

OF SELF AND NATURE: ENVIRONMENTAL STEREOTYPES IN THREE NOVELS BY

J.-CH. RUFIN

by

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(Under the Direction of JONATHAN F. KRELL)

ABSTRACT

This dissertation examines the use of environmental imagery in three novels by contemporary French author Jean-Christophe Rufin: *Rouge Brésil* (2001), *Globalia* (2004), and *Le Parfum d'Adam* (2007). Using literary techniques similar to those used in the *Bildungsroman* genre, in each of the novels Rufin isolates one character that, thanks to their separation from mainstream society, is able to objectively consider Western (and more specifically American) attitudes toward both the natural world. Two themes therefore emerge as dominant in all three of the novels: the opposition between nature and culture, and the myth of the Ecologically Noble Savage.

This work deconstructs the use of these two themes within the selected texts. I propose that Rufin demonstrates that nature and culture, while accepted as opposite concepts, have in fact been closely related for thousands of years, and that the opposition between the two contributes to the problematic relationship that exists between contemporary humans and their environment. Furthermore, the myth of the Ecologically Noble Savage, a modern evolution of the myth of the Noble Savage, perpetuates the image of indigenous societies – and specifically Native American societies – as more respectful of the natural world and should therefore serve as the model of an

environmentally friendly lifestyle. This image, while certainly accurate for some indigenous societies, perpetuates stereotypes that are remnants of European colonization and denies the complexities that characterize indigenous relationships with the land. By highlighting the fallacies inherent in such stereotypes, Rufin creates an environmental ethic that emphasizes emplacement, effectively demonstrating that living responsibly in a specific locale is the first step toward a renewed – and more mutually beneficial – relationship between humans and the natural world.

INDEX WORDS: 20th Century French Literature, ecocriticism, Jean-Christophe Rufin, Ecologically Noble Savage, Nature-Culture, littérature française, écologisme, bon sauvage écologique

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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my father Jim and my mother Marcia, whose love for and knowledge of their land in rural upstate New York have had a profound influence on my understanding and appreciation of nature. It is also dedicated to my maternal grandfather, whose passion for languages inspired me to pursue French as a full-time career. Above all, I must dedicate this to my family: to my husband, Mike, who is a constant source of love and support, and who has tolerated me throughout the writing of this work. Finally, to our daughter Nadja, who helps me to see the world through fresh eyes every single day. In its own small way, this dissertation is an effort to ensure that her generation has the opportunity to enjoy the world around them in the same way as people have for countless years before.

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as a student I have been inspired by the ways in which they each make literature come alive to their students.

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INTRODUCTION

A quick glance at the day's headlines in a typical newspaper from almost any northern industrialized country shows that editors and journalists devote a lot of space to climate change. Just one example: on July 3, 2012, the leading headline in the *New York Times* read, "Temperature Rising: A Climate Scientist Battles Time and Mortality"; a large photograph illustrating the effects of deadly floods in Northeastern India dominated the space above the article. This headline comes as most of the United States battles record-breaking heat for the second week in a row: On July 1, one town in Kansas recorded temperatures of 115 degrees Fahrenheit, and the average temperature across the Midwest and Eastern United States was 15 degrees above normal. Heat-fueled wildfires broke out across the Western U.S., while strong storms, a result of the high temperatures, knocked out power lines along the East Coast. The prevalence of articles regarding climate change might seem logical in the U.S., given the fact that the National Climatic Data Center stated that May 2012 was the warmest on record, and that June and July saw hundreds of previous heat records fall to record-breaking temperatures¹. Articles taken from the same time period from around the world, however, show similar ecological disasters: floods in the Krasnodar region of Russia killed almost 200 at the beginning of July; the same week, heavy monsoon rains in Northern India displaced nearly 250,000.

These headlines represent extreme situations, but it cannot be denied that the human presence in the natural world leaves visible and lasting traces, which have been accumulating since early humans first altered their environment. This is not a new or revolutionary concept, but an obvious observation. Until relatively recently the natural world was more powerful than

¹ Tuesday, June 26 saw the establishment of 251 new daily high records, according to *USA Today*.

human beings. Humans, like all other biological organisms, lived at the mercy of the natural world. This does not tend to be true of modern society. Michel Serres, an eminent French philosopher, points out that until the 20th century, agriculture was the driving force of human life and of culture in general (53). Thanks in large part to their ability to alleviate the difficulties associated with living as part of the natural world, modern humans have irreversibly altered their environment. In his well-known article “The Historical Roots of Our Ecological Crisis,” Lynn White, Jr. makes that point that while earlier generations of humans altered their environment, the impact was not nearly as far-reaching or profound as that of their modern descendants:

[T]he impact of our race upon the environment has so increased in force that it has changed in essence. When the first cannons were fired, in the early 14th century, they affected ecology by sending workers scrambling to the forests and mountains for more potash, sulphur, iron ore, and charcoal, with some resulting erosion and deforestation. Hydrogen bombs are of a different order: a war fought with them might alter the genetics of all life on this planet. By 1285 London had a smog problem arising from the burning of soft coal, but our present combustion of fossil fuels threatens to change the chemistry of the globe’s atmosphere as a whole, with consequences which we are only beginning to guess. With the population explosion, the carcinoma of planless urbanism, the now geological deposits of sewage and garbage, surely no creature other than man has ever managed to foul its nest in such short order. (5)

While White drew heavy criticism, especially from religious scholars², his point is nonetheless valid. Scarcely twenty years after the publication of White's article, Bill McKibben, author of "The End of Nature," went as far as to state that "a child born now will never know a natural summer, a natural autumn, winter or spring" (50), such is the extent of human alteration of the natural world.

As much as understanding the scientific aspects of climate change falls to scientists, more and more scholars in the Humanities are striving to understand just how, to use White's terms, we fouled our nest in such short order. In literature studies, the attempt to understand the cultural forces behind climate change has manifested itself in many different ways. Cheryl Glotfelty, a pioneer in the field of ecocriticism, suggests that at its most basic definition, ecocriticism is the study of the relationship between literature and the physical environment. Drawing on feminist and Marxist criticism, ecocriticism takes "an earth-centered approach to literary studies" (xix). As Greg Garrard points out, ecocriticism is a decidedly political mode of analysis: "Ecocritics generally tie their cultural analysis explicitly to a 'green' moral and political agenda. In this respect, ecocriticism is closely related to environmentally oriented developments in philosophy and political theory" (3).³ Furthermore, as Richard Kerridge points out, ecocritics want "to see more clearly a debate which seems to be taking place, often part-concealed, in a great many cultural spaces. Most of all, ecocriticism seeks to evaluate texts and ideas in terms of their coherence and usefulness as responses to the environmental crisis" (qtd. in Garrard 4). While Glotfelty is driven by a desire to see literature scholars contribute positively to the debate that surrounds climate change (xxi), she also acknowledges that an individual ecocritic does not have

² For more on the controversy that White's article stirred among religious scholars, see Jenkins, especially page 284.

³ It is worth noting that while Garrard insists on the political aspect of ecocriticism, Glotfelty includes questions such as "'How is nature represented in this sonnet' or 'How is wilderness represented over time'" (xix) as equally valid concerns among ecocritics. For more on Glotfelty's definition of ecocriticism, see her introduction to *The Ecocriticism Reader*.

to be politically minded in order to consider the role of nature in a particular literary work. This might certainly be true, but since its emergence into the field in the late 1980s and early 1990s, ecocriticism has evolved into an often politically charged mode of interpretation, one in which many scholars strive to use literature as a way to bridge a gap between the sciences and the humanities for the benefit of the “green agenda.” In doing so, ecocritics often risk having themselves labeled as anti-humanists, much like environmental fundamentalists such as those belonging to the deep ecology movement. Such polarization is detrimental to any progress that ecocritics attempt to make in understanding the cultural influences on climate change. Instead, literature scholars must strive to keep one foot planted firmly on the side of ecocentrism and one on the side of anthropocentrism.

Just as literary scholars consider many different facets of the complex relationship between humans and their environment, social preoccupations with climate change have not manifested themselves homogeneously. Instead, the focus of popular environmental movements varies according to country, state (in the case of the United States), or bioregion. Not only are the concerns of each regional movement often very different, but, as is the case between the American and French environmental movements, the entire relationship between humans and the natural world betrays fundamental philosophical differences that have visible impact on the environment. This impact is evident in a comparison of figures provided by the World Bank that indicate the amount of per capita municipal waste per country in 2005-2006: the average French person disposed of 1.92 kg of trash per day as compared with the average American who threw away 2.58 kg per day (worldbank.org). A difference of 0.66 kg (1.45 lbs) may not seem significant in terms of material pollution, but it does demonstrate that the French tend to lead a

more environmentally-friendly lifestyle in terms of material consumption.⁴ The difference in attitude toward the environment between France and the United States is best exemplified in three works by contemporary French author Jean-Christophe Rufin: *Rouge Brésil* (2003), *Globalia* ((2004), and *Le Parfum d'Adam* (2007). In *Le Parfum d'Adam*, Rufin provides an excellent summary of the different environmental concerns:

Chaque pays a créé une écologie qui lui est propre et qui, à certains égards, lui ressemble. En Angleterre, tout s'est cristallisé autour de l'amour des bêtes et contre la chasse à courre. Au Canada, l'intérêt s'est plutôt concentré sur la mer : les essais nucléaires sous-marins, la protection des baleines. La France, ça n'étonnera personne, est entrée en écologie en suivant une jolie femme. C'est Brigitte Bardot qui les a convertis . . . Aux États-Unis, la question centrale, c'est celle des grands espaces, les forêts, la vie sauvage, les paysages de l'Ouest. (252)

Rufin's comment about French environmentalism is perhaps a bit flippant, but it highlights an essential difference between the movement and its counterpart in the United States: American environmentalists tend to concentrate only on the health of the natural world, whereas French environmentalists are more likely to recognize that there must be a balance between ecocentrism and anthropocentrism. His assessment of the environmental movement in the United States, which has its roots in the Westward expansion of the mid-nineteenth century, accurately positions wilderness at its center; the movement in France, on the other hand, is relatively recent, having gained real momentum after May 1968 (Whiteside 17). The three novels that I will consider in this study take place in North and South America, and largely concern themselves

⁴ A quick comparison of per capita municipal waste production in other Western European countries allows for a similar conclusion: Germany produced 2.11 kg per capita, Spain 2.13, Luxembourg 2.31, and Italy 2.23. The United Kingdom and Belgium proved to be even more efficient than France, with rates of 1.79 and 1.33, respectively.

with the American environmental movement. They are, however, written from a French perspective, and *Rouge Brésil* especially presents the forests of the New World from an Old World perspective. In order to better understand Rufin's perspective, it is necessary to have an understanding of both the American and the French environmental movements.

The American environmental movement as we know it today began after the Second World War, but its roots can be found in both the romantic's appreciation of the sublime and the resultant movement towards conservation and preservation of wilderness, especially in the American West. When the first explorers arrived on the North American continent in the 15th century, they were by no means unfamiliar with wilderness: until the late medieval period, many areas of wilderness still existed in Europe (Nash 8). Wilderness was not, however, necessarily something to be valued or praised. Rather, it was the fearsome antithesis of civilization⁵, and many of the early settlers in North America left their relatively urban homes to migrate west. Not only was wilderness associated with real physical dangers, such as food scarcity and the omnipresent threat of wild animals, but with spiritual dangers as well. In the Judeo-Christian tradition, holy men often went into the wilderness as a test of their resistance against diabolical temptation. If the wilderness was seen in a positive light, as is the case in the story of Moses and the Hebrews' forty years in the desert, it is only as a refuge from a greater evil and as a passageway to paradise (Garrard 61). In Greek and Roman tradition, the wilderness was the domain of the god Pan (Greek) and Faunus (Roman). With the hindquarters, legs and horns of a goat, the torso and head of a man, and an insatiable sexual appetite, Pan was a god to be feared, especially by women passing through the forest. As Nash points out, "[Pan] combined gross sensuality with boundless, sportive energy. Greeks who had to pass through the forests or

⁵The analysis that follows draws primarily on Roderick Frazier Nash's *Wilderness and the American Mind*. See Chapter 1 of his work for an excellent and detailed description of Old World attitudes toward Wilderness.

mountains dreaded an encounter with Pan. Indeed, the word ‘panic’ originated from the blinding fear that seized travelers upon hearing strange cries in the wilderness and assuming them to signify Pan’s approach” (11). This fear of the wilderness can be seen in European folklore as well. Northern European folktales speak of trolls, ogres, witches and wild creatures that inhabit the forest (Nash 12). French fairy tales such as those made famous by Charles Perrault also exemplify the prevalent fear of wild places.

Given the predominant attitude towards wilderness in Western culture⁶, it is no surprise that the early settlers and pioneers in North America feared the wild places that they found there. Nash points out that

[w]hen William Bradford stepped off the *Mayflower* into a “hideous and desolate wilderness” he started a tradition of repugnance. With few exceptions later pioneers continued to regard wilderness with defiant hatred and joined the Chilliclothe *Supporter* in celebrating the advance of civilization as the greatest of blessings. Under any circumstance the necessity of living in close proximity to wild country – what one of Bradford’s contemporaries called “a Wilderness condition” – engendered strong antipathy. (23, 24)

American colonists and pioneers of the time were not far enough removed from the threats of wilderness to appreciate it. Just as ancient texts sing the praises of cultivated fields and pastures, early Americans preferred ordered, productive land to wild forests. As the east coast became more urban, and the dangers associated with wilderness posed less of a daily threat, the American antipathy toward wild land shifted subtly to a more ambiguous attitude. Nash writes:

⁶ Nash compares the ambivalent Western attitude toward wilderness with that of Asian countries, where wilderness was typically seen in a more positive light. See *Wilderness and the American Mind*, 20-22.

Appreciation of wilderness began in the cities. The literary gentleman wielding a pen, not the pioneer with his axe, made the first gestures of resistance against the strong currents of antipathy. The ideas of these literati determined their experience [. . .]. The concept of the sublime and the picturesque led the way by enlisting aesthetics in wild country's behalf, while deism associated nature with religion. Combined with the primitivistic idealization of a life closer to nature, these ideas fed the Romantic movement which had far-reaching implications for wilderness.

(44)

The Romantic appreciation of wild, chaotic landscapes had a heavy influence on American attitudes toward wilderness. European Romantics, searching for sublime landscapes, found them in the frontier (Nash 49, 50). By the beginning of the 19th century, those living in east coast cities and the surrounding countryside were able to share their European contemporaries' enthusiasm for wilderness. The terror that early settlers felt when faced with an overwhelming expanse of wilderness could now be intellectually appreciated and interpreted as a favorable experience that allowed one to feel closer to God. (Nash 44). Nash is, however, careful to point out that sublime landscapes were appreciated only by Americans in "urban situations and with literary interests" (44); those who lived their entire lives surrounded by wilderness, such as frontiersmen, still viewed the American wilderness with antipathy.

The sentiments of early American Romantics directly influenced the 19th century American conservationist movement. Settlers journeying west were able to experience a landscape whose grandeur could scarcely be rivaled by the highly civilized countryside of either Europe or the east coast. As Benjamin Kline points out, the western territories of the United

States were so vast that most American settlers considered their bounty to be limitless (33). By the end of the nineteenth century, however, all of the western United States had been explored. By the 1890s, the frontier was considered closed; wilderness had been mostly tamed (Nash 145). The realization that there was no wilderness left either to conquer or to appreciate created an enormous sense of loss in the American consciousness (Nash 143). This sense of loss, and the consequent cultural shift toward wilderness appreciation, marked the advent of the movement to preserve large wilderness areas⁷. Present-day conceptions of wilderness, which revolve around the idea that wilderness areas should represent the natural world in a state untouched by civilization, are the direct result of the so-called Wilderness Cult that dominated early 20th century popular American culture. Greg Garrard writes that “[t]he idea of wilderness, signifying nature in a state uncontaminated by civilization, is the most potent construction of nature available to New World environmentalism” (59). Twenty-first century attitudes toward wilderness areas consider any human presence in supposedly wild landscapes as a degradation of the landscape (Garrard 70).

Although early preservationists were often responsible for expelling indigenous populations in the name of protecting wilderness, the exclusion of human populations did not extend to tourists. The preservation movement gained momentum at the end of the 19th century, the same time at which Americans were lamenting the closing of the frontier. As railroads allowed for more efficient transportation between the east and west coasts and the interior of the United States, entrepreneurs saw the West as a virtual goldmine. Preservationists attempted to stanch the flow of loggers, miners and sightseers by lobbying the government to establish

⁷ The first tract of land officially designated as a national reservation was the Arkansas Hot Springs, in 1832 (Nash 105). It would, however, be thirty years before legislated National Parks became more mainstream: the establishment of Yosemite as a National Park followed in 1864, Yellowstone in 1872 and the Adirondack National Park in 1892.

Wilderness Areas and National Parks (Nash 112, 113). Theodore Roosevelt, himself an avid outdoorsman, favored the establishment of the National Park System as a way for average Americans to enjoy the benefits of the wilderness (Burns). John Muir, a primary figure in the preservation movement, wrote that “thousands of tired, nerve-shaken, over-civilized people are beginning to find out that going to the mountains is going home; that wildness is a necessity; and that mountain parks and reservations are useful not only as fountains of timber and irrigating rivers, but as fountains of life” (Muir 15).⁸ Although human beings were not meant to actually live in the National Parks, thus preserving the wilderness, their presence—on the condition that it be transient—did not negate the notion of wilderness. Early preservationists such as Muir encountered resistance from conservationists, the most famous of whom was Gifford Pinchot (1865-1946), the first chief of the U.S. Forest Service. In contrast to preservationists, who were driven by a metaphysical conception of nature, conservationists strove to wisely manage natural resources for the benefit of human beings. In the words of Pinchot, the Forest Service was created, “not to conserve forests because they are beautiful...or because they are refuges for the wild creatures of the wilderness. The forests are to be used by man. Every other consideration is secondary” (Kline 58). The conflict between preservationist and conservationist ideologies dominated the American relationship with the natural world throughout the first half of the twentieth century, and still shapes current ideas about wilderness, as well as environmental policy.

⁸ Although this citation gives cause to believe that Muir was an avid advocate for the human enjoyment of wilderness, his view toward the human presence in wilderness is actually quite ambiguous, as Nash excellently explains in Chapter 8 of his book. Perhaps one of Muir’s most famous statements may provide more insight to his true character, since it comes from his own journal, and not from a publication intended for others: “I have precious little sympathy for the selfish propriety of civilized man, and if a war of races should occur between the wild beasts and Lord Man, I would be tempted to sympathize with the bears” (*Gulf* 69).

Concern about the human impact on the natural world from an aesthetic standpoint began with the closing of the frontier in the 1890s. Scientific concern for the same problem gained public exposure in the 1960s. During the postwar period, agricultural practices experienced a boom in technological advances. This was a direct result of the need to feed a burgeoning world population. While the upside of the explosion of technological advancement was the increase in food stores in populations that would otherwise experience widespread famine, the use of certain technologies, especially of pesticides, caused enormous concern. Rachel Carson's landmark book *Silent Spring* (1962) is credited for creating public awareness about the dangers of industrial agriculture, and specifically, of pesticide use. The publication coincided with cultural revolutions that spread through Europe and the United States at the end of the 1960s.

If the countercultural movement of the late 1960s can be understood as a reaction against the socially conservative atmosphere that prevailed in the immediate post-war era, then the "back to the land" movement of the late 1960s can be considered as one manifestation of the hostility directed toward centralization, industrialization, and urbanization (Nash 251). The stereotypical image of hippies living in communes contains, like many stereotypes, some kernel of truth. Gary Snyder, considered to be the 'poet laureate' of deep ecology, was among the prominent figures of the countercultural revolution that consequently fled San Francisco when the movement became too mainstream and too far removed from its original intention⁹. His ideas can therefore be seen as generally representative of the deep ecology movement. Through his poetry and essays, Snyder has advocated for the authentic inhabitation of the land, a sort of local environmentalism that has the potential for global impact. Far from believing that human beings

⁹ When Snyder returned from Japan in 1967, the countercultural movement was beginning in San Francisco. As one of the leaders of the Human Be-in (January 1967), he established himself as a figure of the countercultural revolution, a designation that he has often resisted. In 1969 he and his family moved to a tract of communally owned land in the Sierra Foothills and built Kitkitdizze, a completely sustainable homestead.

and wilderness are diametrically opposed, Snyder proposes a sort of middle ground between governmental management and private ownership of land: “[t]he middle path, which [Elinor] Ostrom speaks of, is that of the village or community taking charge. As it did in millennia past” (2009). He has combined wilderness appreciation with political activism, choosing to lead by example. His “Smokey the Bear Sutra,” for example, which is intended to protect against enemies of the earth as well as against “advertising, air pollution, or the police” (243), was distributed in pamphlet form in 1969 by Snyder himself in quiet protest against the Sierra Club’s alignment with the Bureau of Land Management and the Forest Service (244). Snyder is admittedly ecocentric, and some of his stances on issues, particularly on population growth, could be read as decidedly anthropocentric. “Four Changes,” an article published in 1970 and included in *Turtle Island*, identifies over-population as one of the principal problems threatening the ecosystem. Snyder’s proposed solution is radical, calling for the encouragement of voluntary sterilization, the removal of tax deductions for families, and protest against religious institutions that ban birth control (*Reader* 245). Rufin does not take explicit aim at countercultural environmentalists in *Le Parfum d’Adam*, but instead criticizes the Club of Rome’s 1972 report “The Limits of Growth.” His criticism of such radical stances most certainly applies to Snyder’s statements on population reduction, which seems to represent a popular trend in the environmental movement during the late 1960s and early 1970s. What is of interest to my study is Snyder’s ability to lead by example: his rhetoric during the 1970s may have been dismissed by literary critics as being propagandist and misanthropic (Gray 280), but his body of work over time demonstrates otherwise. Snyder has consistently reminded his readers that while “nature bats last” (2009), humans occupy an important, though not central, place within the ecosystem,

and that if one must respect the sanctity of non-human life, one must equally respect the sanctity of human life.

Since the 1960s, the American environmental movement has taken many different directions, and wilderness, once a prominent concern of environmentalists, has fallen somewhat by the wayside, at least in mainstream environmental rhetoric. Some groups, such as the Sierra Club or Earth First!, still advocate primarily for the protection of wilderness areas and are thus the modern incarnations of wilderness advocates such as John Muir and Aldo Leopold. Others, such as Greenpeace, work primarily to protect marine wildlife (although Greenpeace seems to have a hand in a little bit of everything). In the last few decades, renewable energy has become a hot topic, especially for politicians. The real buzzword of the 21st century, however, is Global Climate Change, and wilderness preservation is now secondary to concerns about increasingly erratic weather patterns and their impact on the quality of life on earth. It is interesting to note that the proposed solutions to climate change rarely involve scenarios of reduced growth and increased protection of nature, but rather involve solutions that ultimately demand both technological and economic growth.

The American environmental movement is largely concerned with wilderness areas¹⁰. Garrard rightly points out that the idea that wilderness and human presence are mutually exclusive is historically problematic. When the first explorers arrived on the North American continent, they perceived it as a vast wilderness. While it was certainly a wild, inhospitable place (at least as far as the early settlers were concerned), it was by no means unpopulated. The indigenous population has been estimated to have numbered somewhere between 1 and 10

¹⁰ Americans are of course concerned about other facets of the environmental movement, especially global warming, but as Rufin points out, correctly in my opinion, the preservation of wilderness is typically the focal point of radical American environmental groups.

million¹¹. By the 19th century, as large areas of land began to be designated “wilderness areas,” history had to be rewritten. In their mania for pristine wilderness, white Americans often ignored the fact that indigenous Americans had been living in perceived “wilderness areas” for centuries. The establishment of Yosemite as one of the first National Parks, for example, meant that both the Ahwahneechee Indians and white miners had to be relocated in order for the wilderness to be preserved (Garrard 70). As a result, Yosemite is indeed a wilderness, but not one that accurately represents the history of the land.

“The trouble with wilderness,” to borrow Garrard’s term, is that it creates diametrically opposed approaches to environmentalism. If wilderness excludes the presence of human beings, then environmentalists can either work to preserve wilderness to the detriment of human beings, or they can favor human interests over those of the wilderness. Kerry Whiteside uses the term “centered environmental debate” (8) to describe the differences that divide the American environmental movement. Whiteside is referring to the ongoing debate between anthropocentric environmentalists, who maintain that we should protect the natural world for the benefit of human beings, and ecocentric environmentalists, who adhere to the idea that the natural world has intrinsic value and should have rights similar to those that human beings currently enjoy. This is a common theme in American environmental philosophy, and its roots can be traced directly to the opposing viewpoints of 19th century conservationists and preservationists.

In contrast, the French environmental movement is, as Whiteside puts it, “noncentered” (3). That is to say, the debate between anthropocentrists and ecocentrists exists on the periphery of French environmentalism. Whiteside argues: “the absence of this debate in France has kept

¹¹ As John D. Daniels (“The Indian Population of North America in 1492”) notes, indigenous populations lacked written historical records, and European reports were highly inaccurate. Modern researchers developed several different ways of estimating indigenous pre-Columbian population, and the resulting figures vary widely depending on method. For more, see Daniels’s article.

the discursive field open for different strategies of *noncentered* ecological argument. Rather than feel bound to situate their views in relation to some theory of the ultimate ground of environmental values, French green theorists tend to study how conceptions of nature and human identity intertwine” (3). This difference between the French and the American environmental movements is logical, given the heavy emphasis given to wilderness preservation by the American movement. In contrast, large wild animals such as the bison or the grizzly bear, indigenous to the American West, had no living counterpart on the European continent¹². It is certainly true that large portions of land were still wild, but in contrast to the vast expanses of wilderness that 16th century explorers encountered in North America, Western Europe was practically completely domesticated. It would therefore be virtually impossible to set aside a territory of land untouched by human presence.

In addition to, or perhaps because of, the comparatively early domestication of the European landscape, French philosophers have tended to privilege humans over the natural world. Descartes’s influence on anthropocentrism is well documented by environmental philosophers, and Whiteside notes in the introduction to her book that French contributions to green theory may have been largely neglected because of Descartes’s neglect of the material in favor of the spiritual (1). The representation of nature in French philosophy is explained in greater detail in Chapter 1, but it is worth noting that as a result of Descartes’s belief that man could and should master nature, the French ideal was a representation of what nature should be, not of what it actually was. This has tended to be true for post-World War Two France as well, and in *The Light-Green Society: Ecology and Technological Modernity in France 1960-2000*,

¹² The auroch and the European brown bear are perhaps the closest European equivalents, despite the long-standing domestication of the auroch. Still, the last auroch died in Poland in 1627, and the European brown bear was extinct in the British Isles by 500 AD and is still seriously threatened in Western Europe. For more, see Pastoureau, *The Bear: History of a Fallen King*.

Michael Bess points out that the term *nature* was not synonymous with *wilderness*, but rather with the ancestral *paysage* and the peasants that worked the land, evoking the rural antithesis to an increasingly urban society (12).

Despite a long history of preferring landscapes that could be intellectually appreciated for their order and harmony over the chaos of wilderness, French conservationists have increasingly focused on the preservation of wild land¹³, and the roots of their environmental movement, like those of the American movement, can be found in conservation initiatives of the 19th century. Rising from the popularity of Darwin's *The Origin of Species*, as well as from the interest in natural history that prevailed during the Enlightenment, nature societies were popular in 19th century France just as they were in the United States (Rootes 295). As Whiteside points out, "the project of 'protecting nature' is usually traced to the founding of the Société impériale zoologique d'acclimatation in 1854 by the naturalist Isidore Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire. This society and other associations sought to protect plant species and birds from the devastating effects of industrialization on their habitats" (21). The popularity of these organizations could have produced an effect similar to that produced in the United States: as discussed earlier, the American fondness for wilderness, and especially for wilderness clubs, once the wilderness had essentially vanished, reached its height in the early decades of the twentieth century. Two factors, however, impeded the progress of a national initiative to protect the natural world. The first, as Tad Shull notes, was the highly centralized bureaucracy that was, and still is, characteristic of France. This ensured that conservation initiatives never moved past the local

¹³ Le Parc National des Calanques, situated on the Southern Coast near Marseille, serves as an excellent example of wilderness preservation. Set aside as a wilderness area and protected by law since 1930, the nearly 6000 hectares of land and 2000 of sea were declared a National Park in 2012 in order to ensure continued protection against the increased tourist traffic and the steady growth of nearby Marseille. It is notable in that it is the first semi-urban National Park in Europe. For more, see <http://www.marseille.fr/sitevdm/environnement/espaces-naturels/calanques/parc-national-des-calanques>

level (Shull 13). The second, of course, was France's involvement in two world wars: while Americans were free to indulge in such pastimes as camping and fishing, the French were preoccupied first by fighting in and then by recuperating from wars that devastated their population, their economy, and their land. The immediate postwar period of 1945-1975, popularly referred to as *les trente glorieuses*, saw the rapid modernization of France (Bess 16-17), during which France asserted itself as a nuclear power and made great strides toward the establishment of a nuclear military arsenal as well as a centralized nuclear energy program. While the French public was highly ambivalent toward such rapid modernization, and especially toward nuclear energy, Bess points out that the vast majority of the public ultimately supported the independence from other nations that resulted from creating a modernized country (32).

