these women even though she was: " ... chatiée de la manière la plus inhumaine; ... on me condamna ... à vivre de pain et d'eau; ... on me donnait à la fois les ordres incompatibles, et l'on me punissait d'y avoir manqué; ..." <sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 324.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 269.

Suzanne is never unsure about right and wrong. She observes often that: " ... la voix de la conscience qui me pressait à chaque pas ... ne me permettaient pas; ..." <sup>1</sup> She never tries to take advantage of her superior ability for her own ends. On one occasion, the sisters see her transfixed and deeply contemplative and think she is having a vision. She sees she could very easily capitalize on their gullibility but does not. "Si j'avais eu quelque penchant à l'hypocrisie ou au fanatisme et que j'eusse voulu jouer un rôle dans la maison, je ne doute point qu'il n'eût réussi." <sup>2</sup> Her word is a pact, and she has to explain this to some sisters for whom honesty and oaths mean nothing: " ... et pourquoi ne le ferais-je pas après vous l'avoir promis?" <sup>3</sup>

All the foregoing leads to the fact that Suzanne is capable of deep personal interaction. She forms with sister Ursule an attachment which seems more meaningful to each of them than life itself. This is possible because all of the preceding characteristics such as acceptance, democratic character structure and gemeinschaftsgefühl, are already present. These two communicate as though there were no intervening ego boundaries. There is nothing that

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 383.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 282.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 360.

one would not do for the other. Suzanne was able to feel this for her father even though the attachment was unilateral: "Il est sûr qu'un père inspire une sorte de sentiment qu'on n'a pour personne au monde que lui."<sup>1</sup> She even seems able to establish a personal relationship with the Marquis whom she has never seen, because his character seems akin to hers. As she is writing down her experiences for him, she feels he is there: " ... il me semble que vous êtes présent, que je vous vois et que vous m'écoutez."<sup>2</sup> Suzanne even says of herself: "Je suis née caressante, et j'aime à être caressée."<sup>3</sup> It should be again pointed out that such deep feelings on the part of someone who seems to have had no model nor consistent example of any of the qualities and attitudes she so pronouncedly displays is unusual. Nevertheless, Suzanne, as presented at this point in time, is a remarkably integrated girl.

One other actualization characteristic bears comment. Maslow says his actualizers evidence having had mystical experiences, a feeling of awe before the universe. He describes it as being akin to Freud's oceanic feeling wherein there is a type of transcendence, a loss of self in

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 255.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 383.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 371.

time and space.<sup>1</sup> Unlike her author, Suzanne does pray: "Tous les matins, mon premier mouvement est d'élever mon âme à Dieu, ..." <sup>2</sup> but on one occasion she qualifies her having remained " ... le visage collé contre la terre; ..." with: " ... on n'invoque presque jamais la voix du ciel que quand on ne sait à quoi se résoudre; ..." <sup>3</sup> This would seem to imply that profound mystical experience is not man's nor her forte. Her life style does in fact seem based more on action than on meditation and prayer. This was eminently true of her creator, Diderot. Taken in concert with her life of action, Suzanne seems to say we must act without constant recourse to the supernatural, that action pre-empts meditation.

Is Suzanne a total self-actualizer? Has she arrived at the point of Rameau's philosopher? The answer is no. She is definitely not fixated at any lower hierarchy levels and is undergoing actualization growth. Nevertheless, she has some maturing yet to accomplish. As one example, she is almost too conscious of herself and a little too quick in proclaiming her naiveté and innocence. Furthermore, her innocence is somewhat inconsistent and occasionally a bit strained. As another example, one would

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<sup>1</sup>Maslow, Motivation, p. 216.

<sup>2</sup>Bénac, ed., Oeuvres, p. 283.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 255.

not expect that a young lady who had so masterfully withstood and so successfully coped with cloistered life, and who had for so long a time looked forward to freedom, would have been so incapable of coping with life outside the convent. Diderot never does directly compare Suzanne in the convent with Suzanne after her escape, but he does do so implicitly. In the convent he portrayed her as resilient, resistant to torture and rejection and to all manner of abnormality. She possessed, more than any other nun, the strength of character and the intellectual and physical force to be and do what she felt she must in order to be true to her nature. Outside the convent she no longer has this strength and vision. When her liberator permitted himself some liberties with her she says: " ... Je regrettai ma cellule, et je sentis toute l'horreur de ma situation."<sup>1</sup> It is true that this is an experience she could not have practiced in the convent. Even before entering the convent, however, she speaks of seeking suitors, so the advances of the Benedictine should not have come as a complete surprise. Furthermore, a major reason for her desiring to remain at her mother's home was to seek a young man. Her desire to so readily return to her cell seems out of character with the Suzanne of the major part of the book. The fundamental explanation may be simply that Diderot had to end the story

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 388.

rather rapidly. Proof of this is that her escape, life in Paris, and death, all occur in the space of five pages.