Bess makes the case, however, that during the 1960s, the French were reacting to many of the same concerns as American environmentalists (77). Whereas a decade earlier the population may have longed nostalgically for the past while still embracing modernization, by the 1960s the public mentality had changed enough that the environmental effects of the process were a central concern. Bess attributes this to "a threefold cultural transformation that marked the sixties generation: a widespread ambivalence toward technological modernity; a sharpening sense of militancy among scientists; and a potent new form of radical dissidence manifesting itself in the counterculture" (81). He argues that these three factors had to have been in place in order for public opinion to be swayed in favor of environmental preservation (81). Rufin makes a similar point in *La Dictature libérale*, arguing that by 1960 people were prosperous but isolated, dissatisfied with their new-found prosperity, and as a result were finally able to begin thinking of that which had disappeared as a result. Principal among these was nature (181, 182). The implication, of course, is that concern for the natural world and our effect on it is only possible

when people are prosperous enough to no longer be concerned for their continued survival. Bess takes issues with arguments such as that made by Christopher Rootes, who proposes that the contemporary French environmental movement, and particularly the rise of the Green Party in France, owes its success to the student movement of May 1968, which ultimately had as its goal the decentralization of government (Klimke 1). As Tad Shull points out, this is also a primary focus of Les Verts, the French Green Party (5). Although Rootes clearly states that environmental movements “might best be seen as legatees of the late 1960s ferment rather than as part of it” (297), one of the more direct results was the foundation of *Survivre et Vivre*, which “focused upon the social uses of science and the emerging environmental movement rather than on nature conservation” (297). Bess insists more on the connection between the underlying motivation of May 1968 and the green movement in France, both of which questioned the whole civilization of modern industrialization such as it had formed over the past 300 years (Bess 81). During the 1970s, environmentalists and 1968 revolutionaries alike began to focus on anti-nuclear initiatives. Rootes contends – and his argument seems to be a consensus among historians of the French environmental movement – that the anti-nuclear movement formed an essential link between the environmental movement and the student protests of 1968:

Activists from *Les Amis de la Terre* participated alongside local protesters in the first anti-nuclear demonstrations in Alsace in 1971. This marked the beginning of a decade-long mobilization. Just as the principal grievance of the 1968 protesters had been the centralization of power in the French state, so its policies of expanding the activities of a nuclear energy industry, monopolized by the state, shrouded in secrecy, dismissive of

local concerns, and effectively publicly unaccountable, were taken as evidence that nothing had changed. (298)

Anti-nuclear protests went largely unaddressed by the powerful civilian nuclear industry, which according to Bess practically sank the French environmental movement (92). Attempts by environmentalists to educate the French public on the dangers of nuclear energy were neutralized by a fleet of government experts (Bess 100). Direct action by environmental groups was also ineffective, primarily because they recruited more experienced protestors vetted by the 1968 protests; in contrast to the tactics of non-violent protest favored by the greens, these activists – who were really only participating in order to take on their sworn enemy the central government – became increasingly militant, thus actually pushing public opinion in favor the government (Bess 101-02). Concerns with nature preservation mostly took a backseat to concerns with nuclear power, thus falling by the wayside until the early 1990s, when the Green Party gained traction in the political sphere (Bess 110). Their popularity, at first overwhelming, was short lived, and Dominique Voynet, one of the most influential spokespersons of the party, contended that in order to stay relevant (and successful!) the Greens would have to expand their field of concern:

The Greens, for Voynet, needed not just an environmental and economic platform, but a comprehensive social vision and a realistic foreign policy, if they wanted to be taken seriously as contenders for national power; defending fauna and flora should continue to play a key role, but so should defending the homeless, the unemployed, immigrants, women, and the Third World's downtrodden millions. "Green" should connote more than

just a clean natural environment: it should also mean a just and peaceful
human environment. (Bess 112)

Since the French environmental movement has had more success in the political arena than its American counterpart, it is logical that they should serve as a model to American environmentalists. As Whiteside points out throughout her book, the French environmental movement has succeeded in avoiding an approach that is either eco- or anthropocentric, instead allowing for the fact that the human and the non-human must coexist. As is too often the case, it seems, many Americans are too quick to reject European models of reform. Those who would minimalize the threat of global warming (to say nothing of climate change deniers) consider calls for reduced consumption and energy reform to be infringing on their personal rights. On the other end of the spectrum, radical environmentalists consider any compromise to be too much compromise, and the notion of sustainable development, which would allow human beings to continue to enjoy a standard of living comparable to what we do now, is unacceptable. Luc Ferry criticizes radical environmentalists for their hardline stance, fearing the fascist leanings that lurk under their calls for reduced population and increased government control of environmental issues. Although at first glance this fear seems a bit paranoid, it becomes less so if taken in consideration with the lengths that radical organizations such as Greenpeace are willing to go to in order to ensure the protection of the natural world.

This, then, is the point of departure for Rufin's novels. The suspicion of radical environmentalism is a theme that reappears frequently, and it would be difficult to argue that his aesthetic is one similar to that of deep ecologists. Having spent the majority of his career as a member of humanitarian organizations, most notably Médecins sans Frontières, it is only logical that he be concerned about the effect that environmentalism and climate change have on human

rights. Like Ferry, he seems to be especially critical of radical American environmentalism and of the Western view of the relationship between humans and nature. *Rouge Brésil* is a faithful representation of the antipathy that early explorers and settlers felt upon their arrival in North and South America, but offers an alternative view as well, embodied in the character Colombe, as well as in other European settlers who have “gone native,” so to speak. As such, the novel calls into question some of the fundamental ways in which the Western world relates to nature. *Le Parfum d’Adam* is an especially severe critique of the effects of radical environmentalism on the underdeveloped world, but *Globalia* also examines this issue, and considers above all the effect of legislated environmentalism on humanity as a whole. All three of these novels call into question two tropes that are common in environmental rhetoric. A discussion of the value of wilderness space necessarily demands an examination of the dichotomous, and often contradictory, relationship between nature and culture. Taken in conjunction with one another, these three novels work to deconstruct this relationship, demonstrating that the dichotomy is in fact illusory. As I discussed earlier in the chapter, the use of wilderness as a solution to environmental destruction also demands the discussion of the myth of the *bon sauvage*. This myth, which finds its roots in Antiquity and was solidified in western philosophy by Montaigne and by the *philosophes* in the eighteenth century, raises as many issues as the problematic relationship between nature and culture. By destabilizing these two common tropes, Rufin succeeds in examining the dangers inherent in choosing either anthropocentrism or ecocentrism when advocating for environmental reform. Through his use of the *Bildungsroman* genre, Rufin isolates one character in each novel, allowing this character to serve as the objective other that can critically consider their society’s relationship with the natural world.

In my first chapter, I will briefly trace the development of the *Bildungsroman* genre and make clear the connection between the genre and the natural world. I will argue that the genre, which was pioneered during the German Romantic period, is not as prescriptive as one might think. Although German authors, and particularly Goethe, typically put the protagonist in a social setting so that he might learn the ways of cosmopolitan society, I will argue that this is simply a product of that specific era. Rufin's novels have replaced the social aspect of the character's formation with the natural world, thus making the genre more relevant to a contemporary audience.

Each of the subsequent chapters will consider a different novel while following a similar structure: the first part of the chapter will consider the dichotomous relationship between nature and culture in the context of the narrative, while the second part of the chapter will consider the representation of the Noble Savage. The novels have been arranged in chronological order according to the time period in which they are set. Chapter 2 therefore looks at *Rouge Brésil*, set in 1555; Chapter 3 at *Le Parfum d'Adam*, set in the contemporary United States, France, and Brazil; and Chapter 4 at *Globalia*, set in a future dystopia. In Chapter 2, I consider the ways in which nature and culture have historically been related. I argue that Rufin uses the *Bildung* of Just to demonstrate that if both humans and the natural world are to flourish, then an equilibrium must be established between a society that embraces culture to the detriment of nature and vice versa. The second part of Chapter 2 considers the character Colombe and the way in which Rufin uses her to highlight the destructive practices of the French, endowing her with much the same rhetorical function as Montaigne's cannibals in "Des Cannibales" (*Essais* Chapter 31). Since Rufin's portrayal of France Anarctique, the French colony in Brazil from 1555 to 1567, draws heavily on historical accounts, his portrayal of the Tupinamba allows for the analysis of the

European origins of the myth of the Noble Savage. I argue that by isolating Colombe from both French and Tupi society, thus creating an objective outsider who must consequently live with Pay-Lo – also an objective outsider – Rufin is able to cast light on destructive elements of both communities, thus emphasizing the danger of dogmatic adherence to one particular way of life.

Chapter 3 considers the same two themes, the opposition between nature and culture and the myth of the Noble Savage, in *Le Parfum d'Adam*. Rufin once again chooses a middle path by choosing to represent a vision of nature that eschews the wilderness aesthetic in favor of a harmonious balance between nature and culture. This is demonstrated through the character of Juliette, who I argue is isolated in order to expose the inherent dangers of radical environmentalism, which typically favors nature to the detriment of culture. The second part continues the analysis of the Noble Savage, which by the second half of the twentieth century had evolved into the Ecologically Noble Savage. I will consider this image in the context of two different characters, one of whom represents the stereotypical Ecologically Noble Savage, and one of whom is a more faithful representation of the problems facing contemporary indigenous groups.

Finally, Chapter 4 continues the analysis of these two themes in *Globalia*. In this chapter I demonstrate the ways in which two characters, isolated from their own society, use storytelling as a way to combat the official version of History sanctioned by the government. These stories are intricately linked to the physical world around them, creating a profound relationship between storytelling, nature, and marginality that stands in opposition to the unnatural, sanitized dominant culture of Globalia. Furthermore, I will argue that the use of dystopian fiction serves as a way to encourage imaginative solutions to present environmental and cultural issues. In the second part of this chapter, I will examine the representation of the Noble Savage. I propose that

the terms *environmentalism* and *conservation*, which are essential when attempting to define ecologically noble behaviors, are in fact problematic, since they are based on Euro-American values. Rufin challenges these definitions by creating Fraiseur, a seemingly stereotypical Noble Savage who is neither environmentally conscious nor noble, but who of all the characters still – quite accidentally – exhibits the most environmental responsible behavior. Fraiseur's ethic of place attachment serves as a lesson to the main characters, who ultimately choose to live an environmentally authentic lifestyle.

CHAPTER 1

REVIVING THE *BILDUNGSROMAN* IN THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY

Literary critics and theorists often debate the origin of the term *Bildungsroman*, or apprenticeship novel, as well as the precise definition of the genre. Wilhelm Dilthey (1833-1911) popularized the term, using it in his 1870 biography of Friedrich Schleiermacher, *Das Leben Schleiermachers* (Shaffner 3). However, it seems that the first use of the term more likely dates back as early as 1774, by Friedrich von Blankenburg, as pointed out by both Kontje (*History* 7) and Swales (13). Most scholars of the genre maintain that Karl Morgenstern, a nineteenth century German literary critic, used the term in 1819 in a series of lectures given on literary genres. François Jost recognizes Morgenstern's use of the term as early as 1803, but maintains that his influence was not particularly widespread (102). Dilthey, on the other hand, was extremely well-known, allowing him to popularize the term in the latter half of the 19th century (102). Whatever the precise origin of the term, it is certain that the genre originated in Germany during the period of Weimar Classicism. It should be noted that Goethe, author of *Wilhelm Meister's Apprenticeship* (1795-96), the prototypical example of the *Bildungsroman*, is not known to have ever used the expression. The *Bildungsroman* is primarily a German genre, although examples of are found in other national literatures, notably Dickens' *Great Expectations* (1861) and *David Copperfield* (1850), Rousseau's *Emile* (1762), and Stendhal's *Vie de Henry Brulard* (1890) (Jost 106, 108, 110), as well as Stendahl's *Chartreuse de Parme* (1839), *Le Rouge et le noir* (1830), and Balzac's *Illusions perdues* (1837). While the terms "apprenticeship novel" and "roman d'apprentissage" are close approximations of the German *Bildungsroman*, German scholars insist that both still fail to precisely articulate the concept of *Bildung*, which I will discuss later

(Kontje ix). Wishing to be as faithful as possible to the original sense of the term, I have chosen to use the term *Bildungsroman* instead of the French “roman d’apprentissage.”

The level of debate surrounding the first use of the term does not diminish when talking of structural aspects of the genre. *Wilhelm Meister’s Apprenticeship*, published in 1795-96, depicts a young man drawn to the stage, and who achieves self-realization as a result of joining a theater troupe and coming into contact with the larger world. Jost insists on the episodic nature of the classic *Bildungsroman*, writing that « [c]’est en vain qu’on chercherait dans la trame de *Wilhelm Meister* un principe ferme d’unité. Les épisodes se suivent, divergent ou se ressemblent. Chacun prend sa racine dans l’épisode précédent et se prolonge vaguement par tous les chaînons du récit, mais sans apparence de succession logique » (103, 04). Michael Minden, on the other hand, points out that the tendency of the protagonist to err is fundamental to the genre: “Instead of seeking ways of making personal experience historically significant [. . .] or asserting with all the force of a subjective revolution that personal experience is important *because* it is personal (as Rousseau did in his *Confessions*) the *Bildungsroman* makes the shortcomings of the individual [. . .] the driving force of the genre” (5). Most modern critics see the propensity to err as one of the central points of the genre: a character who is wise enough to avoid error cannot logically be the subject of a genre whose very existence depends on the *Bildung* of a flawed subject. Still, the character’s tendency toward error is still often considered problematic. As Todd Kontje notes, Dilthey’s definition of the genre states that “[t]he hero of the classical *Bildungsroman* [. . .] engages in the double task of self-integration and integration into society. Under ideal conditions, the first implies the second: the mature hero becomes a useful and satisfied citizen” (*Metafiction* 12). There is no mention of *how* the protagonist achieves self-integration, and critics question whether *Wilhelm Meister* qualifies as a *Bildungsroman* under

Dilthey's definition, since Wilhelm does not embrace but rather resists maturation, and his formation is guided by the oppressive Tower Society (*Metafiction* 13). If even the recognized prototype of the genre does not measure up to Dilthey's definition, then it can be assumed that this definition of the genre is either too narrow, or as Kontje states, inappropriate for a modern reader: "We in the late 20th century are reading eighteenth-century texts through the lens of a nineteenth-century definition" (*Metafiction* 12).

What then, constitutes a *Bildungsroman* to the twentieth or twenty-first century reader? As I noted above, Minden sees the protagonist's propensity for error, as well as his ability to learn from his mistakes, as being fundamental to the genre. Jost takes a similar stance, but insists more on worldly experience than on error. He points out that the *Bildungsroman* is characterized by the protagonist's maturation and character formation through worldly experience (Jost 99).

He writes that

[i]l s'agit d'une conception nouvelle du roman, appelé désormais à présenter systématiquement des aspects, des tranches de la vie humaine qui ne s'y étaient reflétées jusque-là qu'incidemment ou exceptionnellement. Quels aspects ? L'action formatrice des événements sur le caractère de l'individu. Quelles tranches de vie ? L'adolescence, les débuts de l'âge d'homme, l'époque, précisément, durant laquelle l'homme se forme. (103)

Jost insists on using *Wilhelm Meister* as the standard for the genre, and writes that "la mesure dans laquelle une œuvre donnée s'en approche [de *Wilhelm Meister*] décide du rang qu'elle occupe dans la liste des *Bildungsromane*" (103). Other critics are not so particular. Martin Swales suggests that the genre is oblique, in that the character's apprenticeship is never quite

finished. According to Swales, it is precisely this obliqueness that “separates the genre from other comparable novel fictions” (34). He argues that “*Bildung* becomes, then, a total growth process, a diffused *Werden*, or becoming, involving something more intangible than the acquirement of a finite number of lessons” (14). For Swales, a *Bildungsroman* is characterized more by thematic elements, in this case the protagonist’s personal development as a result of direct contact with the world, than by the novel’s ability to meet certain structural criteria. Randolph Shaffner, on the other hand, notes nearly twenty distinguishing traits of the *Bildungsroman*, including the desire for self-development according to some internal purpose that both results from and is realized as a result of the individual’s confrontation with his environment. He, like Jost, Kontje, Minden and Swales, also indicates that the novel should focus on the how and why of the individual’s development, with less of an emphasis on an end goal (Shaffner 17).

Kontje rightly points out that if one adheres strictly to Dilthey’s definition, one would be “hard put to find a novel that fits [his] description of the genre” (13). Shaffner goes to the other extreme; to articulate nearly 25 structural elements of a *Bildungsroman* seems excessive. Perhaps it is difficult to articulate what exactly constitutes a *Bildungsroman*, and which elements are essential to the genre, because the twenty-first century reader does not expect from a novel the same thing that a reader would have expected when the *Bildungsroman* first became popular. In their entry detailing the history of German Theory and Criticism after 1968 in *The Johns Hopkins Guide to Literary Theory and Criticism*, Darby, Asher, and Ellis note the following:

Following his teacher Martin Heidegger, Hans-Georg Gadamer insisted that historical objectivity is merely an illusion, for our judgment is conditioned by our necessarily limited historical perspective, or to use his

word, *Horizont* (horizon). Because this horizon is steadily shifting, the interpretation of a text involves *Horizontverschmelzung*, the imaginative fusion of the interpreter's horizon with that of the text [. . .] This new reading will in turn be superseded, since a work's "meaning" is generated by the ongoing dialogue between past and ever-changing present.

Gadamer maintains that historical truth becomes evident in the persistence of certain works and mores over time, or in the tradition. Certain elements within a tradition, however, are merely local. As Darby et al. explain, "[c]ritical inquiry serves the tradition by purging from the past those elements that now appear to have been merely local. In turn, since we are borne along by a stream of common tradition, we can come to recognize in ourselves and the works of our time those prejudices that are local and eccentric and distinguish them from those that are rarefied by the tradition."

In his essay "The Theory of Reception," German literary critic Hans Robert Jauss proposes that a reader can approach a text in two ways: either passively, which tends toward a literal interpretation of the text, or actively, which allows for a more nuanced interpretation (55). According to Jauss, a reader's point of view changes constantly. As a result, the interpretation of a text or the understanding of a literary genre will necessarily change with the reader's historical point of view. He writes: "When considering historical processes dialectically, later modifications are not at all to be seen as incorrect interpretations, but rather as interpretations appropriate to the new time or its artistic needs" (63). It follows, therefore, that the particular elements of the *Bildungsroman* that were relevant when the genre first became popular would not necessarily be relevant to a twenty-first century reader.

Considering both Gadamer and Jauss, I will adhere to a definition that is thematic and not structural, and therefore the least prescriptive: in a *Bildungsroman* the protagonist's character formation results from his or her direct contact with the outside world, with no clear end-goal, often as a result of personal shortcomings. I will, however, take for granted Shaffner's statement that one distinguishing trait of the genre is "an obligatory acknowledgment of both human and natural influences" (18), since "outside world" as it is used by other critics necessarily includes both influences. While it is often proposed by scholars that it is in fact the social world that most influences the character's self-realization, I believe that the uniquely social aspect of the *Bildungsroman* as conceived of by Goethe is a local element of the tradition that is not necessarily relevant to a twenty-first century reader.

Authors such as Goethe, who pioneered the genre, were primarily concerned with creating a national German literature that would rival the French or British literary tradition. Kontje observes that the German bourgeoisie was still suffering from the effects of the Thirty Years War (1618-1648): "Germany remained a provincial backwater until well into the next [century]. Whereas France and England had the cultural advantage of being unified countries with central capitals, "Germany" existed only as a myriad of petty absolutist states whose subjects spoke different dialects of the same language" (*Private Lives* 3). As a result, the social world played a larger role in character formation than did the natural world. From a twenty-first century vantage point, however, it is easy to see the importance of nature in German Romanticism and its influence on the *Bildungsroman*. Tracing the development of the genre, Kontje writes that

[the medieval] concept of *Bildung* [God's active transformation of the passive Christian] changes significantly in the course of the eighteenth

century. Instead of being passive recipients of a preexistent form, individuals now gradually develop their own innate potential through interaction with their environment. Organic imagery of natural growth replaces a model of divine intervention. Transformation into the perfect unity of God turns into the development of one's unique self. In this view, no fall from grace has occurred; humans, like the rest of God's creation, are essentially good. God no longer stands apart from the world but becomes a force of nature – indeed, a part of nature's pantheistic unity. (*History 2*).

He continues by pointing out that Johann Herder (1744-1803) was “the most influential disseminator of this new concept of *Bildung*” (*History 2*). Herder proposed that all individuals are born with unique genetic material in place. External forces, particularly the time and the place of the individual, shape their formation (2). Herder's concept of *Bildung* finds its artistic expression in the *Bildungsroman*. The protagonist is shaped by the culture of the era (Herder's “time”), as well as weather and geographical setting (*History 2*). For Goethe, Herder's “external forces” typically meant bourgeois society, but as discussed previously, a study of contemporary the modern *Bildungsroman* does not have to adhere to the same standards.

If *Wilhelm Meister's Apprenticeship* is the prototypical *Bildungsroman*, it is also a quintessential example of German Romanticism (Gillies). Describing the German Romantic view of nature, Pierre Hadot writes that the Romantics equated understanding nature with recognizing that nature was nothing other than the self's unconscious, and that the other that nature represented was nothing more than the self. (Hadot 352). This is of course an incredibly anthropocentric way of relating to nature, but that does not also mean that it is a destructive way

of doing so. Robert Lenoble claims that such a view of nature grew from the separation anxiety that resulted from the Mechanical and Industrial Revolutions (Hadot 339, 40). Garrard shares this view, and cites the following passage from Keith Thomas:

there had gradually emerged attitudes to the natural world which were essentially incompatible with the direction in which English society was moving. The growth in towns had led to a new longing for the countryside. The progress of cultivation had fostered a taste for weeds, mountains, and unsubdued nature. The new-found security from wild animals had generated an increasing concern to protect birds and preserve wild creatures in their natural state. (Thomas qtd. in Garrard 39, 40).

This in turn led to a renewed emphasis on the aesthetic value of a more wild nature, which as Garrard points out, includes the “possibility of confronting [progress]” (Garrard 40). In their attempt to renew their contact with what they considered to be Mother Nature, German Romantics (and it should be noted that Hadot includes Rousseau in this statement) sought to reveal the secrets of nature through an aesthetic approach, which stood in sharp contrast to a more reasoned attempt to understand nature that had prevailed during the Scientific Revolution and the Enlightenment.

In Antiquity, the Promethean approach to nature, as Hadot calls it, sought to trick nature into revealing its secrets through magic, mechanics, and experimentation. The goal of this was to discover nature’s secrets in order to exploit and dominate the natural world (143). These three approaches to nature continued to be developed and practiced through the Medieval period and into the Early Modern period, when they converged in the form of scientific experimentation (Hadot 143). Until this point in history, the word *experimentum* did not have its current meaning

of experimentation. Rather, as Hadot writes, « *[e]xperimentum* s’oppose ici surtout à la connaissance abstraite et purement rationnelle. Il s’agit plutôt d’une connaissance immédiate, d’une expérience vécue qui peut être ou sensible ou spirituelle. Grâce à l’*experimentum*, on devient « expert », habile à déceler et à utiliser les secrets de la nature, à se servir de la nature comme d’un instrument » (165). Francis Bacon, widely considered to have been the first to theorize the scientific method (Hadot 166), believed that observation such as that practiced by Aristotle, was not sufficient to maintain scientific progress. In *Novum Organum*, he wrote

De même, en effet, que, dans la vie publique, le naturel d’un individu et la disposition cachée de son esprit et de ses passions se découvrent, lorsqu’il est plongé dans le trouble, mieux qu’à un autre moment, de même les secrets (*occulta*) de la nature se découvrent mieux sous la torture des arts [mécaniques] que dans son cours naturel. (qtd. in Hadot, 167)

During the Scientific Revolution, it became common to refer to nature as a machine¹⁴ : “Car c’est désormais la machine, et non plus l’organisme vivant, qui est modèle qui sert à concevoir et à expliquer la nature » (Hadot 175). As a result, scientists at the time considered math to be the language in which natural laws were expressed. This reduced nature to a series of formulas, and one could easily understand the secrets of nature if one simply mastered the laws.

Human beings were not exempt from this rational way of ordering the world. Just as Buffon (1707-1788) created a system of classification for animals, scientists and sociologists were intent on classifying various “types” of human beings. Jean Ehrard writes the following :

Le XVIII^e siècle découvre avec émerveillement ce que les époques antérieures avaient pressenti : l’incroyable diversité des mœurs et des

¹⁴ Hadot points out that nature was also referred to as a machine in Antiquity, but notes that “il est vrai aussi qu’en employant cette métaphore, on voulait seulement faire allusion au bel agencement de la nature” (176).

coutumes, des genres de vie ou des formes de pensée. Ainsi le monde moral n'est pas moins riche et varié que le monde physique : cette révélation enchante des amateurs d'exotisme et de pittoresque ; elle stimule les « philosophes » dans leur hostilité au dogmatisme de la théologie, elle prouve enfin qu'au même titre que les espèces botaniques ou animales, l'espèce humaine peut devenir objet de science. (251)

The preoccupation with reason and order that dominated the sciences during the 18th century therefore carried over into philosophy and aesthetics. Philosophers believed that just as a set of laws existed that governed the physical universe, a set of laws existed that governed human beings (Ehrard 332). The word “nature” therefore referred to reason, and a natural human being was one who allowed himself to be governed by reason: “La *nature* à laquelle se réfèrent les moralists est celle de l'homme adulte et civilisé” (Ehrard 337). Similarly, the aesthetic of the first half of the 18th century tended to insist on the fact that Beauty was to be found in the representation of a reasoned and ordered version of nature:

l'esthétique du XVIIIe siècle postule l'accord de l'homme avec lui-même et avec l'univers : de même que la raison du mathématicien est accordée aux lois générales de la nature physique, l'homme de goût accède spontanément à la vérité du Beau absolue. Une harmonie providentielle fait que la définition du Beau idéal coïncide avec les lois hédonistes du goût. (Ehrard 328)

The rationalism that prevailed during the Scientific Revolution and the Enlightenment found its antithesis in Romanticism. While Enlightenment philosophers conceded that men were more often driven by passion than by reason, they insisted that man was at his most natural when

governed by reason (Ehrard 337). However, as Hadot points out, the prevalence of reason did not correspond to the ways in which human beings experienced nature; as Hadot puts it, the lived experience did not undergo the Copernican Revolution, since as far as individual experience was concerned, it made no difference whether or not the Earth revolved around the Sun or vice versa. In the latter half of the 18th century, realizing that science reduces the pleasure that one feels when surrounded by the natural world, artists and authors attempted to counter the increased mechanization of nature with an aesthetic approach that put less emphasis on reason and more emphasis on the lived human experience, thus the romantic emphasis on the sublime (Hadot 282). While Romantics shifted toward the emotional and the sublime, the emphasis on reason, was still present in the *Bildungsroman* at the beginning of the 19th century. Goethe was, after all, as well known for his scientific work as he was for his literary work. His scientific method, however, consisted of observation and not of experimentation, and therefore represented a point of transition between Enlightenment philosophy and Romantic philosophy : “La forme [du phénomène naturel] n’est pas *Gestalt*, configuration immobile, mais *Bildung*, formation, croissance [. . .] La méthode scientifique de Goethe consiste dans une perception attentive du mouvement de formation. C’est avant tout une morphologie” (Hadot 329). This method of observation carried over to Goethe’s literary works, since this is exactly the manner in which the subject of the *Bildungsroman* attempts to form himself.

Goethe is of course not the first to insist that scientific knowledge came from the careful observation of nature; Aristotle’s observation of the chicken embryo serves as a well-known example. Hadot points out that by the Middle Ages, European scientists were primarily concerned with using magic and experimentation to discover the secrets of nature. By the 16th century, however, observation was again in vogue, and authors such as Rabelais encouraged

students to observe the techniques of artisans and other men who were in direct contact with nature (171, 72). Hadot observes that

[i]l ne s'agit plus de lire, d'expliquer les textes et d'emprunter son savoir aux Anciens, mais de faire travailler sa raison à l'occasion d'observations concrètes et d'expériences bien menées. Descartes écrit, à la fin de son *Discours de la méthode*, qu'il espère que ceux qui se servent de leur raison naturelle tout pure, c'est-à-dire qui n'ont pas eu l'esprit gâté par la scolastique, jugeront mieux de ses opinions que ceux qui ne croient qu'aux livres anciens. (Hadot 172)

That is not to say, however, that understanding the secrets of nature necessarily involved searching outside of one's self. In *Les Mots et les choses*, Michel Foucault traces the history of epistemology. Of particular interest is his articulation of the 16th-century idea that the world was in fact an elaborate system of symbols that, if correctly interpreted, revealed esoteric knowledge of the universe and of God (44, 45). Because humans, animals and the natural world resembled each other, interpretation of natural symbols would lead to an understanding of human beings. Foucault writes that

Il existe, cependant, dans cet espace sillonné en toutes les directions, un point privilégié : il est saturé d'analogies (chacun peut y trouver l'un de ses points d'appui) et, en passant par lui, les rapports s'inversent sans s'altérer. Ce point, c'est l'homme ; il est en proportion avec le ciel, comme avec les animaux et les plantes, comme avec la terre, les métaux, les stalactites ou les orages. Dressé entre les faces du monde, il a rapport au firmament (son visage est à son corps ce que la face du ciel est à l'éther ;

son poulx bat dans ses veines, comme les astres circulent selon leurs voies propres ; les sept ouvertures forment dans son visage ce que sont les sept planètes du ciel) ; mais tous ces rapports, il les fait basculer, et on les retrouve, similaires, dans l'analogie de l'animal humain avec la terre qu'il habite : sa chair est une glèbe, ses os des rochers, ses veines de grands fleuves ; sa vessie, c'est la mer, et ses sept membres principaux, les sept métaux qui se cachent au fond des mines. (37)

This relationship between nature and the Self was still being explored in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Hadot references Pierre-Simone Ballanche (1776-1847), philosopher and author, whose essay « Orphée » (in *Essais de palingénésie sociale*) expressed his belief that “la connaissance de la vérité [de la Nature] n'est pas le résultat d'un geste de dévoilement d'une réalité toute faite, c'est-à-dire d'un enseignement que l'on recevrait passivement, mais que c'est l'homme qui doit trouver la vérité d'une manière active par lui-même et en lui-même” (Hadot 356). For Ballanche, any truth about nature is to be found “dans le cœur de l'homme” (Hadot 356). Throughout much of recent history, then, search for the truth about Nature and about natural processes necessarily involved a search for the truth about oneself, and thus any understanding that one came to involved both the self and nature.

Shaffner indicates the relationship between understanding nature and understanding self in his list of traits that distinguish the *Bildungsroman* from other genres, writing that “an obligatory acknowledgement of both human and natural influences” (18) is a necessary element of the character's self-development. If we take this statement as true, it follows that in a typical *Bildungsroman*, which portrays, as Jost writes, “le processus par lequel l'être humain devient l'image de l'agent, s'identifie avec son modèle, avec son créateur” (98, 99), the character must

come to an understanding of nature, since nature, often in conjunction with other agents, serves as a model. The idea that human beings learn from the natural world is certainly not new.

However, Robert Torrance points out in his introduction to *Encompassing Nature: A Sourcebook* that the Romantic Age was characterized by an “aggravated division of the human from the natural world, and of intense longing for reparation of their shattered communion” (xii). Citing Schiller, Torrance also points out that writers of the Romantic Age sought out in the external world what they lacked internally: “Our [the Romantics] feeling for nature is like the feeling of an invalid for health” (qtd. in Torrance 380).

Just as Romanticism, and especially German Romanticism, developed in reaction to the Scientific and Industrial Revolutions, the *Bildungsroman* developed in reaction to the social revolutions that spread throughout Europe. Jost proposes that the *Bildungsroman*, which first appeared as a sub-genre of the novel in early nineteenth century Germany, should be considered in relation to other educational novels of the time, notably Rousseau’s *Émile* (1762), as well as in relation to the social revolutions that marked Europe during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries (Jost 113). He observes that Rousseau’s educational program that allows for self-education was particularly popular in Germany, perhaps more popular there than it was in France. As a result, German education at the turn of the nineteenth century focused on creating an environment in which a child could learn from experience. Jost considers the *Bildungsroman* to be the literary representation of this educational revolution (113). Torrance also situates literature in the context of social revolution:

Because it was truly encompassing, the world of animals and plants, rocks, rivers, and stars had no existence in isolation from the human and the divine. Only when refined urban civilizations begin to undergo breakdown

or turbulent change – as in Hellenistic Greece, medieval Japan, and Europe at the convergence of industrial and political revolution – have writers searched in the natural world for a wholeness the human world appears to have lost, and evolved new forms of writing to overcome division from it. (xii).

Finally, Kontje states in his examination of the *Bildungsroman* as metafiction that the genre first appeared during a time of “rapid transformation in the literary institution” (*Metafiction* 5). As a result, “direct commentary on the contemporary cultural scene often plays an important role in these texts” (*Metafiction* 6). While such a commentary at the turn of the nineteenth century often involved critical or satirical portraits of members of the literary scene (*Metafiction* 6), it seems reasonable to assume that twenty-first century examples of the genre might also serve as commentaries on the contemporary cultural scene, which necessarily demands a discussion of environmental issues. The *Bildungsroman*, born during a time of great social, technological and political upheaval, seems particularly relevant at the beginning of the twenty-first century, when our “refined urban civilization,” to quote Torrance, seems on the brink of either environmental breakdown or great environmental change.

The idea to classify Rufin’s novels as *Bildungsroman* comes from Rufin himself. In his epilogue to *Rouge Brésil*, he writes, “qu’est-ce que donc que ce grand drame qui clôt toujours l’enfance, sinon un embarquement forcé vers un monde effrayant dont on est sommé d’apprendre la langue ?” (602). A *Bildungsroman* marks, above all, a turning point in the trajectory of the character’s life. Although *Le Parfum d’Adam* and *Globalia* do not use the traditional *topos* of an adolescent character, they nonetheless portray characters who are faced with a definitive breaking point between their past and their future.

The three of Rufin's novels that I will be considering, *Rouge Brésil* (2001), *Le Parfum d'Adam* (2007), and *Globalia* (2004), all contain elements that allow them to be read as ecological *Bildungsromane*. *Rouge Brésil* is a historical novel whose account of France's colonial venture in Brazil relies heavily on the works of Jean de Léry (1536-1613) and André Thevet (1516-1590). Just and Colombe, adolescent brother and sister, are forced by circumstance into the group of colonists who accompany Villegagnon to Brazil to found France Antarctique (1555-1567). Once in Brazil, Villegagnon undertakes Just's education. As Villegagnon descends into madness, however, Just becomes increasingly reliant on knowledge gleaned from his own experience, especially as he comes to understand the destructive capacity of the European colonists. Colombe, in spite of her disdain for the natural world, quickly finds herself at home in the jungles of Brazil, preferring life among the Toupinamba to life in the colony. Although the *Bildung* of each follows drastically different routes, both Just and Colombe end the novel by rejecting European culture in favor of nature. The story begins in 1555, at the height of the Age of Discovery and the beginning of the Scientific Revolution. The considerable cultural and technological advancements of both of these movements can be countered by the violent religious persecution that troubled France at the time. The historical setting of the novel therefore portrays both the "turbulent change" and the "breakdown" that Torrance sees as motivating nature writing, and the period of social or cultural transformation that is characteristic of the *Bildungsroman*.

CHAPTER 2

ROUGE BRÉSIL

Part I: Champions of Nature and Defenders of Civilization in France Antartique.

“I wish to speak a word for Nature, for absolute freedom and wildness, as contrasted with a freedom and culture merely civil, – to regard man as an inhabitant, or part and parcel of Nature, rather than a member of society. I wish to make an extreme statement, if so I may make an emphatic one, for there are enough champions of civilization: the minister and the school-committee and every one of you will take care of that.” (Henry David Thoreau, Walking)

With these oft-cited words, Thoreau opened his landmark essay “Walking.” Written as a lecture to be given at the Concord Lyceum (Nash 84), it subsequently became one of his most popular essays, and in 1862 was posthumously published in the *Atlantic Monthly*. Thoreau’s words imply that there is a clear distinction between nature and culture¹⁵, and one can either “speak a word for Nature,” as he puts it, or one can champion civilization. This is reinforced by his later statement, “Give me a wildness whose glance no civilization can endure” (96). Clearly, for Thoreau, nature and culture are, at least conceptually, dichotomous concepts that cannot be reconciled. Gary Snyder counters this statement in his 1990 essay “The Etiquette of Freedom,”

¹⁵ A note on terms: typically, scholars differentiate between Nature (the culturally constructed idea of the natural world) and nature (the physical world). The term nature (lower-case n) can refer to a myriad of different things, including but not limited to the innate qualities of something or someone, the outdoors (that which is organic but not human), and the entire physical world, including all things made by human beings. For the remainder of the paper, I will use the following terms: Nature (capital n) will refer to the social and ideological construction of the natural world, and nature will refer to the entire physical world, both human and non-human. Furthermore, the distinction is sometimes made between Culture (typically meaning the best of civilization: art, music, literature, etc) and culture, or everything that refers to humans society. In the interest of clarity, I will not make this differentiation. Culture (which will only be capitalized if grammatically dictated) will therefore refer to everything that is exclusively human. If further explanation is needed, it will be provided at that time.

writing that a wildness that no civilization can endure is “clearly not difficult to find. It’s harder to imagine a civilization that wildness can endure, yet this is just what we must try to do.

Wildness is not just ‘the preservation of the world,’ it *is* the world” (6). For Snyder as well, society has constructed antithetical ideas, and the implication is that the crystallization of the idea that nature and culture are polar opposites will lead to the destruction of the world.

The imaginary dialogue that Snyder creates between himself and Thoreau provides an interesting perspective on the traditional Nature/Culture dichotomy. Thoreau’s rhetoric highlights the conflict that exists between civilization and wildness. Snyder’s response, written 130 years later, attempts to reconcile the two ideas, demanding that the preservation of the world be found in the combination of civilized and wild. In fact, Snyder gives a much more emphatic and clear warning in his essay “Unnatural Writing”: “let us not get drawn too far into dichotomous views and arguments about civilization versus nature, the domesticated versus the wild, the garden versus the wild abyss” (171). Rufin’s body of work encompasses similar views, and he typically plays with the traditional nature/culture dichotomy in order to show his reader that extremism of any form is destructive. This is the case in *Rouge Brésil*, where he uses the *Bildung* of the character Just in order to demonstrate the destructive nature of the 16th century French colonial mission in Brazil, and by extension of the Western European tendency to privilege culture at the expense of the natural world. This chapter seeks to demonstrate the way in which Rufin works within the Nature/Culture conflict in order to demonstrate that this dichotomy is illusory. Doing so, however, demands that some time be devoted to the history of the relationship between nature and culture during the European Renaissance and the beginning of the Age of Discovery, which is the setting for Rufin’s novel.

As is often the case with seemingly diametrically opposed terms, Nature and culture do not sit at opposite poles from each other, but rather overlap in varying degrees. While both Culture and culture have come to signify a myriad of different things, earliest uses of the term, as evidenced in Antoine Furetière's *Dictionnaire universel*, refer exclusively to the act of cultivating the land; its significance was therefore entirely agricultural. The traditional meaning of culture therefore speaks to the successful and productive combination of human activity and natural activity. Culture and nature are therefore not antithetical at all. Human culture, in the traditional, agricultural sense of the term, has everything to do with the productive union of the human and the non-human. Words change, however, and culture (as it is popularly used) no longer refers exclusively to cultivated land. Its meaning has been transferred to human beings, and a cultivated person is one who is refined, well-mannered and well-educated. Furthermore, the word can be used to refer to the collective way of life of a group of people. While in some societies this does not necessarily put them at odds with nature, this has been increasingly true of modern, industrial societies. As a result, environmentalists have been increasingly concerned with deconstructing this dichotomy which, in reality, is illusory.

On one end of the spectrum sit environmental purists who contend that wilderness is “the natural, unfallen antithesis of an unnatural civilization that has lost its soul. It is a place of freedom in which we can recover our true selves we have lost to the corrupting influences of our artificial lives. Most of all, it is the ultimate landscape of authenticity” (Cronin in Garrard 69, 70). Garrard, among others, is quick to point out the inherent problem of this approach to nature: in order to appreciate wilderness, which demands the absence of humans, one must place oneself within a wilderness area. This then calls into question the nature of wilderness. Frédéric Couston

makes a similar point, stating that nature conservatories and wilderness areas give visitors¹⁶ an incorrect idea of nature. He articulates three misconceptions about nature that stem from traditional conservatories where tourists can observe nature and learn from interpretive signs :

“1) l’homme et la nature sont deux choses différentes, le grillage entre eux l’atteste ; 2) que serait la nature sans l’intervention providentielle de l’homme qui sait créer un milieu pour les oiseaux ? 3) la nature est un parc d’attraction avec un règlement intérieur strict bardé d’interdits” (23). The education that visitors receive is therefore fraudulent, since the parks only reinforce the idea that humans are superior to and separate from nature. In *La Dictature libérale*, Rufin maintains a highly critical opinion of those who would create “nature ghettos”: zones such as wildlife preserves where nature would be, in theory, “abandonnée à elle-même” (194). Rufin points out the limitations of this approach to the natural world. The act of setting aside tracts of land where nature is left to itself would sufficiently assuage the conscience of the public, who as a result would use them as an excuse for unbridled, destructive growth in the zones that are not given over to nature. Clearly, for Rufin, the answer to environmental concerns is not the quarantine of nature from culture.

Those adhering to this position tend to speak only of wilderness, which replaces nature in their minds as the antithesis of culture. On the other end of the spectrum are scholars such as Neil Evernden, who contends that nature may be real, but Nature is a cultural construction that dates to about 1500 (Howarth 85). Evernden certainly makes a valid point: the definition of nature, whether capitalized or not, fuels linguistic debates that are seldom resolved. Popular usage of the term refers to the natural world: plants, animals, waterfalls – something outdoors to be visited on a nice Saturday afternoon. Used in this sense, nature almost always refers to

¹⁶ Couston writes particularly about the pedagogical aspect of nature conservatories and wildlife preserves, which exist partly to protect nature, but also to attract tourists and visitors.

something that exists apart from human beings. The English and French word nature traces its roots back to the Latin *natura*, which means “innate” (Williams 68). Raymond Williams points out that this is probably the first use of the term, and it is only later that it came to refer to the material world. As such, a quest to understand the nature of something is as much a quest to understand its essence as it is to understand its physical form (68). From this comes Aristotle’s statement, for example, that the nature of a seed is to grow into a tree. From this also comes the term *Human Nature*. By 1690, when Antoine Furetière’s *Dictionnaire universel* was published, the word nature had come to have multiple definitions in the French language, some referring to the material world, some to the essence of a particular being. In fact, there are fourteen entries (two pages, total) for the word nature alone, not including various other forms (*naturel*, *naturaliste*, etc). The definition for culture, on the other hand, is exceptionally brief: only one entry. Clearly, as Françoise Gevrey states, “l’idée de nature était essentielle et comme consubstantielle à l’âge classique, tandis que la notion de culture lui était encore étrangère” (7).

It is reductive, however, to maintain as Evernden does, that Nature, even if it is differentiated from nature by the use of the capital letter, is an entirely cultural construction. At best this is an anthropocentric point of view; at worst, it is highly destructive: if Nature is only what we make of it, if Nature is not *real*, then it becomes much easier to dismiss it as inconsequential and therefore act towards it in a destructive manner¹⁷. Alexander Wilson makes a similar, but somewhat more moderate point, stating that “nature is culture” (12), and that any time we experience the natural world, our perception is mediated by “rhetorical constructs like photography, industry, advertising, and aesthetics, as well as by institutions like religion,

¹⁷ Evernden’s work is well-intentioned, making the accurate argument that it is because humans differentiate between Nature and nature that they are able to pollute without realizing the consequences of their actions. I believe, however, that maintaining this point of view excuses such actions, and is therefore enables pollution just as much as the nature ghettos that Rufin mentions.

tourism, and education” (12). While stating that nature is culture is as reductive as Evernden’s statement that Nature is not real, the second part of his statement certainly presents a realistic assessment of most humans’ approach to the natural world. Wilson’s statement refers uniquely to the twentieth-century experience of nature, but that does not follow that it cannot be applied to the rest of history. Ancient agricultural civilizations, who lived in such close proximity to nature that distinguishing between nature and culture was an absolutely futile endeavor, constructed myths and gods that allowed them to better understand and to better articulate natural processes. This is continued by the pantheon of Greek and Roman gods, all of whom regulate some aspect of the natural world. Although many scholars contend that the Judeo-Christian God is an aberration in this tradition¹⁸, this does not seem to be entirely the case. Although the Hebrews and early Christians differed from their contemporaries in their insistence on one God instead of multiple gods, the god Jehovah still regulated all natural functions. Discussing the history of the interaction between monotheistic religions and the idea of nature, Raymond Williams points out that “[i]n the orthodox western medieval world a general formula was arrived at, which preserved the singularity of both [religion and nature]: God is the first absolute, but Nature is His minister and deputy” (69). By knowing nature, one could conceivably know God.

It is significant for this study that Evernden situates this shift in the relationship between nature and culture around 1500, since *Rouge Brésil* is set only fifty years later. As discussed in Chapter 1, settlers in the New World arrived with all of their cultural baggage. Their only approach to the vast areas of wilderness by which they were confronted was to interpret it religiously. Wilderness was the antithesis to paradise, and everything associated with it was thought at best to be alienated from God and therefore immoral, and at worst to be demonic. Cultivated land, and the civilizations that were associated with it, were of exponentially greater

¹⁸ See White, Lynn, Jr. “The Historical Roots of Our Ecological Crisis.”

value, since taming wilderness was the task set by God explicitly for humans¹⁹. Rufin demonstrates the influence that European culture and religion had on the early settlers of the Americas:

En regardant l'île, ils prenaient brutalement conscience que la traversée n'était pas encore le châtement. Ils étaient en vérité condamnés à la plus inimaginable des peines : celle qui précipite un homme du haut de la pyramide laborieusement construite de la civilisation, tout comme Adam et Ève ont été défenestrés du paradis terrestre. Ils se voyaient rejetés au milieu du monde sauvage, moins heureux que des bêtes puisqu'ils avaient leur conscience pour souffrir d'être dépouillés, vulnérables et hors de toute pitié. (166).

The colonists arriving in Guanabara Bay would not have considered themselves to be looking at Nature. Wilderness and Nature were two radically different concepts. Wilderness was land that had been abandoned by God, and being forced to live in a wilderness condition was tantamount to being rejected by God. Nature, in contrast, was something to be understood through intellect. This belief was inherited from Descartes, who proposed that it was through reason that the true nature of things could be understood. For Descartes and his contemporaries, as well as all scientists who have followed, the essence of nature was expressed mathematically, since math was the governing principle of the laws of nature. Classical French gardens were not seen as artificial and contrived, which is an entirely modern perception of such spaces. Instead, they were considered to be closer to nature than wilderness spaces, because they expressed the mathematical and geometrical principles that governed fundamental natural processes (Ferry 152-53).

¹⁹ See Genesis 1: 26-30

The reality, of course, falls somewhere in between the two extremes of pure wilderness and ordered, dominated nature. In *Rouge Brésil*, Rufin uses the *Bildung* of the two main characters to demonstrate that the “preservation of the world,” to use Thoreau’s expression, is to be found in the middle road between the absolute rejection of either culture or nature. Prior to their journey, Just and Colombe seemed to be complementary halves of the same person (49), especially regarding their relationship to the natural world: Just is sensitive to animals, to plants, to “tous les êtres muets qui composaient la nature” (27), whereas Colombe is so adept at reading the human soul that she demonstrates “beaucoup d’indifférence à l’endroit des êtres ou des choses qui sont réputés ne pas en avoir” (27). Colombe represents what would come to be seen, less than one hundred years later, as a Cartesian view of nature. The belief that animals lack souls, and are therefore just machines, is what drives her to push her horse to go faster and faster, causing her to be thrown from it and seriously injured (30). Although Rufin portrays what would have been the accepted view of animals at the time, he also defies the traditional platonic hierarchies that associate men with culture and women with nature by attributing these opinions to Colombe instead of Just. Their arrival in Brazil pushes each to the opposite extreme, restoring the classical hierarchies for a time. Just’s apprenticeship with the increasingly fanatic Villegagnon, as well as his experiences with other characters in the novel, ultimately allow him to reject Western European culture in favor of a lifestyle that is a hybrid of Western and Tupi cultures.

After being sold to Villegagnon by an opportunistic relative, the two orphans embark on the long voyage to Brazil. The party consists of three ships and 600 men (83), and will take three and a half months to accomplish (153). The confines of the ship, imposed by the sea, mimic the confines of the culture being transported to the shores of the New World so that the ship, and

later the colony, function as microcosmic versions of 16th century France. Villegagnon quite literally represents the king. The first glimpse that Rufin allows of Villegagnon is actually of the ebony desk that contains the king's decrees: the passengers expect to see Villegagnon climbing aboard, but instead they are presented with "une forme carrée, sombre et massive" (115) that descends from a ship, crosses between ships on a sloop, and boards the ship on which Just and Colombe are passengers. Rufin uses the active voice throughout the passage to imply that the desk is moving by its own volition, and only after a detailed description of the desk does Villegagnon appear. The implication is of course that the desk, and therefore the royal decrees contained within, is more important than even the leader of the expedition. A closer look at the passage, however, betrays what Roland Racevskis refers to as "Rufin's skepticism toward the Western drive to authority in early modern times, and toward the colonial effort that aimed to expand that power into hitherto unexplored lands" (70). First, the transportation of the desk from one ship to the other, in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean, is presented as ridiculous: all of the passengers watch incredulously as the entire ship tips while the desk is hoisted over its rail and the rowers struggle to move the sloop (115). As if the logistics of moving the desk did not render the task ludicrous enough, the desk is referred to as "un gros hanneton" (115), and the imagery that follows is entirely insectile: the desk "se dressait seul sur ses pattes" (115), and is encrusted with ivory carvings of cornucopia and topped by a crown (115), evoking antennas as well as the hard, outer shell of a beetle. Several lines later it is referred to as "le gros insect qui venait de se poser sur leur navire" (116). This description of the desk, and therefore of the colonial mission and of Villegagnon, indicates to the etymologically savvy reader, or even to the average gardener, what is to come: just as the "hanneton" (cockchafer beetle or June beetle) is extremely damaging to trees and shrubs, the colonial enterprise will, in a matter of months, completely

destroy all of the trees and shrubs on the island (247). Several pages later, Rufin explicitly states that Villegagnon resembles the desk (119), extending the destructive capacity of the beetle-like desk to its human representative in Brazil.

Accompanying Villegagnon is André Thevet, author of *Les Singularitez de la France antarctique* (1557). Rufin's critique of the colonial enterprise is also evident in his portrayal of Thevet as an ineffectual savant whose knowledge of nature relies uniquely on theoretical information and therefore completely neglects reality. Thevet has joined the expedition as the royal cosmographer. During the journey by skiff from ship to shore, all of his notebooks are washed overboard. Just, who is rowing the boat, attempts in vain to salvage the documents. Racevskis states that "[t]he image of these documents falling apart and disappearing in the water suggests the failure of early modern Western knowledge to grasp and control the discovery of the New World" (71). Thevet was criticized by his contemporaries for boasting comprehensive knowledge of Brazil when in fact he had only spent ten weeks there. While still in the middle of the ocean, for example, Thevet informs Villegagnon that they are in fact already on land. This claim is contradicted by the ship's Captain, who after years at sea can detect land by the height of the birds, the quality of the light and the color of the water (137). Since Thevet has formal schooling, Villegagnon privileges his knowledge over the Captain's years of practical experience, as well as over empirical evidence: the passage indicates that the ship is still obviously in the middle of the ocean. This would have been typical of early expeditions to the Americas, since as Todorov points out in *The Conquest of America*, the decisive argument would have been "an argument of authority, not of experience" (17) – the function of concrete experience was to "illustrate a truth already possessed, not to be interrogated according to preestablished rules in order to seek the truth" (*Conquest* 17). This seems to be a veiled criticism

of Thevet on the part of the author, since it is generally believed that his supposedly first-hand accounts of Brazil were actually based largely on the testimony of French sailors, Thevet himself having only spent a couple of months in the colony. Léry's account is considered to be the more authentic of the two works devoted to the subject, and although he is only a minor character in Rufin's narrative, his influence is evident. It comes as no surprise to Rufin's audience, however, that Thevet's calculations are inaccurate, and although the ship is within several days of solid ground, they are not already there, as he contends.

Taken into consideration with Rufin's portrayal of Thevet as a buffoon, the fact that his entire record of the journey thus far is erased reinforces the idea that Thevet, along with the theoretical knowledge that he represents, is fraudulent and ineffectual. In this case, nature trumps culture to the point that it erases it altogether: despite Just's earnest attempts (at one point he believes himself about to be carried out to sea), the notebooks are ruined: "[t]outes les notes, les documents qu'il avait rassemblés pour le voyage, ses instruments de mesure étaient perdus par les fonds ou détruits" (180). The expedition thus enters Brazil with a clean slate; all preconceived notions are gone. The fact that the ocean prevails over the written word should indicate to the colonists that claiming the land in the name of France (181) is a vain action, it in fact seems to inspire them to work even harder to impose civilization onto the island that they settle.

Perhaps because he is unable to save the remnants of the cultivated world that they have all left behind, Just especially views the wilderness of Brazil as a challenge: "quoiqu'il fût terrassé par l'inquiétude, Just ne pouvait s'empêcher de voir dans cette présence mystérieuse un somptueux défi à son courage" (178). Given his affinity to the natural world, and considering the destructive nature of France Antarctique, which is indicated even on the journey across the Atlantic, it is surprising that Just is sympathetic to Villegagnon throughout much of the narrative.

The voyage, however, provides a place of transition for both Just and Colombe. Despite their apparent worldliness (after having been born in Italy and travelled with their diplomat father, they crossed the Mediterranean with a regiment of soldiers and finally arrived in Normandy), they prove themselves to be remarkably sheltered and naïve about their destination as well as their position within the colonial enterprise. They have been assigned the role of “truchement,” or translator, a term whose significance eludes them both (80). This becomes evident during their first encounter with Martin, an adolescent who, like Just and Colombe, is intended to serve as a translator to the Tupinamba. Forced to lodge with Martin in the hold of the ship, the brother and sister find themselves the victims of his bullying, thanks largely to their belief that they are going to find their father, who, according to them, would not be found among savages (86). Their conflict begins with Martin insulting Just and Colombe’s deceased father, and it culminates with the two boys fighting among the topsails of the ship (103). This episode, seemingly unimportant, in fact serves two purposes. First, it reveals Just’s primary character flaw, which, as discussed in Chapter 1, is one of the essential, omni-present characteristics of the Bildungsroman. In this case, Just’s flaw is pride, especially of his father and of his family name. His pride proves to be first the indirect cause of his initial, psychological separation from Colombe, and later the direct cause of their physical separation. It is also his pride that blinds Just to the devastating effect that the colonists have had on the island.

Second, Just’s initial conflict with Martin instigates the psychological separation between Just and Colombe. Prior to Just’s incarceration the two slept “serrés l’un contre l’autre” (98), Colombe serving as Just’s armor against his enemy (99). Thrown into the brig for fighting, Just emerges several weeks later close friends with Martin and distanced from Colombe, who has had to fend for herself. This has proven to be especially difficult for Colombe, given that she makes

the journey disguised as a boy and must continue to protect her true identity. Consequently, she has become more self-sufficient and less reliant on Just. The effect is seen in the restraint that now exists between the two siblings : “Fût-ce à cause de l’indiscrète exploration de Quintin ou simplement parce que après avoir été séparés ils se regardaient autrement, ils mirent en tout cas une retenue nouvelle dans leur embrassade. Elle n’était pas moins chargée d’émotion, au contraire, mais à la joie de la délivrance s’ajoutait cette fois le trouble nouveau de se sentir différents” (149-50).

The conflict between Just and Martin and the consequent estrangement between Just and Colombe marks the true beginning of their respective *Bildung*. While Just and Colombe have not led a sheltered, easy existence (48), this is the first time that either have had any real contact with a world other than the knightly milieu that surrounded them during their father’s lifetime, and in which they continued to live through their memories and their imaginations after their father’s death. During their time in the brig, Martin gives Just a glimpse into his life as a wharf rat : “Martin avait mille histoires en mémoire, recueillies à la source vive des mendiants, des voleurs et des filles. Il faisait entrer Just dans un monde qu’il avait frôlé en Italie sans jamais lui appartenir” (131). This world is foreign to Just, but the knowledge that he gains from Martin proves to be useful during his time on the island: Martin eventually replaces the leader of a notorious gang of *truchements* who run a long-established black market on the coast of Guanabara Bay, and ultimately betrays Villegagnon to the Portuguese.

Not only does this period of incarceration introduce Just to a sordid world of which he has been entirely ignorant, it ties him more firmly to the destructive aspects of Western European culture. The concept of incarceration is entirely unique to human culture,²⁰ and Rufin creates a

²⁰ In *Surveiller et punir*, Foucault makes the case that prisons represent the humanization of corporal punishment, in that the manifestation of power shifted from being a violent spectacle enacted on the condemned body to a

striking opposition between the splendors of the natural world and the entirely artificial concept of prisons:

C'était une de ces journées des tropiques où les bleus semblent vouloir montrer qu'ils sont assez nombreux pour se partager l'univers : bleu-blanc du ciel, bleu-vert de l'horizon, bleu-violet de la mer et bleu-gris de l'écume. Il fallait tout le génie des hommes pour inventer la captivité au milieu de cette immensité ouverte au bonheur. Colombe, assise à la poupe près d'un canot, pleura silencieusement. (105)

Colombe, left alone but free, consequently liberates herself from the constrictions placed on her by Western European culture as well as by her gender : “[a]vec cette aptitude à remplacer le Malheur par la volonté qui faisait toute la force des Clamorgan, elle se dit qu'elle était Colin, mousse libre, point sot et qui trouverait bien un moyen de libérer son pauvre frère” (105). Just, on the other hand, becomes doubly confined by civilization: not only is he a figurative captive, forced to serve as a truchement against his will, but after the fight he becomes a literal captive in the hold of the ship.

This proves to be a pivotal point in the shift back towards the traditional platonic hierarchies mentioned earlier in the chapter. An essential element of the *Bildungsroman* genre is the influence of the outside world on the character. As I discussed in Chapter 1, the contemporary *Bildungsroman*, which in this case is environmental, must include natural as well as social influences. In this case, Just and Colombe's environment has an enormous influence on their attitudes toward the natural world. Prior to the journey, Colombe demonstrates antipathy

disciplinary regimen aimed at rehabilitating the criminal. Since a criminal is, by definition, one who acts in opposition to the established law, and as Rousseau has shown in *Du contrat social*, legal justice is unique to those who have left the state of nature (43), then it logically follows that the concept of incarceration is unique to society, and is therefore unnatural.

toward nature. She is permitted, however, to spend the entire voyage above deck, free to do as she pleases. This is not always positive: many of the nights spent above deck are rainy and uncomfortable. The result of her habituation to nature, however, is that her reaction toward the jungles of Brazil is enormously different from that of Just. Whereas the rest of the passengers are uneasy in their new environment, Colombe immediately falls asleep under a tree, “bercée par le mouvement qu’imprimait à la terre le manque de celui du bateau” (182). This image provides continuity between the beginning of Colombe’s *Bildung*, begun on the ship, and the experience that she will gain when she finally comes into contact with the Tupinamba,²¹ and stands in stark contrast to the uneasy fear that the rest of the passengers experience on the island, demonstrating that peace can be found in nature.