Finally, much in the fashion of Jacques' Master or of Mangogul, Suzanne seeks an escape, a sort of sedative to help her survive situations she finds intolerable. In the following instance she wants a type of sedative that Voltaire often inveighed against: " ... J'ai demandé à Dieu l'heureuse imbécilité d'esprit de mes compagnes; je ne l'ai point reçu."<sup>1</sup> When she does not receive this gift of a deadened thought process, she resorts to other means. She finds that she can reduce herself to an almost machine-like state: " ... J'ai été ce qu'on appelle physiquement aliénée ... c'est comme ceux qui ont souffert une longue maladie. ..." <sup>2</sup> Reflecting on this condition elsewhere, she says: " ... Ce n'était pas que je pensasse à autre chose, c'est que j'étais absorbée; j'avais la tête lasse comme quand on s'est excédé de réflexions." She even says of her condition: " ... J'étais presque réduite à l'état d'automate. ..." <sup>3</sup> A fully actualized individual would not have needed to resort to such extreme measures but it has seemed to be a stop-gap measure for Suzanne. It is not, however, such a pronounced quality that it markedly detracts from her overall effectiveness and she remains largely at actualization levels.

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 316.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 264.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 263.

## CHAPTER VII

### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The application of Maslow's concept of hierarchy of needs and self-actualization has seemed fruitful in the case of the Eighteenth-Century philosopher Denis Diderot. As much as any human, Diderot has seemed to personify the culmination of Maslow's hierarchy, the self-actualized man. Walter's summation seems particularly apropos in seeing how closely the theory fits.

Le génie intuitif de Diderot se manifestait sans cesse devant le spectacle du monde. Il l'envisage comme s'il devait le comprendre tout entier par lui-même, et sans aucune aide. Il bouillonne d'idées, et les idées sont pour lui une matière chaude et vivante qu'il répand autour de lui, sans se soucier de voir exploiter par d'autres les richesses dont il déborde. Tout objet met en mouvement son esprit; toute pensée déclenche en lui une suite de réflexions originales. ... Il était si bien ne pour les idées vivantes---celles qui naissent comme les choses vivantes et traduisent en mots la vie elle-même et non les abstractions---que jamais il ne put se détourner de son destin, se contraindre à aucune occupation régulière et monotone. Il n'était pas de ceux qui, dans la quiète chaleur d'un bureau, construisent une pensée aux termes soigneusement enchainés et architecturés.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Walter, ed., La Religieuse, p. viii.

Elsewhere Walter characterizes him as " ... l'esprit le plus vaste, le plus profond et le plus puissant, l'homme le plus étonnant de son siècle."<sup>1</sup> Concerning his multiplicity of interests and capacities Walter concludes by seeing him as: " ... le génie le plus compréhensif de son siècle."<sup>2</sup> Daix, in speaking of his comprehensiveness says of him as an anatomist: " ... c'est le précurseur de Bichat." In speaking of his knowledge of chemistry and biology: " ... c'est le précurseur de Lavoisier." Concerning Diderot's knowledge of cerebral functions he characterizes him as: " ... le précurseur de Gall." His insights into transformism make him " ... le précurseur de Darwin." In summation, Daix says that he had " ... une connaissance à peu près parfaite des travaux de l'époque."<sup>3</sup>

When it happens that someone with such a vast understanding also loved to write and create fiction, it would be reasonable to expect that some of his created characters would partake of some elements of his obvious self-actualization. This seems especially so since few writers of any age have so frankly and naively exposed themselves. It is also based on the widely demonstrated fact that many characters of any writer will embody qualities of the author.

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. vii.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. xvi.

<sup>3</sup>Daix, ed., La Religieuse, p. xvi.

This is not to overlook the obvious pitfall of seeing hidden facets of authors in all their characters; such is on many occasions the very antithesis of the facts of the matter. However, Diderot, has, consciously or unconsciously, endowed each of the heroes or heroines of his romanesque works with self-actualization qualities. It is most pronounced in the case of Rameau's philosopher wherein Diderot creates a mature self-actualizer, and it is least so in the case of Mangogul where self-actualization qualities are evident only briefly in the sultan as a young man.

In Jacques le Fataliste and La Religieuse, Diderot presents self-actualizers in earlier stages of development. Jacques is nearing complete self-integration; one expects him to develop into a fully operative actualizer. He has all the markings of becoming another philosophe. The other near-actualizer, Suzanne, is in a sense the more unique; this is because she is in effect the combination of Rameau's philosopher and of Jacques made feminine. She might even be very logically called "the philosopher as woman," or "the actualizer as woman." She seems to embody two of the strongest, most actualized people Diderot knew: himself and Sophie Volland. Consequently, if Suzanne seems to resist physical torture and to endure physical hardship in the manner that a stoic "à la Montaigne" would do, it is probably because Diderot incorporated much of himself and much of his master, Montaigne, into his creation.