Colombe remains relatively free and exposed to nature during their time on the ship, but Just spends much of it locked up. Cut off from nature, he consequently allies himself more closely to Western European culture. The effect on his attitude toward nature is exactly the opposite of that of Colombe. The squalid physical conditions of the brig, together with the sordid stories of life on the wharf that Martin tells to entertain him, erase all affinity that Just once had for the natural world. As a result, Just emerges surly and resentful of authority, a character trait that was absent prior to his incarceration. In contrast to Martin’s stories, Just recounts the stories of *Amadis de Gaule* (162), a 16th century chivalric romance. Rufin writes that “[l]eurs cheveux pouvaient bien grouiller de poux, leurs gencives saigner, leurs ventres crier dans le vide, ils avaient l’éclatante santé des rêveurs” (132). The insistence on the separation of the soul and the body, which was previously characteristic of Colombe, is now attributed to Just, who is more and more firmly entrenched in the imaginary world of chivalry.

²¹ Since Colombe’s *Bildung* deals more with the theme of the Noble Savage, it will be treated in further depth in the second part of this chapter.

Despite his initial revulsion toward Villegagnon, Just quickly becomes his right-hand man (430). Just has already undergone a classical education; he is well-versed in Hesiod, Dante, and medieval romances (223) as well as in Ariosto, Virgil, and Homer, plays the mandolin, and is familiar with Italian Renaissance art and architecture (49). To this, Villegagnon adds works by his contemporaries, such as Erasmus (223) and Copernicus (236), as well as physical tasks, such as fencing. As a result, Just draws closer and closer to the civilized world represented by Villegagnon, and finally, able to see the island from the bay, realizes his own attachment to Villegagnon's project:

Surhumain, le rêve de cette France à venir l'était à tel point qu'on pouvait seulement le tenir pour fou ou admirable. Villegagnon, avec ses outils de guerre, attaquait le bloc opaque de la nature brute avec l'enthousiasme de l'artiste qui se met face au marbre de carrière pour en tirer une pietà. Dans leurs longues conversations sur l'Italie, l'art, le mouvement des idées qui retournait toute l'épaisseur des anciennes erreurs gothiques, Villegagnon avait souvent usé de cette comparaison devant Just. Mais c'est pour la première fois qu'il la comprenait. (267).

This passage also perfectly sums up Villegagnon's approach toward the colonial enterprise in general: everything is a battle to be won, and consequently Antarctic France is characterized by violence and intolerance towards nature, towards women, towards the other religious denominations that are represented on the island,²² and towards the natives of Brazil.

²² Both Anabaptists and Protestants are present on the island at various points in the novel. The Anabaptists flee the island almost immediately to seek freedom in the Brazilian jungle (211). Villegagnon is initially tolerant of the Protestant movement, and goes so far as to write to Calvin seeking reinforcements and supplies. Once the Calvinists arrive, however, Villegagnon becomes increasingly intolerant (perhaps in response to the intolerance of the Calvinists), and eventually expels them from the island.

As Colombe draws closer and closer to the Tupinamba, eventually abandoning Antarctic France forever, Just becomes more and more entrenched in Villegagnon's vision of the colony, eventually consenting, to his great shame, to frisk the protestants, including the women, for weapons prior to their expulsion from the colony (485). Although he has for some time expressed indifference toward Villegagnon (464), the turning point in his attitude toward the colony comes during his recovery from an assassination attempt. During Just's convalescence, Villegagnon has made a despotic descent into madness, conducting his own Inquisition on the island: anyone opposing either him or the Catholic Church is subjected to brutal torture and eventually executed in the most spectacular manner in order to provide enjoyment to the colonists. The detailed description that Rufin presents paints a vivid and horrific portrait of the punitive practices within Antarctic France. The reader's revolt mimics that of Just, who is made to listen to accounts of Villegagnon's cruelty by Villegagnon himself, who visits Just every day and attempts to reassure him of the colony's security. Villegagnon's testimonials have the opposite of the intended effect: horrified by both Villegagnon and the fact that he had once served as a role model, Just realized that Colombe has better understood Villegagnon. He also realizes the deceptive nature of the civilization that he has helped to perpetuate:

Il semblait que toutes les apparences s'étaient retournées comme des vêtements et présentaient à son regard un envers grouillant et sale. Lui-même n'était pas indemne de cette transformation. Sa vie entière suait la lâcheté, l'indécision et l'erreur. Sous ses poses de noblesse et d'élégance, il n'avait jamais pratiqué que les plus grossiers compromis et supporté les mensonges qu'il s'inventait, en faisant mine de les croire. (536)

This realization allows Just to act when, left as interim Governor when Villegagnon seeks reinforcements in France, he learns that the Portuguese are about to attack. Pride, his principal character flaw, has been mastered thanks to repeated humiliations, and Just leads the colonists to join Colombe in the safety of the jungle.

Once in the forest, Just remembers the “*plaisir oublié de la nature et des bois*” (562). It initially seems that his decision to lead the colonists into the jungle is a complete rejection of the Western European culture that he has come to detest. Instead of finding Colombe living primitively, as he expects, he finds her in the house of her deceased mentor, a European who has lived more than fifty years among the Brazilian Indians. The house represents a neutral space where nature and culture have successfully intermingled. Instead of a formally constructed building, the house is a cluster of large trees whose interlacing boughs form the roof (335). At first, the natural elements of the house seem to dominate, given both the overpowering smell of resin and the spectacular view afforded by its mountain top location. The inside, however, is equally overpowering : “[les pièces] étaient meublées d’objets à la fois familiers et surprenants : une énorme effigie, arrachée à la proue d’un navire, grimaçante, drapée de rouge et d’or, des coffres de cuir ornés de cabochons de bronze, des émaux de France, une vaisselle d’argent” (336). The house is not situated so as to keep nature at bay: there is an entry way but no door, no real roof, and parrots, monkeys, squirrels and insects (336) all make their homes within the boundaries of the living space.

This is ultimately the space that Just and Colombe choose to inhabit. After saving the French colonists from the Portuguese (and, along the way, discovering that they are not actually brother and sister), the pair choose to join the Tupinamba. Just’s education, both formal and experiential, allows him to understand that absolute rejection of nature in favor of culture can

only be destructive. Rufin therefore clearly intends to comment on the destructive capacities of unchecked growth. The island, which has played a central role in the narrative, is last seen by Just and Colombe, and therefore the reader as well, as an insignificant ulcer (592) in the immense bay, which “dans l’heureuse santé de toutes ses couleurs, resplendissait de majesté et de paix” (592). The irony, of course, is that the Europeans will eventually win, and the wild coast of the Guanabara Bay has become the massive metropolis of Rio de Janeiro. Rufin ultimately leaves his reader with hope, however: according to a Tupi myth, humanity is destroyed after a giant flood, and only a brother and sister survive. A new human race is born from their union. Rufin’s representation of the brother and sister throughout the novel is such that their union is also a union between nature and culture, implying that in this union the hope of humanity is to be found.

Part II: Eat or Be Eaten: An Ethic of Incorporation. If Just’s *Bildung* in *Rouge Brésil*

exposes the fallacy inherent in the attempt to dichotomize nature and culture, Colombe’s fulfills a similar function in regard to the myth of the Noble Savage, which by the French Enlightenment had come to define the relationship between Europeans and their colonial subjects overseas. This myth, which finds its roots in Antiquity but gained popularity during the Age of Discovery and was eventually theorized during the Enlightenment, is a manifestation of the conflict between nature and culture that I have previously discussed. Frank Lestringant points out that the centuries-old conflict between those who wish to idealize the Cannibal and those who are bothered by the primitive bestiality is still alive and well at the end of the twentieth century. The contemporary focus, however, is placed less on the anthropophagic rituals and more on man’s dependence on his environment. As a result, those who would elevate the Cannibal are tenants of environmentalism and those who maintain the image of the barbaric native are tenants of

culturalism (Lestringant, *Cannibales* 38). The image of the Noble Savage, or the primitive man who happily lives in a state of nature, gained prominence in Europe during the 16th century with the discovery of the American continent, and was revived in the 18th century by Rousseau in his *Discours sur l'origine et les fondements de l'inégalité parmi les hommes* (1755). It was subsequently adopted by the 20th century environmental movement. The current incarnation is in the image of the noble Indian, often portrayed with a tear running down his cheek as he looks out onto the polluted landscape.²³ Although this image dates from the 1970s, it still dominates American attitudes toward environmentalism. Environmentalists, and especially deep ecologists, who often consider themselves primitivists, advocate a return to a more primitive, Native American-esque lifestyle that would save the world from the damage inflicted on it by our modern, capitalistic society.

The image of the cannibal plays a large role in *Rouge Brésil*, since Colombe spends a large part of the novel living among the Tupinamba. Rufin initially accentuates the stereotypes and exoticism that surrounds the Brazilian natives, especially the reports of cannibalism that previous expeditions to Brazil have witnessed. While Colombe is not particularly troubled by the anthropophagic tendencies of the Tupi, she is seduced by the natives' perceived simplicity. After her encounter with Pay Lo, a Frenchman who has lived among the Tupi for more than fifty years, Colombe ultimately decides to abandon the colony in order to live with his family. Through her own observations, as well as Pay Lo's explanations, Colombe realizes that her impression of native culture is in fact idealistic and false, and that total abandonment of her Western way of life would demand ethical compromises that she is unwilling to make. Colombe's *Bildung*

²³ In 1971, "Keep America Beautiful" launched its iconic public service campaign, which features a stoic Indian chief canoeing down a pristine river. After beaching his canoe, he walks next to a busy freeway and watches the drivers throw garbage out their windows. The ad ends with a still shot of the Indian, a solitary tear running down his cheek. Ironically, the Indian was played by a Hollywood actor named Iron Eyes Cody, who is the son of Italian immigrants (Aleiss 31).

consequently establishes her as the narrative's Other, allowing Rufin to criticize the destructive nature of Western European culture at the same time that he criticizes the Western attitude towards indigenous culture. His critique does not exclude the Tupi, and Colombe's position as an outsider allows for an objective examination of the anthropophagic rituals practiced by the Brazilian Indians. The result is an honest assessment of the historical basis for the myth of the Noble Savage, which in turn will allow Rufin to criticize the modern incarnations of this myth in his later novels.

The myth of the Noble Savage finds its roots in the Ancient Greek and Roman Golden Age, as well as in the pastoral tradition and its glorification of a rural lifestyle. Ancient Greeks referred to anyone who didn't speak Greek as "barbarians." This was not necessarily pejorative, merely a statement of fact.²⁴ Nor did it necessarily signify that a society was uncivilized, since Egyptians, for example, were referred to as Barbarians (Mouralis 8). It is, however, indicative of the Ancient Greek worldview, which was composed of concentric circles at which Greece was the center. The further that one traveled from the center of the circle, the closer one came to the barbarian, the unknown, and the legendary (Mouralis 8); not coincidentally, the closer one also came to the wild regions of the known world. It is only during the Roman Empire that the term barbarian comes to signify the antithesis of civilization with its perceived vices and corruption. As an antidote to the allure of exotic luxuries and the corrupted morals that resulted from the expanding borders of the Empire, Roman philosophers, historians and moralists exalted "*des valeurs paysannes sur lesquelles se fonde le patriotisme romain*" (9). Mouralis points out that this tendency manifested itself in two ways: some authors, such as Virgil, glorified the national history of Rome and the local landscape. Others glorified tribal societies such as the Germans

²⁴ The Oxford English Dictionary notes that the historical definition of the term refers to one who is not Greek, which became (after the fall of Greece) one who is not Roman, and then came to refer to one who is not a Christian. The first noted pejorative use of the term, at least in the English language, dates to the late 16th century.

and the Scythes, who exemplified this rustic ideal (9). Mouralis considers the glorification of rustic, tribal societies to be the first step toward the establishment of the myth of the *bon sauvage* (9), a theme which, largely dormant during the medieval period, would be reintroduced to European society during the Renaissance and the Age of Discovery. As Lestringant points out, “[c]ontre la jouissance différée qu’impose la loi du capitalisme marchand, le ‘pauvre sauvage’, avatar moderne du philosophe nu cher à l’Antiquité classique, prône la vie sédentaire, une parfaite autarcie économique et la culture patiente de la terre des ancêtres » (Lestringant, « Rire » 19). Like the Romans who came to glorify the rustic ideal represented by the marginal tribes, Europeans in the sixteenth century would come to neutralize cannibalism and eventually to view the American indigenous tribes as the ideal way for humans to live in a state of nature.

Fifteenth and sixteenth century explorers were highly influenced by stories from Greek and Roman Antiquity, but they were equally influenced by religion. After all, as Lestringant notes, if Thevet, Léry, Montaigne and even Vespucci were rooted firmly in the Early Modern worldview, Columbus was still working within a medieval worldview, highly influenced by Christianity. The figure of the “wild man,” associated with the most bestial aspects of nature, is a common one in the Bible. In the Old Testament, the Ancient Israelites saw the Ishmaelites as an aggressive and fierce tribe, which stood in contrast to the peaceful order of society that the patriarchs represented (Bakhos 15). Ishmael, the first born son of Abraham, was denied his birthright and destined to be a “wild man; his hand will be against every man, and every man’s hand against him; and he shall dwell in the presence of all his brethren.” (Genesis 16:12). Bakhos maintains that this verse is open to interpretation, and citing several anterior studies on the subject, comes to the conclusion that for some, the “free-roaming Bedouin existence” (16) implied by the verse “is uncouth and unconventional, whereas for others, an unshackled lifestyle

unencumbered by social convention and unrestricted by geography is desirable. The characterization of Ishmael is neither inherently negative nor pejorative, but presents the antithesis of the ‘civilized’ sedentary Israelites” (16). The conflict between the ordered and civilized Israelites and various wild tribes forms a sort of leitmotif in the Old Testament, with the other tribes always representing not only wildness but also moral depravity. This attitude toward other civilizations greatly influenced Columbus and his contemporaries. As Lestringant points out in *Le Cannibale: grandeur et décadence*, 16th century European philosophers and ethnographers had two ways of approaching the Cannibals of the New World: either they considered them to be savage monsters similar to the Cyclops or the cynocephali²⁵ (45), or they viewed them as innocent and Edenic; humans as they would have been before their expulsion from the Garden of Eden (101). The former attitude is characteristic of the end of the 15th century and the early 16th century, when contact was initially made with the Caribs and the Arawaks, while the latter is the result of fifty years of contact with various tribes in the Caribbean and coastal South America.²⁶

The term cannibal was first introduced to Europeans after Columbus’ return from his first voyage to the Antilles. In its earliest use, “cannibal” referred uniquely to the Carib tribe. Lestringant notes that “cannibal” derives from the Arawak term “caniba”, which is in turn derived from “cariba,” which the Caribs used to refer to themselves, and which means “hardy.” The Arawak tribe used it pejoratively to refer to acts of extreme barbary, since the Caribe regularly consumed their Arawak prisoners (*Cannibales* 43). He also notes that Columbus, who

²⁵ “Cynocephalus” derives from the Greek *cyno* (canine) and Latin *cephalicus*, meaning head, and refers to a fabled race of men with the body of a human and the head of a dog. Cynocephali are found in many ancient mythologies, most notably as Anubis in Egyptian mythology. They are also found in Greek texts, and were thought to be found in India (OED).

²⁶ For an excellent detailed study on the evolution of European attitudes toward the indigenous populations of this region, see Lestringant, *Le Cannibale*, particularly Part One.

introduced the word to Europe, could not produce hard evidence of cannibalism in the Caribbean until 1495, during his second voyage to the region (*Cannibales* 47). The Arawak stories, however, were sufficient evidence for Columbus to report of their existence in his log books. This image of the ferocious cannibal, which is partially drawn from Columbus's associations of anthropophagy with ancient myth, took on a life of its own once he returned to Europe. On his second voyage to the Antilles, Columbus and his crew come across the remains of a cannibal feast, apparently abandoned at the height of the celebration. They were surprised to find a severed human head hanging from a beam, since they fully expected to find humans with the heads of dogs. The horror of this feast served to counteract any humanity restored to the tribes on discovering that they were not hybrid humans, but full humans (*Cannibales* 47, 48). This macabre image profoundly shaped early sixteenth-century conceptions of Caribbean and American Indians, and the association with the cynocephalis endured: "Le cynocephali, pour Colomb et ses contemporains, apparaissaient comme l'ancêtre légendaire du Cannibale récemment découvert, mythe repondant à l'ancien" (Lestringant, *Cannibales* 54). This association with ancient myth continues throughout the sixteenth century, eventually coming to have more positive associations than negative.

The establishment of the French colony in Brazil allowed for French ethnographers to provide detailed studies of the practices of American native populations, most notably of the Tupinamba in Brazil. In 1557, after having spent just ten weeks in the French colony (situated in what is now Rio di Janeiro), André Thevet published *Les Singularitez de la France Antarctictique*. Thevet's study served to geographically contain the cannibal, as well as to oppose two different representations of the Brazilians: "cannibals" were ferocious, barbaric, and located along the equator. According to Thevet, cannibals were characterized by the act of eating

human flesh for nourishment (Lestringant, *Cannibale* 90), and Léry further stipulates that Cannibals eat their human meat raw (Léry Chapter V). For Thevet, this term primarily referred to any tribes that were enemies of the Tupinamba, who had allied themselves with the French. In contrast, Thevet referred to the Tupinamba as “anthropophages,” which, by avoiding the barbaric connotations implicit in the term cannibal, served to neutralize an otherwise reprehensible practice.

Lestringant points out that Thevet’s interpretation of anthropophagy represents a unique viewpoint. In contrast to the accepted belief that cannibalism was either practiced as an act of barbarism or as an act of vengeance, thus rendering the practice more comprehensible, and even excusable from the European standpoint (Lestringant, *Cannibale* 33), Thevet proposes that in addition to an act of vengeance, anthropophagy is an act of reparation. Once captured, the enemy prisoner is expected to replace a deceased member of the tribe: “Il tient exactement la place du mort . . . Sa présence active, qui se déploie dans la pêche, la chasse, le défrichage de la forêt et le jardinage, les fêtes auxquelles il s’associe de bon cœur, l’amour qu’il porte à sa compagne, dont il lui arrive d’avoir des enfants, compense la perte auparavant subie par le groupe » (Lestringant, *Cannibales* 115). Thevet’s hypothesis²⁷ allows for the association between cannibals and Christians that came to symbolize, especially for Léry, the essential conflict between Catholics and Protestants (Lestringant, *Cannibales* 116).

Histoire d’un voyage faict en la terre du Brésil (henceforth *Histoire d’un voyage*), Jean de Léry’s account of his year in Brazil as part of the group of protestant reinforcements sent to Antarctic France, represents a pivotal point in the evolution of image of the image of the Cannibal. Although both Thevet and Léry adopt a fairly indulgent, almost positive attitude

²⁷ Lestringant points out that this is partially Thevet’s hypothesis, and is partially Lestringant’s own interpretation: thanks to what he refers to as Thevet’s disorderly method, Thevet’s own works only partially articulate this idea (116).

toward the Tupinamba (Lestringant, *Cannibales* 124), Léry's account of the Tupinamba differs from Thevet's in one important aspect. Léry dwells less on the minutiae of cannibalism and more on the symbolic interpretation of the act. Lestringant proposes that this has everything to do with the distance of each author from his time in Brazil: Thevet published *Les Singularitez* barely two years after returning from Brazil and devotes a disproportionate amount of his work to the particular practices of anthropophagy (122). Léry, on the other hand, published in 1578, nearly twenty years after his return, and had published other works in the meantime. The result is a more linear narrative that attempts to classify and clarify certain practices, with the result that the Cannibal becomes a universal symbol that allowed Léry's readers to interpret recent historic events such as atrocities committed during the religious wars (Lestringant, *Cannibales* 125).

Lestringant has shown that, despite Léry's certitude that the Toupinamba are spiritually condemned, the overriding impression that we have of the tribe from Léry's account is that "[l]e Cannibale aime rire" (15). As Lestringant notes,

Des Indiens du Brésil, coutumiers de s'égayer, boire et danser en leurs villages, Léry affirme à plusieurs reprises que c'est un 'peuple fuyant mélancolie', comme si toute l'amertume du monde était renfermée dans la vieille Europe du déclin du XVI^e siècle, bientôt ravagée par les guerres dites de religion, et comme s'il suffisait de franchir l'océan pour échapper à ce glissement général vers le gouffre, dont la conscience aiguë hante les contemporains de Montaigne et d'Agrippa d'Aubigné. ("Rire" 15)

Even the attitude of the Tupinamba establishes their status as something other, and Rousseau takes up this image in his *Discours sur l'inégalité*, solidifying in European tradition the image of a laughing, innocent human freed from the constraints of society. In contrast to the image of the

violent, monstrous cannibal popularized by Columbus and early explorers of the Caribbean, this description creates the image of humans as they were before their expulsion from the Garden of Eden. If one ignored the fact that the Brazilian Indians consumed their enemies, a fact that Thevet and Léry worked to minimize, the resulting image was one of a Golden Age where humans and nature lived in happiness and harmony. This image is essential to Colombe's initial understanding of the Tupi, since Villegagnon tells her that "Tu n'as rien à redouter [chez les Indiens]; ils ne mangent pas les Français. Ce sont des simples. Ils sont doux et beaux comme des dieux antiques. Toute l'humanité de nos pères est là : ce sont des bergers d'Homère, à quelques excès près » (202).

The first edition of Montaigne's *Essais*, which contained "Des Cannibales" (essay XXXI), was published in 1580, twenty-three years after the publication of *Les singularitez de la France Antarctique, autrement nommée Amérique* (1557) by André Thevet, and two years after the publication of Jean de Léry's *Histoire d'un voyage* (1578). Clearly, as Marc Fumaroli points out, "Des Cannibales" is meant neither as an anthropological study nor as an ethnographical work (21). Michel de Certeau has shown that the text calls into question its three major references: public opinion regarding the cannibals, which is lacking reason; scholarly tradition that draws from Antiquity, which is too far removed from the present to be relevant; and modern explorers and cosmographers, who are guilty of adding to their accounts, rendering them less reliable (191). Montaigne's essay is revolutionary in that it claims its source to be "un homme simple et grossier, qui est une condition propre à rendre véritable témoignage" (303), adding that in addition to this man's testimony, he was able to introduce Montaigne to "plusieurs matelots et marchands qu'il avait connus en ce voyage" (303). Although clearly drawing from all three of these sources, particularly Thevet and Léry, Certeau maintains that Montaigne suppresses these

sources in order to distance himself from the competition between an Apollonian representation of the Brazilian Indians and a diabolic representation of them (194). Thanks to his “simple” source, Montaigne can claim to present the most accurate portrait of the Brazilian Indians, which therefore allows him to criticize European society from the point of view of his source. Fumaroli builds on this, pointing out that written accounts of the New World typically served one or more of three purposes: to argue in favor of progress and development, to denounce the inhumanity of Spanish, and as a pretext to highlight the vast difference between the superior morals of European Christians and the depravity of the savage barbarians (22). As Fumaroli indicates, Montaigne uses “Des Cannibales” to refute the first and third of these points.

In *Rouge Brésil*, Rufin presents an almost deliberate misreading of Montaigne’s “Des Cannibales.” If we accept Fumaroli’s above statement, that the primary goal of New World accounts, including Montaigne’s essay, was to argue in favor of progress and development, to denounce the inhumanity of Spanish, and as a pretext to highlight the vast difference between the superior morals of European Christians and the depravity of the savage barbarians, then Rufin deliberately shifts all three of these positions in order to call into question the established literary and historical canon. Instead arguing in favor of progress and development, he demonstrates the inherent destructive qualities of progress when it is carried out irresponsibly. In lieu of denouncing the inhumanity of the Spanish (chosen by Early Modern authors because the Spanish were the principal enemy of the French), Rufin demonstrates the extreme and despotic harshness of the French leadership in Antarctic France. Finally, Rufin uses this episode in history to highlight the vast difference between morals of the Europeans and the Tupinamba. In this case, neither could be called totally superior to the other, although it does seem that Rufin considers cannibalism as the lesser of two evils. Colombe serves as the pivotal center around which these

criticisms take place. Roland Racevskis has argued that “in the liminal, intercultural space that Colombe inhabits creatively and courageously, traditional gender roles and other binary oppositions such as colonizer/colonized and Westerner/native come sharply under question” (74, 75). She herself serves as the antithesis to Christopher Columbus (in French, Christophe Colomb). As a result of her *Bildung* among the Tupi and with Pay Lo, Colombe is placed outside of both societies, perfectly positioned to introduce the Europeans (here, the colonists in Antarctic France), and by extension the reader, to what seems to be a more realistic representation of the Tupinamba.

From the beginning of the novel, Colombe is uniquely situated within the narrative. The only female among six hundred men, she is necessarily set apart from the rest of the colonists, if only because she herself is aware of her marginalized position. This allows Rufin to reproduce, albeit in slightly different terms, Columbus’ initial voyage to the Americas. Like Columbus, who interpreted his findings in the Caribbean through the lens of medieval myth and superstition, Colombe uses her knowledge of medieval romance to mediate her and Just’s banishment to Brazil. Their uncle, who until his death had been their guardian, “était resté au Moyen Âge : il avait mené son domaine comme aux temps féodaux, c’est-à-dire à la ruine,” and it is from their uncle that they inherit a “sens excessif de l’honneur en un temps où le négoce avait pris la relève de la chevalerie” (48). Colombe refers to Just as “Bel Hardi,” a name that evokes courtly romance, and to his horse as Gringalet, which is the name of Sir Gawain’s horse (24). True to Arthurian tradition, when Colombe tries to ride Gringalet, the horse throws her, almost killing her.²⁸ Although this is a characteristic often attributed to Gringalet, who will only submit to his master’s mount, it suggests a point of rupture for Just and Colombe. Not coincidentally, this is

²⁸ For more on the characteristics of Le Gringalet, and especially on his role in Arthurian romance, see Hogenbirk, Marjolein. “Gringalet as an Epic Character.”

the moment when their guardian announces that they will be leaving for Brazil, and at which Colombe stops referring to Just as Bel Hardi: “Elle n’avait pas osé l’appeler Bel Hardi tant ce nom de bravade et d’ailleurs tous les affiquets de la chevalerie perdaient leur force et jusqu’à leur vie en face [des galères]” (Rufin 61). Not only does this signify a physical rupture from Old World Europe, but a figurative rupture from European culture. Once in Brazil, Just and Colombe are increasingly incredulous of the medieval stories that they had used to mediate the world around them: “Colombe et Just, quant à eux, ne savaient quoi penser. L’un pour l’autre, ils évoquaient à voix haute les fabuleuses découvertes du temps du roi Arthur, les îles peuplées de chevaliers sans visage. Mais ils avaient du mal à y croire” (158). Like Columbus, whose discovery helped to launch Europe into the Renaissance, Just and Colombe are forced to leave behind their medieval world view.

If Colombe is similar to Columbus in that they both see the world through a medieval lens, then she is the inversion of Columbus in regard to the cannibals of the New World. Instead of creating the myth of the cannibal, Colombe serves to dispel it. The initial contact between herself and the cannibals is one laden with preconceived notions:

Les Indiens le laissèrent approcher sans broncher. Ils étaient tous à peu près semblables, à première vue : de taille moyenne, conformés comme les humains de par deçà, sans compter plus de bras, de jambes ni de têtes. C’était d’ailleurs cette normalité qui rendait gênante leur complète nudité. Rien dans leur apparence ne permettait de les comparer aux bêtes, que l’on est accoutumé à voir paraître au naturel de leurs poils. Seule la pensée de l’Antiquité pouvait rendre cette licence compréhensible et même admirable. La comparaison s’imposait d’autant plus que les sauvages, loin

de montrer de la crainte ou de la gêne, prenaient des poses altières et nobles, rivalisant de mâle assurance avec Villegagnon. (185)

This description contains elements of the positions from which Montaigne attempts to distance himself. The influence of popular opinion is evident in the supposed grotesque physical appearance of the Brazilians. The nudity compensates for this lack of grotesqueness, and is neutralized by references to Antiquity and the ideal nude philosopher. This image is quickly dispelled by the introduction of Le Freux, a French translator. Le Freux is dressed in European fashion, with “l’aspect d’un gentilhomme” (Rufin 195), but his clothing is made entirely of animal skin, feathers, and wood. Although Le Freux’s subsequent actions demonstrate that his gentlemanly qualities are limited to his appearance, Rufin highlights the contrast between Villegagnon and the translator, stating that “Villegagnon dans sa ban avait débarqué en chemise, et sale de surcroît” (191). Although not a participant in this scene, Colombe is present, and consequently demonstrates the desire to explore the coast more thoroughly (198).

Colombe’s rejection of European culture is not a sudden decision, but rather a process, or to use Racevski’s phrase, “a progressive renunciation” (75). Sent to a Tupi village by Villegagnon to learn the language, she is instantly welcomed by the women of the tribe. This marks the end of Colombe’s childhood and the beginning of her *Bildung*. Colombe is first integrated into the community of women in the tribe: “Carresant ses cheveux, saisissant ses mains, elle l’entraînèrent gaiement à l’écart” (216). This physical separation that now exists between Colombe and the soldiers, who are “stupéfaits” (216) by this act, reinforces both the hidden separation that has always existed between themselves and Colombe, and the separation that now exists between herself and Just. Before allowing her to objectively consider the colonial enterprise, Rufin must first allow her to objectively consider her own personal situation. The

distance, both physical and mental, imposed by her time with the Tupinamba allows for this observation:

En ce moment délicieux où la révélation de son sexe lui faisait rejeter toute illusion et tout mensonge, elle considérait sans fard la cruauté de sa vie : l'errance, l'abandon et maintenant l'exil. L'antidote à ces poisons, le rempart de sa vie, Just qu'elle adorait, n'était même plus désormais un refuge d'amour ; lorsqu'elle paraîtrait devant lui en femme, elle serait privée à jamais du naturel de leur tendresse d'enfants, qu'une gêne subtile avait déjà troublée ces derniers temps. (210)

Colombe embraces life with the Tupi, but is also nostalgic for her other life : « Ce long détour indien – elle ne se souvenait même plus depuis combien de jours elle était là --, s'il l'avait enrichie, lui donnait maintenant la nostalgie de l'autre vie, celle de la rive opposée de l'Atlantique, de l'amiral, des bateaux, de Quintin, des parures de l'Europe, de l'ordre de sa pensée, de la liberté d'une langue clairement parlée, et surtout de Just » (241). The association between Europe and order demonstrates that Colombe still adheres to the platonic hierarchies that associate the two.