So it is that each major protagonist is an actualizer, or near-actualizer. Each is psychically integrated and self-directive. Each is no longer concerned with deficiency motives but is rather outer-oriented. Each seeks to bring about growth in others so as to help them more fully realize their potential. This is the basis of the philosopher's counsel to Rameau; it is the basis of Jacques' "lessons" to his Master; and is Suzanne's "message" to the nuns and to her family. The one exception to all the above is Mangogul; he alone has left actualization to seek gratification. In point of fact this would seem to be a normal state of affairs. In the first place, it was Diderot's first novel, written from twelve to more than twenty years before the other works---the others being the product of Diderot's post-Encyclopedia maturity. Secondly and more importantly, Mangogul is in large measure Louis XV, not Diderot; he is representative of a fading monarchy and not of a vigorous actualizer.

In each novel, Diderot has opposed to his actualizers, characters who are fixated at gratification levels. Rameau has never been able to solve his esteem needs and in large measure his life-style is one aimed at filling these needs which should have long since been adequately met. Jacques' Master is also still very esteem concerned. As representative of that portion of the feudal system which no longer serves its original, useful function, he must engage in much posturing and self-delusion to keep some semblance of self-regard.

Mangogul likewise symbolizes a no-longer-useful segment of society. However, Mangogul's major concerns lie elsewhere than with esteem. Finally, the nuns as a group, and Suzanne's family, symbolize in a more general way, people lost in the morass of prejudice, unenlightenedness and lower needs. Some nuns feel compelled to gratify their physiological needs even though they must do so abnormally. Suzanne's family members are all fixated on filling various of their lower needs and can in no wise empathize with her. Not even her mother is able to rise above lower-need levels in order to save her daughter.

Is Diderot's vision of the world and of humanity summarized by these protagonists in his novels? Why has he chosen to include in each case, actualizers juxtaposed with characters operative and often even fixated at lower levels? Why not a book devoted entirely to actualizers or one devoted entirely to lower-need gratifiers? He of course comes close to the latter in Les Bijoux indiscrets but even there, he shows both extremes of the hierarchy. The answer would seem to be as simple as the basic philosophy of the Enlightenment: that is to say that the world does have people with vision and capacity who will make the earth a better place; these are the philosophers and their allies. On the other hand the world is replete with Rameaus, with masters, with nuns and with unenlightened parents, all of whom are unable, in their present condition, to reach

anything approaching their real potential. Without the insight of a Jacques or the vision and fortitude of a Suzanne, they will be condemned to live out their existence in the morass of lower needs. Like the Master, Mangogul and Rameau, they will be compelled to delude themselves or to sedate themselves till death offers them an exit. The answer, Diderot infers, is not delusion, nor sedation nor mere continued gratification; it is to be found rather in self-discovery, in realistic appraisal and in whole-hearted commitment. The philosopher, Jacques, and Suzanne have all three repeatedly counseled more realistic analysis, to include gaining knowledge of oneself. This is much akin to Montaigne's efforts at self-analysis and discovery. The philosopher and Suzanne have argued for self-control, for self-mastery. Again we see the influence of Montaigne. What seems increasingly clear is that as far as his novelistic works are concerned, the progress Diderot envisioned as coming from enlightening the people, and the hope that he felt the Enlightenment held, pertains as much to self-knowledge and to enlightenment concerning oneself as it does to enlightenment resulting from science and research. As a matter of fact, at no time does he specifically allude to scientific enlightenment as being the key to the progress of any of the characters who are locked at lower-need levels. He joins Montaigne in feeling that personal progress comes with objective and searching self-analysis. This alone can

change Rameau; it is what will save Jacques' Master, the nuns and even Mangogul.

What is the prognosis that any enlightenment will occur? How does Diderot seem to view the probability that those persons now lost in lower-needs will rise to actualization levels? In point of fact the answer seems to be as simple as the fact that none of the lower-need victims have evidenced any improvement, and no change seems to be in the offing. The one exception to this is the one that would at first glance seem the least likely, Mangogul. By novel's end he has returned the magic ring and has forsaken his practice of "bijoux" listening. Once again, whether this presages a return toward actualization or whether it is simply another nod to the royal censor is impossible to determine.

Finally, what remains to be done in areas related to this study? The most evident answer is to apply the hierarchy of motives concept to Diderot's non-romanesque works such as his plays and his philosophical dialogues and treatises. It would be interesting to see just how extensively Diderot employed actualizers juxtaposed with lower-need characters. It would be interesting to see whether he included actualizers or has made allusion to them in all his creative works. It would be interesting to know whether he alludes to actualization principles in the Encyclopedia articles. Interesting also would be the

determination of actualization qualities of his intimates---  
what of Grimm, what of Holbach, what of his other mistresses?  
Finally, it would seem possible to evaluate more searchingly  
Diderot the man and Diderot the actualizer, with the point  
in mind of possibly extending or revising actualization and  
hierarchy-of-needs theory. It is not inconceivable that  
something felicitous might result.

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