Once she has returned to the colony, Colombe finds that she is unable to readjust, despite her nostalgia, which is consequently transferred to her time with the Tupi (300). Her reaction is clearly a commentary against unhindered progress and development. The toll of such ideology is seen on both the colonists and the island: the colonists are "[a]maigris, épuisés, gagnés pour beaucoup par des fièvres" (317), and the island is "méconnaissable . . . Un massacre de troncs remplaçait les ramures de palmes et tous les cèdres avaient expiré. Tondus aussi les bouquets de cannes et même les roseaux. Le relief régulier de l'île était arasé de terrasses et de murs en

construction” (224). The entire coast of Brazil is thus suffering from the arrival of the French, and the ramifications of colonialism, evident from the disease-ridden colonists and the rapidly dying Tupi (311), are equally evident on the landscape.

This begins a period during which Colombe is able to move freely back and forth between the two communities (333), and with each successive absence from either, she finds herself more and more alienated from them both. Unable to reintegrate into the population of Antarctic France, she is equally unable to assimilate into Tupi society, and finds it difficult to objectively consider their culture. Although she has heard rumors of cannibalism, and has even met a prisoner, she is unable to reconcile the violence that she associates with this practice with the peaceful, happy society that she has encountered: “Pour étrange que cela fût, elle n’avait envisagé sa vie indienne que comme un abandon à la douceur et au naturel. Le sinistre nom du cannibale était lié pour elle à la haine et à l’ignorance qui caractérisaient Villegagnon dès qu’il parlait des indigènes. Elle avait fini par exclure jusqu’à l’existence de ces pratiques » (472). Colombe’s assessment of the Tupi encompasses both stereotypes that surrounded the image of the cannibal in Early Modern Europe. She is closer to understanding the nuances of the culture than many of her contemporaries. Despite her ability to inhabit what Racevskis calls an “intermediary zone of encounter” (74) where the two opposing cultures meet, she is unable to inhabit an intermediary zone within Tupi society that would allow her to regard cannibalism objectively.

Rufin uses the character Pay-Lo, a French trader who has lived in Brazil for more than fifty years, to convey this objective view of the Tupi to both Colombe and the reader. In order to meet Pay-Lo, Colombe and her guides must climb to the top of the mountains lining the Brazilian coast. From this mountain-top perch, Pay-Lo can, quite literally, see all that is

happening, and his clear understanding of the situation correlates to his distance from the worldly concern for basic survival that occupy both the colonists and the Tupi. His home, with its mixture of objects from nature and from Europe, represents a space that resists definition or limitation, and thus avoids categorization as either strictly European or strictly Tupi:

Aux touffeurs de la baie succédait la fraîcheur venue du grand large et piquée des aigreurs d'altitude. Le domaine de Pay-Lo n'était marqué d'aucune limite. On avait conscience d'y entrer parce que aux essences sauvages de bois Brésil et de pin se mêlaient de plus en plus densément des arbres utiles et qu'on pouvait presque qualifier de domestiques. . . . Nul ne savait s'ils avaient jamais été plantés ou si, sentant peut-être la présence de Pay-Lo, ils s'étaient avancés vers lui tels des rois mages chargés de présents. (334, 335)

By placing Pay-Lo above the conflict between the various European factions that have claimed the coast, as well as from the coastal Brazilian tribes, Rufin has effectively removed him from society, creating a space and a character that are both neutral to all conflict. As a result, he is able to explain to Colombe that cannibalism is neither good nor evil, nor is it a rumor to be believed or discredited; it is simply a fact (474). Espousing a view similar to that of Montaigne, he points out that cannibalism might revolt Colombe, but that it is natural to want to destroy one's enemy. While Europeans have succeeded in suppressing all species and cultures that are different to their own, keeping only that which is useful to them, the Tupi incorporate their enemies, having what Pay-Lo refers to as "l'admirable qualité de se nourrir de ce qui leur est opposé" (475-76). Pay-Lo exhibits this same quality, but in a metaphorical sense. Like the Tupi, who believe that

consuming their enemy symbolizes the incorporation of his or her power (473), Pay-Lo has incorporated elements of both cultures.

Pay-Lo's narrative function is also similar to that of the hermit in medieval literature. Paul Bretel qualifies hermits as men or women who have consciously chosen to consecrate their life to prayer, which must take place "dans la pauvreté, l'austérité, l'isolement, et en dehors de toute communauté" (75). Bretel points out that typically, the more devout the hermit, the farther he will remove himself from society (401). The hermitage is typically established in a deserted area, which to medieval Europe meant either remote mountains or in the forest (403). Bretel notes that mountainous hermitages are numerous in medieval literature, and that the height of the hermitage typically corresponds with the quality of the hermit, with the most pure being found at great heights (403). These hermits are also closer to the sky, and therefore show more affinity to spiritual matters, and are only remotely attached to earthly, and therefore physical, concerns. The forested setting of many hermitages creates similar connotations. According to Bretel,

L'univers sylvestre de l'ermitage médiéval favorise cependant la méditation de l'ermite par sa richesse d'évocation. Aux connotations référentielles immédiates, comme celles qui sont attachées à la verticalité de l'arbre, s'ajoutent, pour l'ermite cultivé, toute la foisonnante symbolique de l'arbre véhiculée par les textes sacrés et par les écrits des Pères, que sans cesse lui rappelle le spectacle du monde de la forêt. (405)

Pay-Lo's house combines both the mountainous and sylvan qualities of the typical medieval hermitage: not only is he sufficiently elevated that Colombe and her guides must endlessly climb upwards, making many detours because of the rocky terrain (313), but his house is literally inside a ring of gigantic, living trees and openings onto "l'espace infini des crêtes de montagnes

[qui] rappelait que la baie n'était qu'une légère entaille dans un immense continent" (336).

Unlike the traditional hermit, however, Pay-Lo, although wise, is not a religious figure. The description of the view from his mountain-top perch focuses on the earth: the mountains, the hills, the bay, the physical beauty of the landscape. Significantly, the trees stretch upward but the view of the sky (at least from the interior of the house), is limited by the abundance of branches that form the ceiling. Pay-Lo's wisdom is characterized by a profound understanding of the physical world that surrounds him, and although he professes to believe that love is divinely inspired, he exhibits contempt for typical religious practices (468).

Furthermore, Pay-Lo fulfills the essential function of the hermit : « La prédication morale de l'ermite a ainsi pour fonction de déclencher chez le chevalier une prise de conscience qui rendra son âme perméable à son enseignement (pratique des vertus) et à ses conseils » (Bretel 599). For Colombe, this pivotal moment arrives when she finally questions Pay-Lo about the Tupi's rumored cannibalism. His "prédication morale," that despite their shared distaste for cannibalism they must seek to understand its motivation (475, 76), provokes in Colombe this same "prise de conscience" of which Bretel writes. The result is that she is finally receptive to his final message. On his deathbed, he shares with her his belief that the Tupi, despite their practice of consuming their enemies, have a world view that is creative instead of destructive:

Tout est sacré, pour [les Indiens], les fleurs, les rochers, les eaux qui courent dans la montagne. Une infinité d'esprits habitent et protègent les objets, les paysages et les êtres. On ne peut rien toucher qui ne délivre ces forces et limite le mal qu'on peut faire au monde. . . . Mais les autres En dépouillant la nature du sacré, ils l'ont laissée sans protection, soumise à la volonté meurtrière des hommes. Il suffit de voir ce qu'ils ont fait de

leur île. Plus rien de vivant n'y pousse et c'est eux-mêmes, maintenant,
qu'ils déchirent. S'ils sont un jour maîtres de toute cette terre, ils en feront
un champ de mort. (510-11)

The result is a philosophy that Rufin refers to as “leur philosophie anthropophage” (551): the idea that everything in this world devours and is devoured. This philosophy serves to neutralize the practice of cannibalism to the point that Colombe is finally able to understand that she must maintain her independence from both European and Tupi culture if she is to fully understand both (550).

Like Pay-Lo, who states that far from having discovered Brazil, it was Brazil who discovered him (340), Colombe experiences Brazil as a country of discovery. She arrives in the country disguised as a boy, with no real conception of her own identity or of the identity of the people who already inhabit the land. She is conscious of the rumors that have served to create a mythic society, either of monsters or simple, almost Edenic humans. Her time spent with the Tupi, as well as with Pay-Lo, allows her to objectively consider both the attitude of her own culture towards the Tupi as well as the Tupi culture itself. The result is a deeper understanding of the attitudes that inform each culture. The French colonists seek to destroy their enemies, including the world around them, keeping only that which is useful (476). The Tupi also wage war on their enemies, but in a way which is more in keeping with the natural world that surrounds them: having seen that in the forest everything is born, dies, and is reborn again, incorporating one's enemy reflects the interdependence that is characteristic of ecosystems. Pay-Lo and Colombe, who are able to incorporate both European and Brazilian worldviews (both notably reject cannibalism at the same time that they are able to understand its motivation), allow Rufin to analyze the various representations of the cannibal. These opposing representations

provide the basis for the myth of the Noble Savage that Rousseau popularized in the eighteenth century, and which still informs contemporary attitudes toward indigenous cultures. This deconstruction paves the way for Rufin's later work, notably *Le Parfum d'Adam*, in which he examines the glorification of the Ecological Indian as a common trope in environmentalist rhetoric.

CHAPTER 3

LE PARFUM D'ADAM

Part I: Establishing an Esthetic of Nature. Relatively early into *Le parfum d'Adam*, Rufin offers the following description of Atlanta, Georgia:

[Paul] aimait les villes, surtout les villes d'Amérique où il avait vécu. Il s'était toujours senti en elles comme dans une véritable jungle mais humaine. Il aimait leur géographie compliquée, leurs forêts de maisons, les grandes plaines de leurs places, les vallées que creuse le flot des voitures entre les berges des immeubles. Avec son vélo, il traçait dans ces savanes des sentiers secrets qui n'étaient qu'à lui. (25).

This description sets the tone for the novel: far from the more traditional wilderness that permeated *Rouge Brésil*, the setting of *Le parfum d'Adam* is primarily urban, with the exception of several scenes set in the high desert of the Colorado Plateau. This description is typical of Rufin's tendency to blur the supposed distinction between nature and culture, challenging readers to examine their own preconceptions of the meaning attached to either "rural" or "urban." Nature would be entirely absent from the above description, except that the author insists on the natural qualities of the urban landscape: the "jungle," the "forêts de maisons," "les grandes plaines," "les vallées," "les berges" and the "savanes." The passage is also characteristic of Rufin's highly ironic style, and this entirely modern vision of nature naturalizes the city by associating it with natural objects, but the inverse is true of the forests, planes, valleys, banks and savannahs, which are urbanized by their association with the entirely man-made city. The juxtaposition of the cultural and the natural lets the reader imagine an almost pastoral

representation of Atlanta that evokes a wild yet tranquil landscape; it is almost as if, in the absence of true wilderness, there is still a need for some contact with a more primeval landscape. Such a positive description of the city stands in stark opposition to the very negative portrayal of civilization in *Rouge Brésil*, but it also begs the question common to contemporary writers: in such a cosmopolitan and technological society, where the very existence of nature is called in to question, how does an author represent a modern vision of nature?

Whereas *Rouge Brésil* examines the historical separation between nature and culture and works to expose the nostalgic misconception that nature and culture were once separate and should be again, *Le parfum d'Adam* alerts the reader from the beginning that not only are the two inseparable, but that the very idea of nature needs to be reexamined and reconstructed. As the author notes in the postface to the novel, the character Juliette's *Bildung* is clearly meant to introduce the average French reader to the philosophical aspects of the American deep ecology movement, as well as to alert them to the dangers of environmental extremism (759), but it serves a more complex function as well. The novel dramatizes the conflict between what Catherine Larrère refers to as "défenseurs de l'humanité" and "protecteurs de la nature" (15). According to Larrère, Western society has insisted on this conflict precisely because the modern conception of nature has not been fully explored (15-16). Rufin, however, uses this conflict as the means to establish a more contemporary vision of nature that leaves behind outdated, stereotypical visions of nature as something that exists entirely separate from culture.

Using Larrère's articulation of this conflict as a point of departure, it becomes evident that *Le parfum d'Adam* makes two important contributions to the emerging field of French ecocritical literature. First, the novel contributes to the establishment of a French ecocriticism as proposed by Stéphanie Posthumus, which offers viable alternatives to the wilderness esthetic that

dominates many canonical American texts, which too often tend to privilege what Lawrence Buell refers to as the “green world myth” (55) to the detriment of human beings. However, a uniquely French body of ecological literature must involve the intermingling of the urban and the rural if it is to be representative of the historical relationship between Old World Europeans and the natural world. Second, the examination of Juliette as the central character allows for the discussion of the political and social relevance of the green world myth, which rests on the premise that nature and culture are distinct entities, easily separated. This necessarily demands an examination of the role that deep ecology plays in her formation, as well as the relationship between what Barry Lopez refers to as the interior and exterior landscapes, and the formative effect that the representation of the exterior landscape has on the interior landscape (64-65).

The passage cited at the beginning of this chapter is an example of a contemporary representation of nature, and is especially relevant as we find ourselves living in what many have referred to as a post-natural society. Like the majority of Rufin’s work, the descriptions in *Le parfum d’Adam* are firmly anchored in reality. It is often a metaphorical reality (anyone who has been to Atlanta knows that the landscape there bears little resemblance to either the jungle or the savannah), but nevertheless can be grounded as what Buell refers to as “a place of literal reference” (85). For decades literary studies have felt the impact of theoretical approaches to literature that were increasingly divorced from reality, and which had the effect of severing the relationship between a word and that which it represented; the physical world is only of secondary import.²⁹ As a result, literature studies became more and more abstractly theoretical. At the same time, human beings have become increasingly divorced from the natural world. I

²⁹ Cheryll Glotfelty states in the introduction to *The Ecocriticism Reader* (1996) that “[i]f your knowledge of the outside world were limited to what you could infer from major publications of the literary profession, you would quickly discern that race, class, and gender were hot topics of the late twentieth century, but . . . you might never know that there was an earth at all” (xvi).

have already discussed the work of Bill McKibben, who proposes that nature (and McKibben refers only to that which is unaltered by human beings) no longer exists, and that human beings are being forced to reexamine the very concept of the term. Carolyn Merchant makes a similar argument in *The Death of Nature*, although she situates this paradigmatic shift during the scientific revolution instead of during the twentieth century, as is the case in McKibben's work. Michel Serres, on the other hand, simply states that the Neolithic age ended sometime in the 1960s or 1970s, and that contemporary human beings have been brutally and thoroughly denatured (Serres, *Temps des crises* 12-14). The validity of such statements is of course up for debate, and it can easily be argued that nature isn't really dead, since the definitions of nature are practically endless. It is, however, indisputable that more than half of the world's 7 billion people live in cities,³⁰ and Serres makes the point that "un pourcentage élevé parmi les générations qui me [Serres] suivent n'a jamais vu poussin ni paille, joug ni soc" (*Temps des crises* 13-14). Although cities may be more environmentally friendly, life-long residents of the metropolis must make a concerted effort in order to come in to contact with nature beyond the scope of city parks. The fact that many inner city students don't actually know what a chicken even looks like outside of its grocery store packaging,³¹ for example, begs the question: is the traditional pastoral representation of nature as a (relatively) uninhabited place that serves as a source of spiritual renewal relevant to the twenty-first century reader?

³⁰ Serres references the following figures, which are confirmed by INSEE: "[l]a proportion d'humains vivant dans des villes passe de 3% en 1800 à 14% en 1900 et à plus de la moitié en 2000. Les démographes prévoient qu'en 2030, cette proportion avoisinera les 70 à 75%" (Serres 13). Since the publication of Serres's work in 2009, INSEE has revised the last figure, projecting that by 2030 approximately 80% of the world's population will be urban.

³¹ During a personal conversation with the author, a charter school English teacher in center-city Philadelphia described how she had arranged for her secondary students to visit a petting zoo when they informed her, in all seriousness, that they didn't realize that a chicken was a real animal, but rather believed that the chicken breast that they ate for supper was artificially created. The irony, of course, is that the chicken breast might as well be artificially created, since the factory-raised chicken's habitat and lifestyle can hardly be called natural.

Like natural systems, the idea of nature is in a constant state of flux. From the point of view of physical science, the natural world is an open system that is in a constant state of flux thanks to various inputs from surrounding systems. The idea of nature is also in a (relatively) constant state of flux: as I discussed at length in my introduction, western European notions of nature have changed often over the course of human history. Stéphanie Posthumus notes that Michel Serres explores at length the implications of “naître” as the linguistic root of “nature” : “‘Qu’est-ce que la nature, sinon l’ensemble des objets, ces formes à l’état naissant et qui transforment cette forme ?’ ([*Lucrèce*] 116)” (Serres qtd. in Posthumus 90). This brings to mind Herclitus’s enigmatic aphorism *phusis kruptesthai philei*³² (La Nature aime à se cacher), as well as Pierre Hadot’s assertion that of the possible translations, “ce qui fait naître tend à faire mourir” and “ce qui est né veut mourir” are probably what Hericlitus meant to say (Hadot 30). The concept of nature, then, much like nature itself, is subject to change, and is more a process of Becoming than a constant, immutable fact. It follows that the idea of nature, and therefore the representation of nature, will not be universal, but will rather differ historically and culturally. This is certainly the case of wilderness, which historically was of little value, but which, especially in the modern United States, is considered one of the remaining bastions against the threat of global climate change.

In her article “Vers une écocritique française: le contrat naturel de Michel Serres,” Posthumus works to define a French ecocriticism, stating that while ecocriticism has firmly established itself in Anglophone literature studies, the field is still virtually absent from French departments, both in France and in the U.S. and Canada (86). In attempting to define a uniquely French ecocriticism that is “provisoire” yet “exploratrice et originale” (86), Posthumus uses *Le*

³² Only fragments of Heraclitus’s writings have survived, thus leaving the explanation and interpretation of this aphorism up for debate.

Contrat naturel as a point of departure. She chooses this work “en fonction de son ouverture aux domaines scientifiques et politiques, de son statut philosophique et littéraire et de son influence sur les médias et le public en général » (86). It is Serres’s insistence on nature as « chose naissante » (90) that seems particularly attractive to Posthumus, and she states that this facet of Serres’s thought allows for “plein de possibilités car elle [la nature naissante] permet de poser la même question à des textes littéraires de toute époque : quelle nature naît dans tel ou tel texte littéraire ? » (90).

This is therefore the principal question concerning the representation of nature in *Le Parfum d’Adam*. In *Rouge Brésil* the natural world is depicted in a much more traditional manner. In *Le Parfum d’Adam*, however, nature is portrayed as a complex hybridization of the natural world and human beings; it is an entirely European vision that recognizes the role that human alteration of the environment has played for centuries. Through realistic representations of poor, urban ghettos, Rufin also questions the roles that cities have played in climate change debates. Whereas defenders of nature advocate for more wilderness space, other climate change scholars argue that cities have a smaller carbon footprint than their suburban counterparts (Ross 18). One can rightly argue that protecting wilderness space is very different from creating (sub)urban sprawl; the carbon footprint of American suburbs is enormous, while wilderness space has been shown to effectively absorb a portion of the carbon dioxide released into the atmosphere. However, Glaeser and Kahn have suggested that the imposition of land restrictions for environmental purposes has pushed suburban development towards less environmentally friendly areas, thus increasing the carbon outputs of these areas (405). It is not my intention to advocate for the destruction of wilderness areas in favor of cities, but merely to highlight the fact that cities are often vilified by deep ecologists, when in fact many scientists and cultural analysts

believe that cities offer viable solutions to the increasingly large carbon footprint of Western suburbia, especially in the United States.

It is therefore significant that Rufin's novel with the most overt environmental agenda is set in a primarily urban environment. Proponents for an urban approach to ecocriticism (or perhaps an ecocritical approach to urbanism) argue that ecocriticism has primarily been dominated by "nature writing, American pastoralism, and literary ecology" (Bennett and Teague 3). Bennett and Teague argue that excluding representations of urban spaces from ecocritical studies limits conceptualizations of nature and culture, and also ignores the placement of cities within ecosystems, often leading to the erroneous belief that cities somehow exist separate from the rest of the ecosphere (4). I would add to this argument that the literary focus on wilderness as somehow redemptive has increased the desire of the average American to live on his .5 acre wooded lot, thus increasing his or her carbon footprint. This urban exodus is driven by good intentions on the part of urbanites to have a greater contact with nature, but the effects have been detrimental to the earth's atmosphere. Despite this desire for a more rural, even wild, experience, as the statistics cited by Serres, and as Rufin's novel, demonstrate, cities provide the setting for most human activity. Furthermore, a representation of nature as that which allows the intermingling of the human and the non-human is a more faithful representation of what would be a uniquely French ecocriticism, where virgin forest is scarce and human alteration of the environment, as evidenced by the tradition of cultivation, reaches back thousands of years.

In this context, the phrase "human alteration" does not contain negative implications. Larrère cites the example of the Parc National des Cévennes, a heavily wooded national forest that is entirely human made. Thanks in part to centuries of cultivation, this region of France was desertified and then reforested in the 19th century by those who wished to restore the area to its

pre-agricultural forested state. However, in order to maintain the health of the forest, it has become necessary to “manage” it, or occasionally cull out undergrowth and cut down trees. Otherwise, it would become “impénétrable et hostile” (Larrère 176). This situation, where the defenders of nature advocate leaving the forest to its own devices and therefore untouched by human beings, exposes the fallacy inherent in the concept of “untouched wilderness”: those advocating for the rights of nature in the Parc National des Cévennes are in fact advocating for the rights of an entirely human-engineered version of nature. Because the Parc National des Cévennes is an attempt to restore the natural world to what it once was prior to human alteration, it serves as an excellent example of how inextricable humans are from the natural world, and how difficult it is to designate one landscape as more “natural” than another. Rufin seems to recognize this fallacy, and as I will discuss later in this chapter, is highly critical of those who blindly defend nature.

In *The Environmental Imagination*, Lawrence Buell argues that the tradition of new world pastoral, which began with the discovery of the Americas, replaced the highly idealized rural landscape of classical and medieval pastoral with the actual landscape of the New World. This contributed to the establishment of what Buell calls the “green world myth” (55), since as historical accounts make evidently clear, the American continent was far from an idyllic landscape. According to Buell, however, contemporary environmentalists work within the framework of new world pastoralism, since they hold the idealized American landscape to be a reality (55). He argues that

[i]n order to inhabit their environment responsibly, in order to even see it, they [environmentalists] have to perceive it as something other than just a green world, a dream, a concept. The green world myth is a start. It is the

best they can perhaps do at a certain stage. It marks the beginning of the possibility of a mature conception of a heterotopic alternative to the poisoned environments that we increasingly find ourselves inhabiting. But it can become productive only as people learn to use it in the earth's interest as well as in humanity's, and this new responsibility cannot be assumed until one begins to look past the mythical vision as well as through it. (55)

By dramatizing the conflict between the defenders of humanity and the protectors of nature that I referenced in the previous paragraph, Rufin also represents the various ways in which environmentalists react when they find themselves confronted with the green world myth. Ted Harrow is unable to negotiate the fallacies inherent in the green world myth and is pushed to extremism by his (albeit unconscious) adherence to this myth. From a narrative point of view, his character is relatively static, and his inability to perceive the green world as anything other than “a dream, a concept” – to use Buell's phrase – ultimately leads to his demise. Juliette, however, finds in the green world myth a point of departure. By the end of the novel, she finds herself capable of critically examining this mythical vision, and is poised to become a productive member of society by educating the children in the Brazilian favelas.

Juliette's *Bildung* takes place in several stages, each involving a different guide. The first stage, which includes her initial foray into activism (a portion of which exists only referentially, having taken place before the beginning of the narrative) is guided by her fellow activist Jonathan. The second stage is guided in part by Ted Harrow, a member of the New Predators (the eco-terrorist group behind the plot to eliminate the world's poor), in part by her interpretation of Aldo Leopold's *A Sand County Almanac*, and in part by the overwhelming

power exerted on her by the Colorado Plateau, which allows for the examination of Lopez's concept of exterior and interior landscape. The final stage allows for the synthesis of the various ideologies that she has encountered, and marks the point at which Juliette can entertain the possibility of creative alternatives to environmental extremism, as well as to environmental destruction.

From the beginning of the narrative, Juliette is established as the text's Other. In the opening scene of the novel, the author separates her from the rest of society, since she is the only one responsible for the mission in Wroclaw, a responsibility of which she had initially doubted herself capable, but during the course of which becomes "*sa mission à elle. Et elle voulait l'accomplir seule*" (16). This almost euphoric declaration of independence is contrasted with more somber expressions of her solitude, and is often reflected in the descriptions of her environment. The victim of administrative exile thanks to her government teaching assignment, she finds herself in "*cette campagne sinistre*" (65), and her house "*s'accordait à sa mélancolie*" (65). Furthermore, the house is described as being situated "*à mi-chemin à peu près du bourg et de la banlieue qui monte à sa rencontre, sur un replat déboisé depuis longtemps car on y a capté une source*" (65), and belonging entirely neither to the village nor to the surrounding countryside, rather marks the boundary between the two spaces. Strangely, the house's large balconies look out onto the wall of a cliff, instead of being oriented towards the valley as one might expect (65), and perhaps reflects Juliette's refusal to

If the scene in the Wroclaw lab separates Juliette from other human beings, it also separates the animals from the more natural members of their species. The rats are described as "*monstres . . . sans poils, d'un rose écœurant, d'autres badigeonnées de vert, d'orange, de violet. Plusieurs rats avaient un regard vitreux, comme si leurs yeux énormes avaient été décolorés et*

verniss” (13). These are truly denatured animals, and in fact Juliette questions whether or not such creatures actually belong back in their natural habitat (13), implying that such heavily altered animals are less natural than their unaltered counterparts. The result is that they don’t belong anywhere at all: they can’t be released back into the natural world, either because they are incapable of survival or because they’ve been contaminated by laboratory testing. Nor do they truly belong in a lab, where they are unable to act according to instinct. The animals represented in this scene of the novel have no intrinsic value other than their usefulness to science; they are nothing but a canvas for experimentation. There is, however, one marmoset that stands out, and on which the narrator insists. Unlike the other monkeys, who despite their captivity seem to be in fairly good condition (13), this last one has electrodes planted into his skull, which serve as the “instruments de sa torture” (14). According to Primate Info Net, the online resource for the National Primate Research Center, marmosets are the most commonly used primate in European and North American biomedical research facilities. The authorial choice to create a bond between Juliette and a marmoset serves to create a thematic link between the beginning and the end of the novel. The common marmoset³³ is indigenous to the Northeastern and central coastal region of Brazil. Although not native to Rio de Janeiro, they have been sighted there and seem well adapted to urban life (Primate Info Net). The abuse of this particular marmoset therefore serves as a metaphor for the exploitation of southern resources by the northern industrialized countries, and the “muet reproche que contenait son regard” (15) conveys the reproach of an entire region of exploited humans, animals and land that have been victim to northern economic domination. In addition to serving as a metaphorical representation of the victimized Brazilians, the marmoset also functions as a reflection of Juliette’s own solitary condition: “ce petit singe

³³ In the absence of further qualification by the author of the subspecies of marmoset, I will assume that he is referring to the common marmoset native to Northeastern coastal Brazil.

exprimait toute la solitude et toute la souffrance qu'elle reconnaissait depuis des années comme siennes" (14), and it is in fact this solitude that pushes her towards environmental activism.

Juliette's melancholy solitude is reflected in the description of her house and of the surrounding countryside, and it is fitting that her new-found euphoria is also mirrored in the sudden arrival of spring in the Jura:

Mais tout cela, la tristesse, le froid, les fantômes, c'était avant. Depuis une semaine, le printemps était revenu, avec le soleil et assez de chaleur pour pouvoir ouvrir les volets dans toutes les pièces. Depuis une semaine, les bois étaient pleins d'oiseaux et d'écureuils. Des biches approchaient de la maison à la tombée du soir et Juliette prenait des fous rires en essayant sans succès de les toucher. Depuis une semaine, surtout, il y avait en elle le souvenir de Wroclow. (66).

Juliette is represented as relatively tranquil in this passage. This calm, almost joyous interlude comes as a result of "ce mistral intérieur [qui] avait chassé toutes les mauvaises humeurs » (67). This of course is a reference to the strong, at times violent wind in the south of France, typically felt during the winter or the early spring. The author's frequent comparisons between Juliette and her exterior surroundings calls to mind Lopez's interior and exterior landscape. In his essay "Landscape and Narrative," Lopez examines the idea that the world of narrative is composed of these two landscapes. The exterior landscape is the physical world that surrounds us. He notes, however, that when we really know an exterior landscape – when we are firmly anchored in a place – we recognize more than just isolated physical objects. Instead, we note relationships among elements of the landscape. The difference, according to Lopez, is characterized by the difference between cataloguing (simply being able to identify physical objects) and discourse

about a landscape, be it in the form of narrative fiction, creative non-fiction, poetry, or storytelling. Similarly, the interior landscape, which is our mind – our *ego* – is also characterized by relationships, but in this case by relationships between the interior and exterior landscapes. That is to say, our personalities are shaped by the places in which we live. Lopez asserts that there is and should be a profound relationship between the contours of our minds and the contours of the land; as human beings, we are affected, whether we recognize it or not, by place. The role of narrative, in Lopez’s opinion, is to reconcile these two landscapes (64-65) which have been at odds in western philosophy for hundreds, if not thousands, of years. This of course reflects the influence of romanticism on contemporary thought, since it was common for romantic poets to emphasize the relationship between the internal emotional landscape and the external physical landscape. By placing Juliette in settings that reflect her mental and emotional state, the author negotiates the distance between the interior and the exterior. This is a process throughout the novel, and in these first scenes portraying Juliette the landscape serves more as a reflection of than an influence on her interior state.

Nevertheless, there is a correlation, and it is clear that Juliette’s bi-polar disorder (738) is exacerbated by her surroundings. The periods when she is manically euphoric frequently take place in an urban setting: the protest marches in Lyon, which are characterized by a “joyeuse bousculade sur les quais du Rhône, les slogans hurlés bras dessus bras dessous” (315); the lab in Wrocław, where she experiences an “exaltation voluptueuse” (17); the café in Geneva, where her previous melancholia becomes “une trépidation intérieure, une exigence permanente de bruit, de mouvement, d’agitation” (124). These descriptions, as well as Juliette’s interior landscape of high excitement and nervous energy, stand in contrast to the peaceful, tranquil images that dominate the author’s descriptions of the Colorado Plateau. The horse is “placide et confortable”

(302); the path of the canyon is “sinueux” (303) and characterized by “profondeurs” (304); the desert, though “écrasante” (304), is also “inerte” (304); Juliette is “bercée” (315) by the horse’s movement and “enveloppée” by the silence. The landscape is so tranquil that it seems to be an almost fixed image against which Ted and Juliette move. Juliette’s state of mind corresponds to this tranquility and becomes remarkably lucid during this episode. She notes, for example, “un imperceptible grondement lointain” (309), which in other situations, “elle aurait dit que c’était simplement le sang qui battait dans son oreille » (309). Surrounded by the « silence de cette nature vierge » (309), however, she associates this beating with “les villes en marche avec leur avant-garde d’asphalte et d’ordures ; le filet d’autoroutes jeté sur la terre pour la capturer ; le pas lourd des légions d’humaines qui, par milliards, déversaient leur multitude dans les plaines sans défense, le long des côtes, et jusqu’au flanc des montagnes” (309). Prior to this episode urban landscapes fed the manic phases of her bi-polarity, but this particular description of the city is menacing, evoking the image of droves of asphalt conquerors.

It also marks the second instance in which she experiences empathy for someone or something other than herself, the first having been the marmoset in the lab. The sound of her own blood beating in her ears is transformed into

le bruit des forêts abattues, des bêtes sauvages massacrées, des rivières étouffées d’immondices, du ciel empesté de fumées, des mers polluées de pétrole. Ces images se bouscullaient dans l’esprit en alerte de Juliette. Elle aurait pu crier tant l’impression qu’elles produisaient sur elle était douloureuse et forte. Aucun livre, aucun article de journal, aucune propagande n’aurait pu donner corps à ces menaces comme le faisait cette immensité déserte et silencieuse. (309).

This marks a moment of significant growth for Juliette. Her encounter with the marmoset left her horrified, unable to even consider the monkey's pain as she jumped over it and fled into the night (20). Although she was able to empathize briefly with the animal, her consideration of its pain only served to highlight her own feelings of solitude. Her empathy with the entire earth however, is completely selfless. This in fact marks the beginning of the second stage of her *Bildung*, which, thanks in part to Harrow, in part to Aldo Leopold's *A Sand County Almanac*, and in part to the experience of the sublime in the Colorado desert, Juliette becomes firmly anchored in her commitment to saving the environment from human destruction. Her participation in Greenworld is described as a selfish activity : "elle ne savait pas trop pourquoi elle défilait, mais elle était heureuse de sortir et de crier" (315). Until her desert interlude, her desire to work with the New Predators had been largely motivated by her desire to maintain the high that she felt immediately after the theft in Wroclaw (67).

Aldo Leopold's now canonical work, *A Sand County Almanac*, is only mentioned once in the novel, but its importance reverberates throughout the narrative. The narrator states that Juliette found the book in her room in the cave home in Colorado, which harbors Ted and the rest of his crew during the planning stages of the attack (304). The home is described as spare yet "digne d'un reportage dans un magazine de décoration branché" (279), and calls to mind high-end underground hotels that are currently trendy, especially in Turkey and in the American Southwest. Thanks to what one can assume is the deliberate placement of the book in Juliette's room (Harrow is established as a character that does everything very deliberately), *A Sand County Almanac* is elevated to the status of the Bible. The almost religious worship of Leopold's work is representative of the way in which many deep ecologists hold *A Sand County Almanac*, and especially the included essays "Think Like a Mountain" and "The Land Ethic," in high

esteem. Both of these essays emphasize a more holistic view of nature, and promote the idea that human beings must act responsibly toward other organisms. While “The Land Ethic” develops a more systematic way to extend ethical practices to the natural world, “Thinking Like a Mountain” is a seemingly insignificant anecdote of a hunting trip in the Southwest that Leopold took as a young man. He and his companions spy a pack of wolves below them, and promptly pump lead into the group which is actually a mother and her adolescent pups. Leopold’s reflection on this incident is especially poignant, and one cannot help but lament along with him as he watches “a fierce green fire dying in [the mother wolf’s] eyes” (130). He concludes, while watching the wolf die, that neither the wolf nor the mountain would agree with his previously held belief that fewer wolves equals more deer, and more deer equals happy hunters. Ecosystems are more complex than that, he realizes as a more mature adult, and more deer actually leads to depletion of their food stores, which leads to starvation of the herd. Wolves, as the herd’s natural predators, help to keep this balance in check, and he writes at the end of this anecdote that

I now suspect that just as a deer herd lives in mortal fear of its wolves, so does a mountain live in mortal fear of its deer. And perhaps with better cause, for while a buck pulled down by wolves can be replaced in two or three years, a range pulled down by too many deer may fail of replacement in as many decades. So also with cows. The cowman who cleans his range of wolves does not realize that he is taking over the wolf’s job of trimming the herd to fit the range. He has not learned to think like a mountain. Hence we have dustbowls, and rivers washing the future into the sea.

(132)

The point of Leopold's anecdote is to remind his reader that human intervention, however well-intentioned, often ignores the fact that ecosystems have a system of checks and balances – feedbacks, to use the scientific term – that ensure the longterm health of the system. Harrow seems to have misinterpreted Leopold's message, taking it upon himself to cull what he perceives as the planet's primary predator.

This is not Juliette's first introduction to the book : "Il [Jonathan] présentait pompeusement ce texte comme l'acte de naissance d'une nouvelle relation entre l'homme et la nature, une relation dans laquelle l'être humain n'est qu'une – miniscule – partie du tout et ne saurait s'en prétendre propriétaire" (305). The ability to situate the landscape within the environmental movement allows Juliette to fully experience the power of the American West : "[l]oin d'être ordonnée par et pour les hommes, cette nature écrasante lui parut à l'évidence ne laisser qu'une place infime, insignifiante au spectateur humain. Écrasée par cette beauté, il était clair pour Juliette que la nature vivait d'une existence propre et ne devait rien à l'homme sinon sa destruction" (304). And several paragraphs later : « Les paysages américains conservent au contraire une force native, indomptée. Ils font comparaître l'homme devant eux comme un étranger contraint de se plier à leurs lois. C'était le sentiment qu'exprimait Aldo Leopold et Juliette le partageait à son tour » (305). This scene fulfills the function of new world pastoral described by Buell, who states that "[n]ew world pastoral thus offered both to filter the vision of those enchanted by it and to stimulate them to question metropolitan culture itself (even while participating in it)" (54). The act of distancing herself from the (relatively) metropolitan areas that she has frequented up until this point in the narrative allows Juliette to recognize that "le véritable objectif était de se mettre en travers de l'homme dans sa destruction de la nature" (318).

At this point in the narrative, both Juliette and Ted are firmly anchored in the green world myth described by Buell. Their perception of how the land should be is “properly unspoiled” (Buell 54), and the end game of the New Predators (to regulate the population by killing a large portion of impoverished populations in urban slums) indicates an inability to come to terms with the current global landscape – a landscape that is increasingly dominated by human beings. Harrow’s lifestyle is especially inconsistent: he pays lip service to environmental ideals, but his role as an eco-terrorist is driven more by his hatred of poverty than by his commitment to environmentalism (*PA* 351). His personal habits, on the other hand, reveal a love of luxury and the ability to easily navigate an urban environment: his residence in Colorado is equipped with the latest technology (279); he dresses extremely well and wears an expensive watch (350); and once in Rio de Janeiro he and Juliette stay in a hotel in Laranjeiras (539), an upper-middle class neighborhood in the wealthy Zona Sul district. Nor is he capable of committing murder on behalf of the New Predators; in his cowardice, he has arranged that Juliette shoulder the blame for the crime while he escapes all consequences (673). His propensity to view everything in binary pairs (rich/poor, nature/culture, north/south) eventually leads to his demise: he is unable to “look past the mythical vision as well as through it” (Buell 55), and this inability to reconcile reality with a more idealized world of reduced population and ecological harmony leads to his death.

Juliette, on the other hand, is increasingly ill at ease with her role in the mission (526, 544, 546), a feeling which is intensified by her contact with a family living in the favela in Rio de Janeiro. The result of her experience with Harrow is that she is able to synthesize the ideas presented to her and see through the very one-dimensional image of the environment that characterized his world-view. The second stage of her *Bildung* was initiated by her contact with the natural world, and this final stage also takes place in nature, but this time in a hybridized

nature that is neither completely urban nor complete wilderness. In her letter to Paul, Juliette writes that

À cet endroit [aux abords de l'aéroport], il n'y a pas de plage et rien n'évoque artificiellement les vacances. C'est un lieu de remblai et de friches industrielles. Il est tout à la fois souillé et intact car la disposition des mornes, l'harmonie de la côte donnent l'étrange impression de pénétrer dans ce monde pour la première fois, comme ont dû le faire les découvreurs portugais. . . . Je n'ai pas oublié une nuit que nous [Ted et Juliette] avons passée, seuls dans le désert du Colorado. Personne ne m'avait aussi nettement fait penser à la terre, à sa fragilité, à la mort qui la menace. Sur mes rochers, en regardant, presque au ras de l'eau, la baie et les mouettes qui la survolent, j'ai retrouvé la même impression aussi forte, aussi profonde, aussi révoltante. Cela, je ne le renie pas.

Et pourtant, Harrow avait tort. (749, 50)

Ultimately indifferent to ideology (750), Juliette's tendency to privilege "l'émotion, le sentiment, l'amour" (750) allows her to use her belief in the earth's fragility as a point of departure toward Buell's proposed alternative to the poisoned environment" (Buell 55). The favelas of Rio de Janeiro provide just such a space, because they are not entirely metropolitan and they are not entirely in the country (this particular area of Rio is on a hillside, almost in the country). The residents, as well, are neither urbanites nor *paysans*; they have migrated to the favelas from the surrounding countryside in search of work, but they have not been entirely assimilated into the urban culture, and in fact the more affluent citizens of the city consider them to be parasites (543). In this space that is "entre dedans et dehors" (752), Juliette proposes that education and

the ability to break down barriers that comes as the result is the only way to effectively combat the destructive capacity of “l’Homme moderne” (752). Instead of considering the most destitute populations on the planet as the enemy of environmental health, she perceives them as the human victims of the same mentality that has made a victim out of the natural world. Her goal is not to make “militants, mais seulement des gens qui, à leur tour, tenteront un jour de franchir les limites » (753).

In the postface to the novel, Rufin admits that his goal was not to delve into the details of environmental philosophy, but rather to “réfléchir sur le regard que nous portons sur le tiers-monde et la pauvreté” (759). Nevertheless, *Le parfum d’Adam* succeeds in representing an image of the natural world that is highly realistic. Whether one adheres to the belief that we are living in a post-natural society or not, it cannot be denied that the amount of virgin wilderness is dwindling, and will probably continue to do so as the world’s population increases. While efforts to conserve remaining wilderness areas should not be abandoned, the belief that human beings can revert to a more primitive way of life is unrealistic given the current world population. This is of course the premise from which Rufin begins his novel. By dramatizing the conflict between the defenders of humanity and the defenders of nature, he arrives at a new representation of the natural world that combines more urban images with images of wilderness. The effect is such that the reader begins to see the possibilities of wilderness within the urban landscape; the urban and the wild are effectually reconciled. In attempting to define a uniquely French ecocriticism, Stéphanie Posthumus states that “la littérature est le lieu d’où l’on peut imaginer de nouveaux modes de vivre, de nouvelles réalités, et donc, de nouveaux rapports au monde, à la planète et à la terre » (86). By pushing the concept of eco-terrorism to extreme limits and by representing an idea that would be extremely subversive, and by allowing the real-world application of these

ideologies to fail within the narrative framework, Rufin exposes the fallacies inherent in certain environmental extremist ideologies. The novel's epilogue, however, is extremely optimistic. Juliette functions as the character best able to perceive the nuances of such ideologies, which are motivated by legitimate concerns – stopping the destruction waged on the planet by northern industrialized societies – but which have grossly misplaced the blame for such destruction. Her belief that education of the poorest members of society will someday provide viable solutions to the problems facing them thus becomes, in the realistic context of the narrative, a suggestion to the reader as well. In situating this proposed solution within a context between inside and outside – to repeat Rufin's expression (752) – or which might more appropriately be referred to using Buell's term – “heterotopic alternatives” – Rufin succeeds in proposing a new relationship with the natural world: one that challenges readers to ask themselves how they, like Juliette, might best contribute positively to slowing the destruction of the world around them while still taking into account the rights of all human beings.

Part II: The Ecologically (Ig)Noble Savage. In *Le Parfum d'Adam*, Rufin creates a thematic sequel to *Rouge Brésil*, which demonstrated the development of the European attitude toward the indigenous inhabitants of the newly discovered American continent. Characterized primarily by fear of the unknown, this attitude quickly led to the physical and sexual exploitation of the indigenous Brazilians. In *Le Parfum d'Adam*, the result of centuries of exploitation and domination is evident in the abject poverty that characterizes the living conditions of the *favelas*, or slums, of Rio de Janeiro – areas in which the population is predominately of African or indigenous descent (PA 752). In the novel, the impoverished urban Brazilians become the target of the *Nouveaux Prédateurs*, who believe that global climate change is caused in large part by overpopulation. Their solution is to reduce the global population by annihilating the poorest

populations, who, according to the *Nouveaux Prédicateurs*, are the least able to act in an environmentally responsible manner. The eradication of these populations would allow the already developed world to continue fine-tuning its environmental impact and live a more environmentally authentic life (PA 613). The image of what is now popularly called the ecologically noble savage serves as a model for the *Nouveaux Prédicateurs*, and especially for Ted Harrow. This stereotypical image of Native Americans serves as a guide to Juliette for a part of the novel. However, her stance as an ethnic outsider (unlike Harrow, she is neither native nor American), as well as her role as scapegoat, provides her with the objectivity to understand the fallacies inherent in the use of the ecologically noble savage as the *salut du monde*. In this context, her formation allows the reader to analyze the American fascination with the ecologically noble savage and to understand that, far from embodying a realistic mode of living, this figure is an example of cultural essentialism that reinforces the colonizer/colonized power structure (albeit in an environmental context) and thus limits any real possibility for environmental change.

As I discussed in Chapter 1, the idea that the indigenous tribes of both North and South America lived closer to the state of nature was a popular idea during the sixteenth century. The stories recounted by both voyagers and ethnographers were interpreted by their audiences in two ways. There were those who held that the native Americans' proximity to nature and their lack of identifiable infrastructure (such as one might find in say, Paris, for example) implied their inherent goodness and evoked the image of innocent, Golden Age humans who had not been corrupted by society. In contrast, many believed that this proximity to nature implied inherent depravity: since the Americans were ignorant of the Judeo-Christian God, and therefore of the Gospel, this indicated God's decision to condemn these populations. They were therefore

considered to be violent, morally depraved, licentious, and lazy. Evidence of such depravity was easily found in the practice of cannibalism in the Caribbean and in regions of South America, or in the fact that most inhabitants of the warmer regions were generally nude. This was a more typical reaction to accounts of Caribbean and South American indigenous cultures, at least in the decades immediately following their discovery (Ellingson 12). Although humanists such as Montaigne defended those who practiced cannibalism, they tended to use such practices as a metaphor highlighting the cruelty of European society. They were therefore far less concerned with a realistic portrait of individuals than with the rhetorical function of certain indigenous customs. Ethnographic portrayals, on the other hand, claimed to be a more faithful portrait of indigenous societies, but as Ter Ellingson points out, this was not often the case; even seemingly objective portraits often served more as a mode of self-discovery on the part of their European authors than as an accurate portrayal of the indigenous subject (68).

Ellingson makes the case that these early ethnographic studies of indigenous communities in North America serve as a basis for the myth of the Noble Savage. According to Ellingson, the myth of the Noble Savage is erroneously attributed to Rousseau, and is hardly to be found even in Montaigne or Léry, despite their frequent association with the myth (12). Instead, he attributes the coining of the term to Marc Lescarbot (1570-1641), who first used the adjective “noble” to describe the tribes located in present-day Quebec and eastern Canada (22). Lescarbot arrived at the conclusion that the “sauvages sont vrayments nobles” (Lescarbot in Ellingson 22) because, like the European nobles, the Mi’kmaq³⁴ hunted and waged war (Ellingson 22). If they enjoyed the same rights that only upper strata of the French nobility could enjoy, then from a legal standpoint they must also be noble. Ellingson is quick to point out that the attribution of nobility to the Mi’kmaq was “an ontologically essential rather than a trait-

³⁴ Tribe indigenous to eastern Canada and Nova Scotia, among whom Lescarbot lived for a year (1606-1607).

ascriptive nobility” (46); on an individual basis, neither Lescarbot nor other travel-ethnographers of the time³⁵ attributed any real nobility of character to the indigenous Americans that they encountered. In fact, the Baron of Lahontan, whose three volume account of his time spent among the Huron was an instant best-seller (Todorov, *Human Diversity* 272), is thought to have invented many of the more “noble” individuals and societies that figure into his accounts; it is only in reference to these imagined populations that Lahontan relies on the rhetoric of nobility (Ellingson 68). This is also true of the dialogue that he creates between himself and a “sauvage de bon sens” in the third volume of his travels, titled *Discours curieux entre l’auteur et un sauvage de bon sens qui a voyagé*. The fictional Huron Adario, based on the historical Huron chief Kondiaronk (Ellingson 68) is an enlightened character who provides honest assessments of European society and embodies “clear-minded wisdom” (Ellingson 68) in the face of Lahontan’s assumed role of the straight-man (Ellingson 69). While Kondiaronk is purported by Lahontan’s contemporaries to have been “a man of ability, extremely brave, and the Indian of the highest merit that the French ever knew in Canada” (Charlevoix in Ellingson 73), he is also reported, again by Charlevoix, to have been engaged in a “Machievellian set of political machinations” that served to kill his Iroquois enemies and place the blame on the French colonists (Ellingson 75). This undoubtedly makes for a more nuanced and interesting portrait of the historical figure behind Adario, who according to Todorov is the “purest example of the ‘noble savage’ in a work that appeared at the beginning of the eighteenth century” (*Human Diversity* 271), and therefore warrants further examination.

³⁵ Ellingson studies in detail the journals of explorers such as Samuel de Champlain and Jacques Cartier, as well as (among others) the writings of Gabriel Sagard (17th century missionary ethnographer of the Huron), Louis Hennepin (17th century missionary and discoverer of Niagara Falls), the Baron de Lahontan (late 17th century explorer of the northern Mississippi and author of highly popular travelogues), and Joseph-François Lafitau, 18th century missionary and ethnographer of both the Huron and the Iroquois.

Lahontan's purportedly unfaithful portrait of Chief Kondiaronk is the culmination of his first two accounts of life with the Huron, *Nouveaux Voyages* (Volume 1) and *Mémoires de l'Amérique septentrionale* (Volume 2). The first is comprised of a series of letters recounting his travels in New France, while the second volume is a more traditional travelogue that details the flora, the fauna, and the inhabitants found in New France (Todorov 271). However, as Todorov points out, in order to idealize a society one must avoid considering it in too much detail; this applies especially to narrative descriptions of the society. He also notes that Lahontan's description of Huron society becomes less detailed with each volume, culminating in the essentialist portrayal of Kondiaronk in the final volume (271-72). Lahontan's noble savage is therefore comprised of three irreducible elements: he is both economically and politically egalitarian; he is economically, politically and culturally minimalist; and he lives in conformity with nature (Todorov, *Human Diversity* 273-74). Aside from their historical importance, these elements are worth considering given their continued presence in the 20th century recasting of the noble savage as the ecologically noble savage.

In ethnographic literature dating from the years immediately post-contact until the early part of the nineteenth century, French ethnographers typically represented indigenous societies as both economically and politically egalitarian. According to Lahontan, the Huron were strangers to the concept of *Meum* and *Tuum*³⁶, as well as to the concept of political hierarchy or subordination (*Human Diversity*, Todorov 273). Both of these absences within the societies contributed to the image of an anarchic society which, for those Europeans unhappy with the strict social order of the Old World, served as an antidote to their discontent (Todorov 274); and Lahontan himself writes that he would like to become savage in order to "be no longer expos'd

³⁶ This expression, literally translated from the Latin as "Mine and Yours", was frequently used in New World ethnographies to refer to the principle of private property.

to the chagrin of bending the knee” (Lahontan in Todorov 274). In addition to being economically and politically egalitarian, Lahontan notes that the Huron were economic and social minimalists, practicing subsistence farming and limiting themselves to what was strictly necessary. This extended to cultural practices, and Lahontan observes that the arts and sciences were entirely absent from indigenous cultures (Todorov 274). Finally, Lahontan’s noble savages live in conformity with nature, which according to Todorov is “the basis for their preference for equality and liberty” (274). This serves as explanation for the lack of written laws and the lack of religion, since the “natural is sometimes what is reasonable” (Todorov 254). If they follow the natural, and therefore the reasonable, then the Huron will always do what is right, good and reasonable. Lahontan sees this as an admirable principle, championing “the freedom of reason over dogma and of nature over artifice” (Harvey 165). Living in accordance with natural principles also extends to behavior, and the most common example of this involves sexuality: instincts, according to Lahontan, should never be repressed by law. Lahontan’s fictional Huron Adario notes that “We live quietly under Laws of Instinct and innocent Conduct, which wise Nature has imprinted upon our minds from our Cradles” (Lahontan in Todorov 275). While the *Dialogue* presents the Huron’s tendency to behave according to natural instinct in a positive light, both Harvey and Todorov are careful to point out that the *Dialogue* contains the most idealized representation of the Huron; Lahontan’s *Mémoire*, which follows a format similar to that used by Léry, provides much more “nuanced, descriptive, and often quite negative portrayals of different Native American peoples” (Harvey 167).

Current scholarship leaves little doubt to the fact that Rousseau was highly influenced by Lahontan and by his portrait of the Huron. Rousseau is often considered to have been the inventor of the concept of the noble savage, since man in the state of nature serves as a

philosophical base for many of his most famous arguments, made in “Discours sur l’origine et les fondements de l’inégalité parmi les hommes” (1755), *Du contrat social* (1762), and *Émile* (1762).³⁷ As Ellingson points out numerous times, Rousseau does not specifically mention the term “noble savage” (or in his case, “sauvage noble”). It must be noted, however, that although Ellingson’s work is interesting and certainly has its merits, I share David Harvey’s opinion that it is too prescriptive (163), since Ellingson rejects any account of primitivism that does not specifically contain the phrase “noble savage” or “sauvage noble,” in the case of French authors. Even if Rousseau does not specifically use the phrase “sauvage noble,” the concept of primitivism is prevalent in his work. It is also well-known to scholars in the field that Rousseau is only one contributor to a long tradition, at least in French literature, of the concept of primitivism; a tradition that can be traced at the very least to Montaigne and his contemporaries, if not further. It can, however, be argued that Rousseau popularized the concept of primitivism – if not for his contemporaries, who would have been well-aware of the concept, then for future generations, since Rousseau’s body of work has remained influential for nearly three centuries.

A (very general) summary of Rousseau’s concept of the “state of nature” is as follows: All human beings have been corrupted by society to some extent. There exists, however, a hypothetical *état de nature*, which humanity as a whole left behind at some point. Rousseau is adamant, however, regarding the hypothetical nature of this state, asserting that no human being, beginning with Adam, has ever existed in the state of nature; this is rather the state that humans would have lived in between their creation and the reception of God’s laws and precepts, which happened almost immediately (“Inégalité” 24-25). Rousseau’s description of humans in the state

³⁷ British philosopher Thomas Hobbes (1588-1679) is also well-known for his theories on the state of nature, especially as it relates to social contract theory. Hobbes has a decidedly more negative attitude towards this state, and therefore cannot be said to contribute to the construction of the concept of the Noble Savage.

of nature is what “aurait pu devenir le genre humain s’il fût resté abandonné à lui-même” (25).³⁸ In this state, humans were essentially animals, with no discernible language and no identifiable culture (24). As a result, they were entirely driven by instinct. One element of this instinct, however, was the fundamental need for society, since – as Rousseau states multiple times throughout his body of work – humans did not otherwise have many advantages over other beasts (*Du contrat social*, Chapter 2; “Inégalité” 26; “De l’état de nature” Fragment 8). Having left this hypothetical state by forming societies, return is impossible: “Quoi, donc? Faut-il détruire les Sociétés, anéantir le tien et le mien, et retourner vivre dans les forêts avec les Ours? Conséquence à la manière de mes adversaires, que j’aime autant prévenir que de leur laisser la honte de la tirer” (“Inégalité” 93). In between these two states is an intermediary stage in which Rousseau situates the Native American tribes. For Rousseau this savage stage is where man would be the happiest: “Ainsi quoique les hommes fussent devenus moins endurans, et que la pitié naturelle eût déjà souffert quelque altération, ce période du développement des facultés humaines, tenant un juste milieu entre l’indolence de l’état primitif et la pétulante activité de notre amour propre, dut être l’époque la plus heureuse, et la plus durable” (58). Furthermore, “[l]’exemple des sauvages qu’on a presque tous trouvés à ce point, semble confirmer que le genre humain était fait pour y rester toujours, que cet état est la véritable jeunesse du monde” (58).

This elegy on the “véritable jeunesse du monde” is not a consistent sentiment for Rousseau, who at times praises a more simple existence, while at others criticizes the “savages” for their very simplicity. In the second part of the “Discours,” for example, he makes the

³⁸ Rousseau’s conception of the state of nature is somewhat contradictory. At times, such as in the “Discours,” he makes it clear that the state of nature is hypothetical, and that the Native Americans are not representative of humans as they were in the state of nature. At other times, he states that certain tribes, such as the Caribes of Venezuela, are so primitive that they have barely left the state of nature (“Discours” 34-35).

argument that as long as humans were happy living a fairly rustic lifestyle, occupying themselves only with tasks of which a solitary person was capable, they were “libres, sains, bons et heureux *autant qu’ils pouvaient l’être par leur nature* . . . mais dès l’instant que l’homme eut besoin du secours d’un autre, dès qu’on s’aperçut qu’il était utile à un seul d’avoir des provisions pour deux, l’égalité disparut, la propriété s’introduisit, le travail devint nécessaire . . . on vit bientôt l’esclavage et la misère germer et croître avec les moissons” (58, emphasis mine). He continues by arguing that metallurgy and agriculture, both of which are absent from Native American cultures (according to Rousseau), are the means by which humans began to work the earth (“Discours” 58, 59). A careful reading of this passage indicates that Rousseau might well be envious of such a simplistic and solitary state, elevating the noble savage as the ideal of all that is “admirable and uncorrupted in human nature” (White 3). But the phrase “autant qu’ils pouvaient l’être par leur nature” implies a natural, inherent deficiency that allows Rousseau’s “sauvages” to be content with a less advanced lifestyle. He therefore reinforces the European belief that their Native American counterparts were both intellectually and morally inferior, despite their many other admirable qualities.

Rousseau’s “Discours” continues the ethnographical tradition that establishes the indigenous population of the New World as Other. This is evident in the above citation, and is even more explicit in the following assertion:

Gardons-nous donc de confondre l’homme sauvage avec les hommes que nous avons sous les yeux. La nature traite tous les animaux abandonnés à ses soins avec une prédilection qui semble montrer combien elle est jalouse de ce droit. Le cheval, le chat, le taureau, l’âne même, ont la plupart une taille plus haute, tous une constitution plus robuste, plus de

vigueur, de force et de courage dans les forêts que dans nos maison : ils perdent la moitié de ces avantages en devenant domestiques . . . Il est ainsi de l'homme même : en devenant sociable et esclave, il devient faible, craintif, rampant. (30).

This establishment of the Native American population as the other was an essential element of the romantic portrayal of the noble savage. First of all, although the expression of Romanticism varies according to country, it almost always includes the notion of the sublime, the feeling of being overwhelmed in the face of nature. This often included a certain feeling of astonishment or even horror (Garrard 64) that would have been evoked more strongly by an extremely stereotypical portrayal of the Native American population. Furthermore, the aesthetic appreciation of tragedy, especially in the form of the death of the other, was a prevalent theme, and was an “integral part of the ‘sublime and the beautiful’” (Burke qtd. in Tudor 94). Tudor points out that such appreciation was to be found in horror, not in terror; horror implies that there is sufficient distance between a tragedy and the spectator that the spectator does not feel personally threatened, and is therefore able to derive aesthetic and intellectual pleasure from the spectacle (96, 97). As the ultimate other, the suffering and/or death of indigenous characters was especially effective. Rousseau and his contemporaries had already established the racial and intellectual inferiority of non-Europeans; and although many Romantics found their inspiration in Middle Eastern subjects, these populations were still more closely related to the European male, and therefore not representative of the other to the same degree as Native Americans.

In *Le Parfum d'Adam*, the image of the noble savage is presented in three different forms. First, McLeod (his financial backer) and Fritsch (the professor who inspired McLeod, albeit unconsciously) present the more theoretical and ideological function of the noble savage. Despite

the fact that McLeod and Harrow are working toward the same end, their relationship (which is entirely implicit – the two never speak in the narrative) replicates the colonizer/colonized power dynamic, since Harrow functions entirely as McLeod's pawn. Second, Ted Harrow seems to embody the Ecologically Noble Savage that is the champion of environmental groups. Rufin's representation of Harrow, however, serves only to reveal the contradictions that can often be found within the Euro-American construction of the Ecologically Noble Savage. Finally, Harrow's mother, Marie Rosaire, and the Brazilian inhabitants of the favelas stand in stark contrast to the previous two representations of the noble savage. Both serve as a more realistic portrait of the fate of the indigenous inhabitants and the destructive nature of the European colonial enterprise in the Americas. The Brazilians especially demonstrate to Juliette that the stereotypical ecological Native American, while certainly a seductive image, is not a faithful representation of indigenous populations, and serves only to propagate exploitative power structures.

McLeod and Fritsch both play minor but important roles in the narrative. McLeod is revealed to be the mastermind of the terrorist plot, while Fritsch unknowingly provides the intellectual motivation : during the 1960s, Professor Fritsch held an informal seminar at his home, during the course of which he and his students discussed how to best limit the effect that human beings had on the natural world (468). The answer, he states, was to drastically reduce the population while simultaneously preventing the development of poor countries, who typically have higher populations than countries that have already become technologically and industrially advanced (472). The ideas that Fritsch outlines is typical to deep ecological philosophy, and the emphasis on the importance of Malthusian economics to environmentalism were highlighted in the now (in)famous Meadows Report ("The Limits to Growth") given at the Club of Rome

summit in 1972. This report examined what might happen to the planet if the current rates of population growth were maintained, and projected a disastrous outcome. The Ecologically Noble Savage plays a central role in Fritsch's conception of the population problem, and he expresses the wish to talk to a Native American, "un des grands modèles que j'ai toujours utilisé dans mes travaux pour illustrer le thème de la responsabilité écologique" (478). McLeod confesses no such attraction to Native Americans. Instead, he seems to see directly through the Ecologically Noble Savage guise adopted by Harrow and other environmentalists: "[Harrow] était parvenu aux mêmes conclusions. . . par une voie totalement différente: celle de la mystique indienne. Ou plutôt, celles d'une néoculture indienne revue et corrigée dans l'Amérique d'aujourd'hui par des groupes désireux de retrouver leurs racines perdues. Le type se prétendait indien" (620). This statement states explicitly the conclusion at which the reader has already arrived: far from being an authentic example of the Ecologically Noble Savage, Harrow is ascribing to a stereotype that was almost entirely constructed by white Euro-Americans.

Following the romanticized representation of the Noble Savage, in which he (or she) is brave, wise, and stoic, the image disappears from western literature for almost a century.³⁹ It is revived somewhat in the genre of westerns, usually in the form of a wise, elderly medicine man whose role is to counsel either the younger native warriors or the white cowboy (Thorslev 282). Thorslev also points out that the Noble Savage in westerns is almost always betrayed by the white man (282), which serves as a reflection of the systematic victimization of native populations through re-education and through relocation to Indian Reservations. It was not until

³⁹ The work of artist George Catlin (1796-1872) is a notable exception, and Catlin produced hundreds of paintings and sketches of Native Americans (*smithsonianmag.com*). Native Americans make appearances in literature during the latter half of the eighteenth century, but they are rarely depicted as the Noble Savage. It is interesting to note that during the same period, which saw the decline of Native American culture, German Karl May (1842-1912) enjoyed considerable success thanks to his series of novels depicting the travels of Old Shatterhand, an American cowboy, and his friend Winnetou, chief of the Apache.

the late 1960s and the latter half of the twentieth century that the image of the Noble Savage was transformed into the Ecologically Noble Savage. The Ecologically Noble Savage stood as the antithesis to the environmental havoc supposedly wreaked by the Western lifestyle: if Euro-Americans were guilty of wild consumption, then Native Americans were minimalists, using only what they needed; if Euro-Americans treated the environment as a ready store of materials, Native Americans endowed a spirit to every element of the natural world. By establishing this rhetorical trope, environmentalists added a new dimension to the already established idea that Native Americans were somehow different from Euro-Americans. The implication is that only white Americans pollute, thus giving the Native American population – and anyone who adopts a similar lifestyle – the moral high-ground when it comes to environmentalism.

This, however, can be seen as the continuation of a long history of appropriation of indigenous culture by the colonizing Europeans. Garrard points out that many “contemporary Native writers also evince annoyance at the indiscriminate appropriation of Native cultures, under the banner of ecology, by the New Age industry and its Euro-American customer” (125). The assumption that Native Americans live more closely with nature and are therefore less apt to permanently alter their environment is not always accurate.

Ted Harrow functions as the ideal embodiment of the ecologically noble savage, but in reality he exhibits the same (very human) tendencies of the indigenous groups mentioned above. The reader’s first introduction to this character, through the eyes of Juliette, reveals a tall, spare man who is described as enormous and bony (274). There is little distinction between Harrow and the surrounding desert:

Sa peau épaisse, sombre et tannée, ses doigts noueux, la maigreur de ses
membres formaient l’exact pendant des arbres secs, des plantes

succulentes et des haies rugueuses qui survivaient sur ces sols hostiles.
 Mais au-dedans, de même qu'on sentait les végétaux gorgés de sève et
 d'eau, tendus d'une vie indestructible et proliférante, de même la
 souplesse, la force, la résistance de cet homme étaient apparentes dans
 chacun de ses mouvements. Seule tranchait, dans l'harmonie de ces deux
 natures accordées, l'humaine et la végétale, l'étrangeté de son regard.
 (274)

And several lines later : “un front très haut courait à la rencontre de ces cheveux noirs et raides, laissés longs et coiffés en arrière. . . . Ni le nez étroit ni la bouche aux lèvres minces ne constituaient de sujets bien remarquables. Le regard de l'homme captait toute l'attention. Juliette n'aurait pas su dire ce qu'elle y lisait. Ce n'était ni un regard triste ni un regard menaçant” (274).

The comparison between Harrow and a tree serves two functions. First, both the reader and Juliette are given the impression that Harrow is not an approachable character: the adjectives used in the passage to describe his skin denote hardness and dryness. When read aloud, the frequency of fricative consonants (/s/, /ʁ/ – the French “r”) and the occasional use of the hard “c” sound /k/ reinforces the imagery evoked by the adjectives, creating a sonority that is dry and brittle, and which almost seems to crackle. This brittleness is contrasted by the adjectives “souplesse” and “force,” neither of which is characteristic of brittle, hard wood. This speaks to the force of Harrow's will, since he has proven himself a force with which to be reckoned. Here Harrow is portrayed as the quintessential Noble Savage, right down to his high forehead, his straight black hair pulled back (one imagines into a braid, although the passage isn't specific), the straight nose, and his unreadable yet stoic gaze – Rufin might as well have been using Keep

America Beautiful's "Crying Indian" campaign poster as his guide in creating Harrow's physical attributes.

Second, although it may not be a flattering portrait, it certainly succeeds in aligning Harrow with the natural world. This is of course an essential element of the Noble Savage, who is more closely affiliated with the state of nature than with the state of society. It becomes clear that Harrow ascribes to this belief when he states that "[les sociétés traditionnelles] se sont adaptées à la nature et non l'inverse. Les combats rituels, les sacrifices, toutes les interdictions avaient pour but de limiter la taille du groupe. Ainsi, le milieu naturel pouvait toujours le nourrir en abondance" (308). His affinity for nature, however, is suspect. As is characteristic of Rufin's characters, Harrow's name offers insight into his character: the word *harrow* signifies a gardening tool used to break up clumps of sod. Harrow's surname therefore betrays his contradictions at his initial introduction to the narrative. Rufin leaves little room for the reader to doubt Harrow's motives, since Paul and Kerry have already exposed the fact that he is motivated as much by hate of poverty as by love of the environment. This is evident in the description of the cave home where the *Nouveaux Prédateurs* are headquartered. I have already discussed this in detail in Part I of this chapter, but it provides such insight into Harrow's character that it bears re-examination. Thanks to McLeod, the cave dwelling is equipped with the latest technology; as Juliette notes, this is clearly a high-tech, global operation (436). This calls into question his sincerity when describing Native American practices to Juliette, who notes that he seems to apply the description more to himself than to anyone else:

Sur le territoire où [les Indiens] vivent, ils ne se comportent pas comme des maîtres. Ils ne transforment rien, n'abîment rien. La terre les tolère, et ils la respectent. Jamais ils n'oseraient l'approprier, la découper en

parcelles comme une viande morte. La terre, pour eux, est vivante. Ils ont conscience de faire partie d'un tout. Ce que l'on apprend avec eux, c'est l'équilibre de toutes choses. . . . Pour eux, la nature pourvoit à tout en abondance. C'est la civilisation des Blancs qui a créé le manque. (307)

It might be Europeans who created want, but Harrow's statements ring false when the reader is aware that he returns to a well-equipped, luxurious living space. These contradictions succeed in destabilizing the idea that Harrow is the embodiment of the Ecologically Noble Savage, since one can only imagine the environmental impact of providing a cave dwelling in the middle of the Colorado desert with electricity and water. His heritage, revealed several chapters later, further negates the notion that he is the quintessential Ecologically Noble Savage: his mother, Marie Rosaire, is a Native American who was raised Catholic and denies any association with what she calls Red-Skins (348); while his father is a New England WASP, descended from the pilgrims aboard the *Mayflower*, who was disinherited following his marriage to Marie Rosaire (338). Thanks to the influence of both cultures, as well as the influence of the "Indiens d'une reserve" (362), Harrow has pieced together "une vision du monde à lui, comme d'autres ramassent n'importe quoi pour se construire une cabane" (362). In *The Ecological Indian*, historian Shepard Krech III points out that this is fairly typical of contemporary Native Americans, many of whom have, over time, transformed the originally Euro-American projection of the Ecologically Noble Savage into a self-image (27). It therefore seems logical, albeit hypocritical, that he is able to synthesize both the materialism of colonial culture and the spiritual aspects of indigenous American culture. Juliette, ignorant of Harrow's background, is impressed only by the image that he chooses to project. As the two become more closely acquainted and she begins to see through this projection, she is able to better distinguish between the sincere concern for the

environment that is shared by many and the self-aggrandizing posturing of which Harrow is guilty.

Harrow's statements propagate the largely Euro-American constructed image of the Ecologically Noble Savage as one who lives lightly, taking only what is needed and nothing more. This is nothing but a twentieth-century restatement of the Early Modern and Enlightenment belief that more primitive societies had no concept of private ownership. In constructing Harrow's monologue, Rufin has stayed incredibly faithful to the rhetoric used by those who revere Native American's for their supposedly environmentally friendly lifestyle. As always, the reality behind this image is incredibly complicated. From an historical standpoint, one must take into consideration that nineteenth century estimates of the pre-Columbian population were highly inaccurate: the 1894 census estimated the pre-Columbian population of what would later become the United States to be about 500,000 (Thorton 17), presumably as a result of inaccurate records, and perhaps in order to downplay the extent of the population reduction as a result of the Indian Wars. Current scholarship estimates that the number was much higher; scholars disagree on the estimated population of pre-Columbian North and South America, but even the most conservative estimates range from seven to ten million, and the highest estimates begin at 55 million (Brinkley). Although this number does not even begin to compare to the current population in the United States (let alone in both North and South America combined), it still seems significant given the limited technology possessed by pre-Columbian Native Americans.

In addition, it is thought that the pre-Columbian Native Americans highly altered their environment. Kent Redford points out that

Precontact Indians were not “ecosystem men”; they were not just another species of animal, largely incapable of altering the environment, who therefore lived within the “ecological limitations of their home area.”

Paleobiologists, archaeologists, and botanists are coming to believe that most tropical forests have been severely altered by human activities before European contact. Evidence of vast fires in the northern Amazonian forests and of the apparently anthropogenic origins of large areas of forest in eastern Amazonia suggests that before 1500, humans had tremendously affected the virgin forest, with ensuing impacts on plant and animal species. These people behaved as humans do now: they did whatever they had to to feed themselves and their families. (Redford)

This passage would suggest that when Columbus and subsequent explorers first stepped into what they identified as virgin forest, they were in reality surrounded by a new growth forest that had previously been cleared for farming or living, and that was probably only about a century old – much as Thoreau sang the praises of the wilderness while walking around on abandoned Concordian farms that nature had reclaimed. From the vantage point of the twentieth or twenty-first centuries, it can certainly seem that traditional Native American societies lived lightly on the land, but that assessment is only possible because we can compare their society with ours, which has an immense impact on the global environment and a population of about 7 billion people. But by that logic, it could be argued that sixteenth century Europeans also lived a less environmentally harmful lifestyle; why not advocate a return to a Renaissance lifestyle? It is well documented that, provided with European technology that made life a bit easier, Native American tribes were quick to adopt new practices. The horse is just one example of a non-

indigenous introduction that was so quickly incorporated, especially by the Plains Indians, that it is now synonymous with their culture.

The victimization of Native Americans is represented by Marie Rosaire (Harrow's mother) as well as by the Native Brazilians living in the favelas – the intended targets of the Nouveaux Prédateurs. Each is representative of the disabling of indigenous cultures by the colonial power. Marie Rosaire only appears in one chapter of the entire novel, and her role is minor but important. She provides us with crucial information about her son – information that allows the reader to fully understand him, while Juliette, deprived of this information, remains in the dark for much of the novel. Her home, “un mobile home monté sur cales” (342) is typical of those on an Indian Reservation, which are often characterized by abject poverty. Prior to her introduction, we have learned that she was raised by Catholic nuns (348); as a result, she distinguishes between herself, “née indienne” (348), and “de vrais Indiens” (348) that influenced Harrow during his adolescence. Marie Rosaire might well consider the Indians on the reservation to be real Indians, but she is highly contemptuous of their practices. She herself has taken an Indian name – “Vent du Matin” (347) – and refuses to be called by her Catholic name, so her contempt cannot be said to stem from having entirely adopted a white European attitude towards her own people. Rather, she inhabits a middle space that is neither white European nor indigenous American and results in the hate of both races: “[e]lle hait les Indiens parce qu'elle les juge dégénérés; les Blancs parce qu'ils l'ont rejetée” (362). Her assessment of the “Peaux-Rouges” (348) is closely tied to their environmental practices. When she relates that Harrow talked to her about “la Terre, la Vie, la Nature, tout ça avec des majuscules” (347), she uses the term “déblaté” – literally, to go on about – to describe his discourse, indicating that she doesn't take such talk seriously. She continues, several lines later, to say that

Je les connais, ces Peaux-Rouges, ils ne sont pas tellement plus indiens que moi, finalement. Mais, eux, ils s’y sont remis. Ils en rajoutent même un peu pour montrer qu’ils sont sérieux. Ils sont capables de passer la nuit à regarder la lune et de ne dire que trois mots pendant tout ce temps. Mais ces trois mots-là, ils ont l’air de les avoir mâchés et remâchés et ils vous les présentent comme si c’étaient des reliques sacrées. Moi, je n’ai jamais gobé leurs histoires. Je les prends tous pour des farceurs. (348).

By stating that these Native Americans are “farceurs,” Marie Rosaire calls into question both the image that they are cultivating and the principles of which they speak. And this is, in fact, a cultivated image on the part of Harrow’s influences, and on the part of Harrow himself. As Marie Rosaire points out, they are no more or less “Indian” than she, but they’ve added to the image – aggrandized the image – to the point that they are nothing but a stereotype of themselves. Marie Rosaire is obviously a victim of white attitudes towards Native Americans – a lifetime of constant rejection by white society attests to that fact. But the other Native Americans are equally victims, even if they and Harrow don’t believe themselves to be.

The Native Brazilians are also the victims of industrialization, traveling to the metropolis (in this case, Rio de Janeiro, but the favelas similar to those in Rio are found throughout the country) in order to find work. For the most part, the citizens of the favelas fall into three categories: the descendants of emancipated slaves; indigenous Brazilians whose ancestral habitat (typically the Amazon) has been destroyed by deforestation; or indigenous Brazilians who voluntarily leave their rural home in order to create a better life for themselves. The Brazilians in the novel do not demonstrate any active contempt for indigenous cultures; rather, they seem to accept the poverty in which they live as a given:

[les enfants de la Baixada Fluminense] ne sont pas trop mal nourris. On peut penser que la plupart d'entre eux ne sont pas orphelins. Ils sont seulement pauvres, pauvres à un point que nul ne peut imaginer car leur misère n'est pas le fruit d'un cataclysme, d'une chute, mais leur condition profonde et probablement éternelle. Ils sont nés pauvres comme d'autres êtres naissent renard ou cheval. La misère n'est pas leur état mais leur espèce. (572-73)

They are the fictitious representation of the widespread poverty that plagues the indigenous population of Brazil, a population that bears little resemblance to stereotypically "Noble" representations of indigenous populations.

The inhabitants of the favelas have been presented to Juliette – by Zé-Paolo, one of Harrow's Brazilian collaborators – as sub-human: "Ce sont des malheureux, expliquait-il, Des malheureux et des monstres" (573). This is, however, an extremely narrow view of the complexities inherent in urban poverty, and evidence of the perceived self-superiority of the elite class over the poor masses. Harrow and McLeod, who force the poor to shoulder the responsibility of the world's problems, refuse to see that the poor – especially the indigenous poor – represent the culmination of centuries of exploitation by the dominant European class. Guided by Carmen, a Brazilian woman who provides shelter, Juliette comes to the realization that "[à] Rio, quand on regarde les pauvres, on comprend d'où ils viennent. Ces visages d'Indiens sont ceux des sociétés primitives détruites, ces peaux noires appartiennent aux esclaves amenés d'Afrique pour travailler dans les plantations. . . . Au Brésil, on comprend que les pauvres ne sont pas une espèce à part, une monstruosité venue d'on ne sait où : ils sont le produit de notre société. Elle les a fabriqués, rejetés hors de ses clôtures" (752).

Harrow has served as Juliette's guide for a large portion of the novel. The result is that she believes that his professed way of life, which models itself after Native American culture, offers real solutions to the effect that humans have on the environment. The contradictions present in Harrow's actual way of living, including the hate that feels towards the poor, succeed in convincing Juliette that Harrow is in fact wrong (750). She accepts some of the things that he has taught her, but must combine his lessons with those of Carmen and her family to arrive at a more profound conclusion: "Les Blancs n'ont pas commis de plus grand sacrilège à leurs [les Indiens] yeux que de planter des piquets et clore leurs prairies de barbelés. Cela peut paraître un raisonnement primitive, mais je crois que c'est vraiment l'essentiel, le péché originel de notre civilisation : planter des barrières" (750). And of course, the irony of Rufin's ending cannot be ignored. Harrow – the one who would kill millions on behalf of the planet, who would reject all of Western culture in name of indigenous values – is hacked to pieces by the (authentic) indigenous Americans who have no claim to the title of Ecologically Noble Savage, but who are in the end both more noble and more savage than any myth could make them out to be.

CHAPTER 4

*GLOBALIA***Part I. “histoires” and “Histoires”: Nature, Culture, and Storytelling as an Act of**

Resistance. Since the advent of post-colonial theory in the latter half of the twentieth century, the primarily oral nature of stories and histories of indigenous cultures has been recognized as a way to actively resist assimilation into the colonizing culture. Paradoxically, the act of writing can also be considered an act of resistance, especially in the case of minority groups, for whom the denial of education served as a way to perpetuate their minority status within the dominant society. This is also a way of denying such populations any kind of cultural history, especially in the case of populations who have been uprooted from their ancestral land and forced to move to another area. The new population that forms as a result of this upheaval must consequently create its own history. This is true of American and Caribbean Black communities who, in as a result of the slave trade, lost all connection to their homeland and to their history, which was often rooted in the landscape. This is also true of American Indian populations, who – although not forced into slavery – suffered the same forced migration that Africans had undergone centuries before. This is the case as well in *Globalia*, where the conflict between history and History – to use Édouard Glissant’s distinction – is exemplified by the characters’ relationship to the landscape. Through the formation of the two main characters, Baïkal and Puig, it becomes obvious that active resistance against Globalia must incorporate literature, nature, and a sense of history in order to be successful.

Globalia, a future one-world nation-state, is a highly divisive society that masquerades as an all-inclusive perfect democracy. Following a series of violent civil wars, a group of wealthy

businessmen, intellectuals, and politicians formed Globalia with certain limits in mind: a strict separation between the incorporated areas of Globalia and everything else; total annihilation of all political resistance to Globalia; and the maintenance of strict cultural and political cohesion within the borders of Globalia. This would be achieved “en sensibilisant sans relâche les populations à un certain nombre de dangers : le terrorisme, bien sûr, les risques écologiques et la paupérisation. Le ciment social doit être la peur de ces trois périls et l’idée que seule la démocratie globalienne peut leur apporter un remède” (*Globalia* 332). This obviously demands a high degree of control of the citizens, which has been achieved through psychological manipulation by government-controlled media outlets, as well as through spatial containment. In the novel, the world has been divided between zones – primarily urban areas over which the Globalian government has total jurisdiction – and non-zones, areas which the Globalians believe are used to preserve wilderness. Movement between the zones and the non-zones is difficult, although in the name of absolute freedom (the governing principle of Globalia) it is hypothetically possible. The majority of Globalian citizens never attempt to cross the borders, in large part because the government has psychologically manipulated them to believe that the non-zones don’t exist. The zones are actually bordered by heavily surveilled walls and glass ceilings, and any unauthorized attempt to cross the border is immediately aborted by the government (51). In order to render psychological manipulation more effective, the government has deprived its citizens of their history and consequently of their connection to any particular spatial location:

Ces lois [sur la “Préservation de la Vérité historique”] ont limité l’usage identitaire de l’Histoire. Dans un premier temps, chaque peuple composant la fédération globalienne n’a eu que le droit de commémorer ses défaites. La notion de victoire était considérée comme suspecte car donnant

naissance à des désirs impérialistes et à des rêves de gloire. Mais on s'est rapidement aperçu que les défaites pouvaient nourrir autant de comportements revanchards ou agressifs. Le droit à l'Histoire a ainsi été remplacé par le droit à la Tradition, fixant à chacun le petit nombre de "Références culturelles standardisées" que nous connaissons aujourd'hui. Toute liaison entre le temps et l'espace a été radicalement coupée à partir de cette époque : la relation entre les peuples, leur histoire et leur terre a été déclarée notion antidémocratique. (333).

In most cases, this has been successful, and Globalians indulge in historical references at carefully constructed historical tourist sites. Cape Cod is the first example given in the novel, and the ability to "sentir ses racines" (77) is presented as such a powerful aphrodisiac that the only hotels in the area are rented by the hour (77). This makes it clear that the desire to understand one's personal identity is a deep, almost primordial desire for most people, but in the cultural amnesia that prevails in Globalia, this desire is carefully manipulated in order to politically and commercially benefit the society as a whole. For Baïkal and Puig, however, both of whom are interested in studying history, the inability to attach themselves to a landscape that holds any degree of meaning has sparked the desire for revolt.

In *Le Discours antillais* Édouard Glissant discusses at length the relationship between history and History and the relevance of this distinction to the cultural identity in the Caribbean, but I propose that his argument is equally relevant to the cultural atmosphere that Rufin has created in *Globalia*. History (capital "H") is official, linear, and Western (227). Glissant does not deny the fact that Caribbean History exists, but he notes that it is always in the context of the dominant, European culture. The existence of History as a discipline that claims to shed light on

the lived reality of the people is absent, which means that a collective consciousness is also absent (223), since there is no inherited body of myth. This stems from the nature of Caribbean history, “une histoire faite de ruptures et dont le commencement est un arrachement brutal” (223). In contrast to colonial African countries, where the colonial population still occupied ancestral territory, allowing for the continuation of traditional stories and songs, Caribbean slaves typically had no common ancestry, no common language, and therefore no common collective consciousness that allowed them to navigate their shared experience and mount an active revolt against the colonial power. The result was that shared experiences occurring after the brutal separation from their homeland began to be referenced in terms of natural events (225).

To this definition of History, Glissant adds the companion Literature, which is also linear:

Histoire et Littérature s'accordent (si l'on excepte quelques épisodes d'entremêlement vite épuisés, comme au temps des philosophes présocratés) pour séparer l'homme du monde, pour asservir nature à culture. La linéarité du récit et la linéarité de la chronologie se dessinent dans un tel contexte. L'homme, élu, se connaît et connaît le monde, non parce qu'il en participe, mais parce qu'il le met en série et le mesure à son âge, c'est-à-dire à sa seule filiation. (240)

Caribbean poet Derek Walcott, who has also written about the absence of a collective consciousness in the Caribbean, writes that “[i]n the Caribbean, history is irrelevant, not because it is not being created, or because it was sordid; but because it never mattered. What has mattered is the loss of history, the amnesia of the races, what has become necessary is imagination,

imagination as necessity, as invention” (6). This is the dynamic that is at work in *Globalia*, since the government has effectively neutralized all versions of history except for its own official version, self-fabricated and bearing very little resemblance to the actual events that surround the formation of Globalia (350-51). As noted in the passage that I previously cited, everyone in Globalia is given a set of standard cultural references that depend on their actual ethnic ancestry. These provide vaguely ethnic name choices for their children and the allow them to display stereotypical cultural artifacts in their homes: Baïkal’s mother, for example, is officially “[d]ouble agrément Russie-Mongolie” (30), which legally permits her to display a matryoshka doll and a goat-skin carpet should she choose to (30). There is no real connection to one’s ancestry or to one’s ancestral home. This is highlighted by the detached, highly legislated environmentalism practiced by all Globalians. Nature thus becomes the servant of culture, both in the sense that culture dictates the way in which the Globalians must interact with the natural world, and in the sense that the Globalian representation of the natural world is as false as its representation of History. The result is that the Globalians are separated entirely from the world around them, existing in a sort of cultural amnesia that is exacerbated by the arbitrary nature of the History with which they’ve been provided.

This is the mentality that forms the basis of environmental practice in Globalia. The majority of Globalians have adopted an incredibly responsible attitude toward the environment within the confines of the zones; in fact, ecology forms the basis of all educational programs (*Globalia* 238). Rather than demonstrating an active concern for the environment, this attitude is portrayed as a form of indoctrination. This is evident in the almost ironic tone that the narrator adopts when referring to the supposed environmentally sound practices of Globalians:

La “Loi sur la protection de la vie” faisait obligation de traiter la moindre plante avec respect. La répression était opérée grâce à une surveillance constante des lieux où se trouvait la végétation. Dans cet immense jardin qu’était devenu Globalia, une garde étroite était montée autour de cette espèce potentiellement dangereuse qu’était l’homme. Heureusement la société s’entendait à le contrôler. (131)

The use of the term “répression” indicates the true nature of the supposed liberty that all Globalians enjoy. Environmentalism has become more of a mandated habit for Globalians than a conscious choice. Furthermore, Globalia might be considered an immense garden by its citizens, but in actuality it is only a small archipelago of cities (339) in which the natural world is a highly cultivated mimicry of what the natural world was once, but which no longer exists anywhere on the planet thanks to the destructive practices of the Globalian government. The “indifférence” mentioned in *La Dictature libérale* and which is portrayed in *Globalia* is therefore a result of indoctrination and legislation instead of a by-product of human psychology. Furthermore, the demand for environmentally friendly products in Globalia actually contributes to the continued destruction of the non-zones. Take as an example K8, “le carburant propre” (74) that has replaced traditional petroleum as a source of energy. Contrary to popular opinion in Globalia, K8 is not clean at all: it may not produce carbon emissions when used, but it is actually a petroleum derivative whose production creates so much pollution that the sites are situated at the outer extremes of the non-zones (390).

Despite the fact that most Globalians consider the non-zones to be savage, empty places, the majority also believe that they perform a vital function: “d’un point de vue écologique, vouloir faire des non-zones des territoires accessibles à l’homme revenait à les retirer à la nature.

Or les non-zones étaient présentées au contraire comme des terres où Globalia garantissait à la vie sauvage une totale protection” (281). The idea that the answer to environmental problems is to consecrate one area to the protection of wilderness is one of which Rufin is highly critical. In *La Dictature libérale*, he writes that “‘protection de la nature’ consiste à faire voisiner pacifiquement la civilisation technique et une nature naturelle, sauvage et vierge. La plus extrême industrialisation pourrait donc coexister avec la sylvie la plus indomptée, dans une apparente indifférence” (194). As he points out, however, this is a severely limited approach to environmental preservation, and leads to what he refers to as nature ghettos: the small areas given over to wilderness protection will sufficiently assuage the public’s conscience, which in turn permits unrestrained environmental exploitation in industrial zones.

This, then is the context for Baïkal’s resistance. Ron Altman, one of the founding fathers of Globalia, takes advantage of Baïkal’s spirit of resistance in order to create a “Nouvel Ennemi” who serves as a scapegoat for periodic government-orchestrated attacks against the Globalians.⁴⁰ Baïkal’s complicity in this arrangement provides him with a free pass into the non-zones. At first his attitude is not characterized by resistance; after all, he goes into the non-zones with the government’s permission. As the true nature of Globalia is revealed to him throughout the text, however, his vague antipathy toward the society is transformed into an active desire to revolt. As Kate – Baïkal’s girlfriend – points out, he is initially motivated by the desire to “retrouver la liberté, les grandes prairies, les ciels d’orage, tout ce que lui avait raconté sa mère. Baïkal est un poète, pas un terroriste!” (249). The relationship between literary or oral tradition, nature, and resistance is established with this single assertion, and it is intentional on the part of the author

⁴⁰ In *La Dictature libérale*, Rufin explores at length the mechanisms of and the psychology behind democratic governments. He proposes that despite their professed weakness, democratic regimes are actually quite strong because they draw their power from their adversaries. In order to function the most effectively, they must therefore have an Enemy that the public perceives as a fundamental threat to their way of life. For more on Rufin’s analysis of democracy, see “L’Ogre démocratique” (9-23), his introduction to the text.

that Baïkal's first reaction to the non-zones is to relate to them in terms of metaphor. Left in complete solitude amid the immense landscape, he sees clouds for the first time and is surprised by how large they are: "le soleil grimpait de nuage en nuage du côté de l'est et des doigts de lumière encore pâles caressaient d'énormes cumulus fixes. . . . Le sol, écrasé par ces monstres, semblait n'être qu'une carrière destinée à leurs joutes" (129). The use of metaphor in this passage allows the reader to consider what might otherwise be a typical landscape (assuming that we are all familiar with the ways in which giant cumulus clouds cast shadows on the earth) with a new perspective, which in turn heightens our awareness of Baïkal's situation. For Baïkal, on the other hand, metaphor functions as a way to make the non-zones somewhat more relatable, and the stories related to him by his mother provide a point of departure for understanding the world around him (249). At the same time that the author evokes the image of giants, a potentially frightening association, he also compares the clouds to sheep: "[Baïkal] contempla un long moment cette prairie grise et bleue, parcourue de troupeaux sans maître" (129-30). This association alerts us to the fact that nature in the non-zones might very well be wild and terrifying (like giants), but that it might also have the potential to be cultivated and gentle, albeit unruly – after all, the clouds are sheep that have no shepherd.

The non-zones, as the name suggests, are the antithesis of the zones: anarchical "espaces vides, sauvages, livrés à la nature" (*Globalia* 17-18). The landscape has been destroyed by periodic bombings by the Globalian government, as well as by the extraction of gas needed to maintain the standard of living within the zones. The various tribes living in the non-zones are victims of the Taggeurs and other mafia-like clans who rape and pillage at their whim. In order to navigate an entirely foreign world, Baïkal must have a guide. Fraiseur, a *tribu* (tribesman), fulfills this role by navigating for Baïkal and by initiating him into the realities of daily life in the

non-zones. Thanks to Fraiseur, Baïkal's initial resistance to Globalia, which was motivated only by "un désir vague de retrouver une liberté" (377) transforms into active revolt against "cette société haïssable et digne d'être combattue" (377). This change in conviction arises partially from the extent of destruction that he witnesses as they travel, which is instigated by Globalia in order to neutralize any real threat to the society. Much of Baïkal's resistance, however, is motivated by the landscape itself, which is represented as a curious mix of nature and culture, and to which Fraiseur is able to give voice through stories and songs inspired by the land and by twentieth century pop culture at the same time. Fraiseur is initially presented as a wanderer, and the narrator notes that Baïkal knows more about navigation than Fraiseur, despite having never been in the non-zones before (218). Within the context of the zones, historical amnesia operates as well, since most *tribus* aren't familiar with the events that led to the formation of the tribe. These details serve to create a fictional society that is quite similar to those that resulted from the historical slave trade: a violent and forced migration, the arbitrary reformation of tribes, systematic oppression through violence and deprivation (*Globalia* 350). In order to negotiate the negation of its own traditions each individual group has created its own myth of origin. As Glissant points out, "[l]e Mythe est la première donnée de la conscience historique, encore naïve, et la matière première de l'ouvrage littéraire" (237). It is also the element that unifies a society, both by creating a collective consciousness and by using both language and location in time and space to create a fundamental link between nature and culture (Glissant 239).

In the case of the Fraiseur tribe this myth centers on a distant ancestor who worked at the Ford plant in Detroit. As he and Baïkal travel through the non-zones, Fraiseur shares the myths and stories associated with his tribe. These stories are consistent with Glissant's definition of history (lower-case "h"): pluralistic, of the people, non-linear (230). Furthermore, the Fraiseur

tribe's myth of origin fulfills the function described by Glissant, by which "[l]e Mythe déguise en même temps qu'il signifie, éloigne en éclairant, obscurcit en rendant plus intense et plus prenant *cela* qui s'établit dans un temps et un lieu entre des hommes et leur entour. Il en explore l'inconnu-connu" (237). Fraiseur's story of the tribe's origin can be resumed as follows: in the 1920s or 1930s (which in Globalia is the extremely remote past), the first Fraiseur, a Brazilian chief, and his wife, an African princess, walked from Brazil to Detroit. The first Fraiseur took a job at the Ford plant and participated in the Detroit jazz scene. (218-21). After working for some time, the first Fraiseur decided to go back to the Amazon. At the same time, Globalia was being formed. Since the ozone had been mostly destroyed, the government of Globalia agreed to pay the first Fraiseur an annual wage if he and his descendants protected their area of rainforest from deforestation (238). As the result of generations of re-telling, the original Fraiseur's daily ritual of going to work has assumed the signification of a religious rite (221), in which Ford is referred to as "LUI" (221); Detroit has become the mythical place of origin (220), analogous to the Garden of Eden; the Fraiseur's work coveralls are a "tenue de cérémonie" (221); and his name tag and clarinet are treated as religious relics. The choice of words throughout the passage helps to solidify this image, and training and promotion within the company are referred to as "initiation" and "passer tous les échelons" (221). This is certainly intended to be a parody of the function of commercialism within our current society, especially considering that the Fraiseur clan's ritual psalm is "Whouoc hroun zwe kloc" (379), a pidginized version of *Rock Around the Clock*, and that their ritual dinners are iguana nuggets, ant milkshakes, and monkey cheeseburgers – an homage to the first Fraiseur's habit of eating at the "légendaire restaurant McDonalds" (393) every Sunday.

Despite the obvious parody and resultant criticism of both religion and American pop-culture, Fraiseur's story fulfills an important function within the text, allowing Baïkal to understand the full import of the cultural amnesia that operates in Globalia:

En Globalia, le passé était englouti au fur et à mesure. Un mois paraissait aussi lointain qu'un siècle. Les titres de l'actualité disparaissaient des écrans d'une semaine sur l'autre. Les événements qui avaient eu lieu l'année précédente étaient aussi inconcevables qu'ils ne s'étaient jamais produits. Dans les non-zones, au contraire, le passé résonnait interminablement. Comme une voix réfléchi en écho sur le flanc des montagnes et qui revient méconnaissable, les faits anciens se perpétuaient dans les mémoires. Mais ils étaient déformés, transformés, enjolivés et n'avaient plus qu'un lointain rapport avec le présent qui, longtemps auparavant, les avait créés. (221-22)

Fraiseur and Baïkal's journey through the non-zones allow the reader to see the extent of the destruction unleashed on the people and on the landscape. Not only has the land been completely destroyed by Globalian bombers, but it is also littered with junk. The text itself is also littered with references to the junk, which is almost all brand-name: "Jeep" (139), "Pepsi-Cola" (219), "FORD" (221)⁴¹, "Boeing" (83), "McDonalds" (391). All of the objects that are emblazoned with logos date from "jadis" (219), and it is implied in the text that they are relics from before the civil wars – that is to say, from the reader's temporal present. As Fraiseur leads Baïkal through the non-zones, these brands serve as a way to highlight the strangeness of the landscape. The Jeep for example, which Baïkal recognizes as a car, is actually functioning as a house, and

⁴¹ In an ironic twist, the car company Ford is actually the god of the Fraiseur clan, whose founder was literally a "tourner-fraiseur" (221) at the Ford plant in Detroit in the beginning of the twentieth century.

Fraiseur notes that “[p]-têt que c’était une voiture mais y a longtemps alors. M’est avis que c’est une maison depuis un bon bout de temps” (140). Fraiseur’s statement indicates that these artifacts, which the reader may consider junk, are such a part of the surrounding world that he considers them both useful and natural, much like trees or rocks (144). This fact speaks to the long-term damage inflicted on the non-zones by first the civil wars and then by Globalia: as Baïkal notes that “il [Fraiseur] n’avait jamais vu ces lieux autrement qu’en ruine. Il ne savait pas reconnaître ce que ces installations étaient devenues, parce qu’il n’avait pas la première idée de ce qu’elles avaient pu être. Il n’avait sans doute jamais été mis en présence d’une usine en état de fonctionnement” (144). The use of brand names creates two narrative effects. First, it indicates the extent to which branding has left its mark – pun intended – on the physical world. This works on multiple levels: the non-zones are littered with junk, the junk is littered with brand names, and the text itself is littered (albeit in an intentionally satirical manner) with both the junk and the brand names. Second, it infuses the narrative with ironic humor that is characteristic of Rufin’s narrative style and which only serves to highlight the dysfunctional world view that characterizes the world within the text. By relying on brands that are familiar to the reader, Rufin extends his critique to contemporary, industrial society.

Michel Serres explores the cultural effect of branding at length in *Le Mal-propre: polluer pour s’approprier?*. He argues that all living organisms pollute in order to appropriate; many animals mark their territory with urine or some other bodily fluid or scent that indicates to all other animals the limits of their home territory. Human beings are no different. Clothes, shoes, household items, etc., don’t belong to us until they have been marked with our sweat; once we pollute them, they belong to us. Serres explores at length the various historical and cultural implications of this basic fact to finally arrive at the use of brands as a way for corporations to

appropriate physical objects. There are two types of pollution that he explores: hard and soft pollution. “Pollution dure” is conventional pollution, and Serres speaks specifically to large scale pollution typical of industrialism: chemicals and waste that are disposed of in the bodies of water adjacent to factories, or carbon emissions from large factories. Serres considers this as a way for corporations to claim a particular area: water pollution, for example, ensures that no other species can (safely) inhabit that area. As long as the polluting material remains, that space belongs to the polluting company. The other type of pollution that Serres discusses is “la pollution douce,” a seemingly innocuous form of pollution that he sees as noxious as hard pollution. Soft pollution is defined by Serres as “les tsunamis d’écriture, signes et logos, dont la publicité inonde désormais l’espace rural et civique, public, naturel et paysager. Fort différentes, au moins dans l’ordre énergétique, ordures et marques résultent pourtant du même geste de salissure, de la même intention d’appropriation, d’origine animale” (Serres 43). By emblazoning their brand on advertisements, clothing, highway billboards, etc., companies essentially appropriate that space for themselves. If hard pollution is the material garbage of industry, soft pollution – advertising – is the cultural garbage of industry: “[i]mages, déchets de tableaux; logos, déchets d’écriture; pubs, déchets de vue; annonces, résidus de musique” (53). Not only does this cultural garbage appropriate the physical space that it occupies, but it also has come to form a sort of border around our living space. As Serres points out, the closer one gets to a town or a city, the more one is bombarded by advertisement (56). This is especially true of poor, urban neighborhoods, and Serres argues that this is another way for the dominant culture to continue to disenfranchise minority groups, both at home and abroad: material waste gets disposed of in poor neighborhoods or in poor countries, and cultural waste – advertisement – is to be found in these

same neighborhoods and countries. In this way, hard and soft pollution work together toward an “envahissement global” (48).

The soft pollution is familiar to Baïkal, and he notes that despite the occasional glimpse of an antiquated logo, the landscape in the non-zones “ne parlait pas: les publicités qui envahissaient l’espace en Globalia faisaient là totalement défaut” (219). The logos that are present in the non-zones are decaying yet intact, implying that industrial corporations that have become the symbol of developed societies have contributed to the moral and cultural decay within the societies, yet are powerful enough that they will never totally disappear. Hard pollution, on the other hand, is ubiquitous. As in the case of the wall of the Pepsi-Cola plant or the old Jeeps, some of it dates from the distant past, and even the now-ancient ruins are still surrounded by “de véritables ruisseaux sombres et visqueux” in which “[d]es reflets dorés montraient qu’à ces fluides se mêlait une grande quantité de mazout et d’huile” (255). In fact, clean drinking water has become such a rare commodity that the possession of “une source” provides not only water but income (145). If we take for true Lopez’s statement that in many native societies, ritual is based on the imitation of the order exhibited by the land (5), and that their philosophies are derived from attention to the scientific and artistic qualities of the surrounding land, then the Fraiseur tribe’s curious blend of nature and culture within their myth of origin makes sense. The vestiges of the commercial and industrial culture that existed before the installation of the Globalian government have left obvious and lasting impressions on the Fraiseur tribe’s worldview, just as they have on the landscape. In both cases, the original meaning of these references has been obscured with the passage of time; a Jeep is now typically used as a home, and working long hours at a car plant has been transformed into religious devotion. In both cases, the natural world has proven to be more durable than the culture that

sought to dominate. The landscape, despite devastating alteration thanks to pollution, shows evidence of, if not recovery (which seems unlikely, given the sustained destruction thanks to Globalia), then at least of achieving some sort of equilibrium: “Ils passèrent au large d’un complexe industriel en ruine, situé le long d’un ruisseau au fond d’une vallée. Vu de loin, le site avait l’aspect d’un monstrueux potager en friche. Les herbes folles et les arbres avaient recouvert toute la surface de l’ancien combinat” (143). Despite a myth of origin that emphasizes culture over nature, the myth is still framed by a blending of nature and culture: the first Fraiseur and his wife walk from Brazil to Detroit, and once they’ve made their contract with Globalia to guard their “puits d’ozone” (238), they walk back to the Amazon. Once Baïkal and Fraiseur arrive on the puits d’ozone, it becomes even more obvious that the tribe has followed a reverse trajectory from what one would expect: their tribal origins begin in an urban, highly industrialized context, and over time their lifestyle has become more closely associated with the natural.

The relationship between the landscape described above and the act of storytelling provides a final dimension to Baïkal’s resistance against the Globalian government. It is, after all, this decimated and impoverished landscape that inspires Fraiseur’s stories, some of which serve to create landmarks that are useful for navigation, and some of which concern the Fraiseur tribe’s origins (218-19). The act of storytelling thus creates the impression – in the mind of Baïkal, but in the mind of the reader, as well – that an otherwise desolate land is full (219). To achieve this, the narrator juxtaposes a description of the polluted land with the rich, colorful, and humorous story of Fraiseur’s ancestor who apparently worshiped at the altar of Ford. This serves to divert the attention from the heavy pollution and helps both characters to neutralize the desolation that surrounds them. Fraiseur’s stories are not entirely a method of escapism, however, because the narrator consistently returns to the polluted landscape, thus emphasizing it

at the same time that he seeks to divert our attention. The result is that the creation and repetition of these stories, which create a bridge between nature and culture, demonstrate active resistance to the Globalian assertion that the non-zones “ne sont pas humaines” (333) or that they “n’existent pas du tout” (333), and are thus easy targets for the destructive practices that fuel Globalia.

Puig, a journalist, demonstrates a strong affinity for history, especially the regional history of southwestern France. This desire is contrary to the Globalian law indicating that too strong of an attachment to one’s origins tends toward arrogance and racism, and is therefore illegal. Puig’s resistance to this idea is motivated by literature, and specifically by the act of writing, and his statement, “[a]ujourd’hui, moi, Puig Pujols, je suis libre” (161) is significant in that he writes his declaration instead of stating it aloud. Liberation is entirely associated with the desire for historic roots. Officially “agréé-Français” (187), Puig is actually Catalan, and his pride in his origins sets him apart within the context of the narrative; only Fraiseur is as proud of his heritage as Puig. Puig’s ability and desire to write is expressly linked to the Catalan region, since his grandmother taught him to write during time spent with her in Carcassonne (161). In the absence of a community, Puig initially writes in order to create a personal history:

Il raconta son enfance, décrivit sa mère qu’il n’avait vue que deux fois avant son accident, la maison de Carcassonne avec le grand tableau en vraie peinture qui ornait la salle à manger : l’assassinat du duc de Guise. . .
 . Rapidement, Puig sentit une telle aisance sous sa plume qu’il s’évada de toutes les contingences, fussent-elles liées à la mémoire. Il composa des poèmes où il n’était question que d’amour et d’honneur. (177)

Just as Fraiseur's stories are inspired by the landscape, Puig's story, constructed in order to create his identity, is also inspired by the remembered landscape of southwestern France. In a society in which connection to one's history and land – beyond the accepted standardized cultural references, of course – is considered antidemocratic, the simple act of writing his history marks a clear rupture from the Globalian way of life. The language employed in this passage indicates that Puig intends to take action against Globalia. The painting of the duc de Guise's assassination, the possession of which is a felony (177), indicates a spirit of resistance that becomes evident when Puig takes up reading as an almost obsessive past-time. His poems about love and honor call to mind medieval courtly romances, which is reinforced by the memory of the medieval city of Carcassonne (161). Not only does the content of Puig's statement declare defiance against Globalia, but the medium does as well. The fact that he uses his "plume" as a way to evade creates an association between the pen and the sword, and it is interesting to note that the narrator never refers to Puig's writing instrument as anything other than "plume." This of course evokes a long tradition of associating the pen with the sword, and Voltaire famously wrote "qui plume a guerre a". Since pens can only be found in the "rayon bricolage" (158) in Globalia, the ability and the desire to write make Puig all the more potent. As a result of the prevalence of digital media, Globalian culture is characterized by its ability to live entirely in the present. History is thus rendered obsolete, since any event that seems historic is forgotten as soon as the next big event occurs (221). By selecting paper and pen as his medium, Puig has ensured that his memories, and therefore his own personal history, are comparatively permanent, thus rendering them more offensive to the government.

Because he desires to write, Puig decides to join Walden, an association devoted to reading and writing. At Walden, Puig is introduced to Henry David Thoreau's *Walden; or, Life*

in the Woods, which is typically published with Thoreau's essay "Civil Disobedience" appended. He eventually makes the acquaintance of Paul Wise, the founder of the society. Wise, in conjunction with *Walden*, serves as a guide to Puig as he learns more about Globalia, since Wise is in possession of documents that bear witness to the formation of the one-world government. Puig's first reaction to *Walden* is to take it as "un conte à la limite de l'absurde, plein de fraîcheur et de poésie" (185). Such a reaction is typical, at least according to the founding members of the society (186), and is in fact the inspiration for its name: "sous les apparences du rêve, ce qu'ils trouveront ici, c'est la réalité" (186). This statement speaks to the larger function that *Walden* fulfills within Rufin's text: Thoreau's text serves almost a standard around which Puig, Kate, and eventually Baïkal, rally in order to mount resistance against the government. Thoreau's act of breaking with society, however slight that break might have been, allows the three characters to imagine their own break with society. Thoreau's words might very well seem like a work of wild imagination, but as Thoreau himself stated in a journal entry, "I find the actual to be far less real to me than the imagined. Why this singular prominence and importance is given to the former, I do not know. In proportion as that which possesses my thoughts is removed from the actual, it impresses me. I have never met with anything so truly visionary and accidental as some actual events" (qtd. in Crarner 15). The idea that reality can be less real than the imagined gives Puig and Kate the freedom to envision their escape from Globalia.

The choice of *Walden* as key reference within the text also indicates the trajectory of Puig's character development, since *Walden* and "Civil Disobedience" (1849) both indicate that Thoreau was committed to social change, as do his actions during his lifetime (Lauter 3). As Lauter points out, both "Civil Disobedience" and *Walden* "are fundamentally political essays: they have designs on their readers' thoughts and actions. Both argue for certain ways of thinking

about and living in the world and against others, particularly in terms of the relationships of individuals to society and to the nation” (3). In the first chapter of *Walden*, Thoreau states quite clearly that his work is not intended for those who are content with their present condition, but to the “mass of men who are discontented, and idly complaining of the hardness of their lot or of the times, when they might improve them” (15). For Puig, who is generally discontented with Globalia, it is Thoreau’s submersion in the natural world that prompts him to think that “[i]l fallait une imagination supérieur pour concevoir un monde où l’homme vivrait ainsi librement dans la nature et se livrerait à ses plaisirs sans tenir le moindre compte de l’intérêt collectif : pêcher, faire du feu, couper les arbres” (*Globalia* 185). Since all three of these activities are illegal in Globalia, and since the government has done everything possible to ensure that its citizens have forgotten that another way of life ever existed, it is only logical that to Puig’s mind, such activities have always been illegal. Just as Thoreau undertook an alternative way of life, Puig uses Thoreau’s narrative to imagine alternatives to Globalia.

Imagination is a key concept in Thoreau’s narrative, just as it becomes a central characteristic of Puig’s own personal *Bildung*. Thoreau’s journals contain examples of his attitude toward imagination, indicating that the imagined is often more real than the actual (Crarner 15). As Crarner points out in an annotation that accompanies his edition of *Walden*, Transcendentalists were influenced by Samuel Tyler Coleridge’s (1772-1834) distinction between imagination and fancy. Fancy is defined by Coleridge as a “mode of Memory emancipated from the order of time and space” (qtd. in Crarner 8) – and consequently a superficial way of perceiving the world – whereas imagination is a more profound and deeply creative mode of perception (Crarner 8). This distinction is at work within the representation of Globalia. The Globalians (and I exclude Puig from this category because of his recognition of the

actual nature of Globalia) are fanciful⁴² in Coleridge's sense of the term, in that they are emancipated from the order of time and space. Puig, ironically a slave to the Globalian policy of absolute, enforced freedom, desires to be anchored in time and place, which is evident in the nostalgia that he feels toward medieval Carcassonne. It is through reading both *Walden* and "*Histoire de la Catalogne*" that he begins to realize that History in Globalia has been reduced to "des scènes, à des ambiances. Dans les parcs de loisirs où les professeurs emmenaient leurs classes, on passait du manège médiéval au funérarium égyptien, des échafauds de la Révolution française aux remparts romains virtuels. Tout cela venait du passé comme le calcaire et le granit venaient du sol : sans ordre" (188).

If Fraiseur's myth of origin is classified as a history, and not a History, there is little doubt that *Walden* belongs to the category of both History and Literature as Glissant defines them. Thoreau is of course a canonical New England writer, and Cape Cod is "la première référence culturelle standardisée des agréés anglo-américains" (76). His contribution to American culture is undeniable, and as an active abolitionist, the case can certainly be made for his contribution to American history as well. *Walden* also exhibits linear tendencies, and although there is no linear plot, per say, the chapters do more or less follow the calendar year. Still, Glissant makes the case that such linearity separates humans from the material world, and this is not the case for *Walden*. A degree of separation still exists, and *Walden* went through seven revisions before it was published (Crarner xv), which indicates that the representation of the natural world in Thoreau's text is a finely wrought one, demonstrating Thoreau's vast

⁴² I do not mean to imply that "fancy" had a negative connotation for Thoreau and his fellow Transcendentalists; in fact, he seems to imply that both imagination and fancy must be liberated in order to throw off the yoke of slavery (7). Thoreau, as an ardent abolitionist, wrote specifically in reference to American and Caribbean slavery, writing that "[s]elf-emancipation even in the West Indian provinces of the fancy and imagination, – what Wilberforce is there to bring that about?" (7). Given Crarner's reference to Coleridge, Thoreau seems to imply that both fancy and imagination must be free to work within imaginative new spaces – imaginative new histories – if slavery is to be abolished. He uses human slavery as his example, but his statement is applicable to any sort of enslavement, whether physical or otherwise.

knowledge of historical and naturalist texts. Within the context of *Globalia*, however, Thoreau and his contemporaries have been erased from the cultural consciousness.⁴³ This fact makes familiarity with the text as subversive an act as becoming familiar with one's place of origin, and allows the *Walden* to rid itself of its iconic status to become a dangerous piece of counterculture. As Crarner points out, and as Thoreau himself stated in his journals, the primary goal of *Walden* was to create a mythology; to read the work as autobiographic would paint a portrait of a hypocrite who had his mother do his laundry while professing to have eschewed all creature comforts (xx). If *Walden* is read as a mythology, then it exemplifies Glissant's statement that the creation of myths is a bridge between nature and culture, since it relies on rhetorical and narrative strategies to represent the natural world. Despite Thieu's (a member of Walden society) protestations to the contrary, Puig has in fact read *Walden* correctly by assuming that it is a story.

In order for resistance against *Globalia* to have a chance at success, there must be a collaborative effort between the *tribus* (represented by Fraiseur), the *Déchu*s (a warrior tribe represented by the character Helen), and the Globalians (Baïkal, Puig, and Kate). This collaboration only becomes possible when Baïkal, Puig, and Kate have all been sufficiently schooled in the hypocritical nature of the Globalian government. The intermingling of history and History, and therefore of nature and culture, allows for the exposition of such hypocrisy since it allows for a complete portrait of the past. Still, the conclusion of *Globalia* is not particularly optimistic: Fraiseur is killed by Howard, a *Déchu* and co-leader of the resistance who is revealed to be a mole for the government (476-82). Wise, the son of a founding member of the government, finds himself the dupe of Altman, who has orchestrated every action of the entire novel. These two revelations seem to confirm the idea that the author situates the character

⁴³ *Moby Dick* is implicitly referred to in order to highlight the cruelty of whale hunting. Otherwise, New England history has been reduced to the arrival of the pilgrims and the era when maritime trade flourished (during the latter half of the eighteenth and the first half of the nineteenth century) (*Globalia* 76).

formation in the context of a dystopian world, since it reveals the extent to which the government has infiltrated every action and every attempt at revolt. This is significant, since as Rob McAlear has shown, “the space described by the dystopian narrative is a possible outcome of our current moment given no alteration in our social conduct or ideology” (26). Fear therefore plays a large role in the psychological effect of dystopian fiction. This fear is typically anticipatory instead of immediate, and operates on the psyche instead of on the body, which allows it to be distinguished from terror; it cannot merely horrify, but must stir the desire for change in the reader as in the protagonist (McAlear 25). Dystopian fiction, like ecocriticism, is therefore inherently political in nature, since its “suasive aspect lies in its emphasis on generating a future vision of the reader’s current world for the purpose of encouraging an intervention in history” (McAlear 25). Furthermore, the future world represented in the text must be sufficiently near to the temporal present inhabited by the reader to instill anticipatory fear, but it must be distant enough to permit the possibility of change. The author therefore uses temporality in order to “endow the reader with the ability to create social change” (McAlear 28). The rupture point between the temporal present and the represented future, which typically takes the form of some cataclysmic event, is typically situated very close to the reader’s temporal present, heightening the reader’s sense of urgency.

The goal of dystopian fiction is therefore to incite the reader to actively work to change the present. McAlear specifically states, however, that dystopian literature does not provide a blueprint for change (29). It can be assumed, therefore, that it is intended to encourage readers to imagine ways in which they can avoid a future like that represented within the narrative. In the case of *Globalia*, it is clear that change must come from a collaborative effort between dissenters in both the zones and the non-zones. In order to avoid a similar future, the reader must envision

the same sort of collaboration between history and History, between developed and developing societies, between nature and culture. This spirit of collaboration, as well as the willingness to explore non-traditional avenues of resistance, is the predominant message of Rufin's novel, and the reader is left with the sense that the key to resistance is to be found in *Walden*: "[e]n Globalia, dit [Kate], songeuse, ce livre n'avait guère de sens pour moi. Le bonheur dans la nature... mais ici, je commence à comprendre. Wise disait que c'était l'arme la plus puissante dont disposent les êtres humains" (493). It seems likely that this statement is intended to evoke Thoreau's declaration from "Walking": "what I have been preparing to say is, that in Wildness is the preservation of the World" (94-95). This is only the most often quoted fragment of a longer and, in my opinion, much more interesting reflection. Thoreau therefore follows this quotation with the elaboration that

[e]very tree sends its fibres forth in search of the Wild. The cities import it at any price. Men plough and sail for it. From the forest and wilderness come the tonics and barks which brace mankind. Our ancestors were savages. The story of Romulus and Remus being suckled by a wolf is not a meaningless fable. The founders of every state which has risen to eminence have drawn their nourishment and vigor from a similar wild source. It is because the children of the Empire were not suckled by the wolf that they were conquered and displaced by the children of the northern forests who were. ("Walking" 95).

That the rebellion against Globalia is instigated by a group of so-called savages from the non-zones is significant given Thoreau's stance on the wild. Although the rebellion against Globalia is not successful, Baïkal and Kate's decision to return to Fraiseur's ancestral land – which they

now describe as “notre puits d’ozone” (493) – indicates that they have integrated themselves into the wildness that prevails in the non-zones. Armed with happiness in nature, poised to preserve the world through wildness, Kate and Baikal represent a hopeful solution to an otherwise pessimistic statement about the state of nature in the contemporary world.

Part II: Place-attachment and Environmental Responsibility. So far, I have considered the ways that the myth of the Noble Savage, and later the myth of the Ecologically Noble Savage, misrepresents North and South American indigenous culture. In *Rouge Brésil*, the author represented the Noble Savage in a way that paid homage to his historical sources while at the same time highlighting some important misrepresentations of indigenous Brazilians on the part of French ethnographers. *Le Parfum d’Adam* presented two different images of the Noble Savage: the Ecologically Noble Savage (represented by Ted Harrow), and a more accurate representation of the effects that Euro-American domination have on indigenous populations (represented by Marie-Rosaire and the Brazilians living in the favela). Since *Globalia* is set in the future, we find a slightly different representation of the Ecologically Noble Savage. Although the previous two novels are fiction and not factual histories, they are still anchored in both the past and the present, and therefore are constrained somewhat by historical convention. In *Globalia*, this is not the case. In his postface to the novel, Rufin notes that when writing historical fiction, the rules of the world represented in the narrative are given to the author, but in the case of speculative fiction, it is up to the author himself to define these rules (*Globalia* 498). Rufin’s representation of the Ecologically Noble Savage is still present in *Globalia*, but rather than having to work within the framework of historical or present reality, he is free to imagine a version of indigenous culture that calls into question more than just the historical accuracy of the myth of the Ecologically Noble Savage. Instead, the terms *environmentalism* and *conservation*

are themselves called into question, and the author suggests that the myth of the Ecologically Noble Savage is anchored in Euro-American definitions of these two terms, which don't necessarily apply in the context of indigenous world views. By creating Fraiseur, a representation of the Ecologically Noble Savage who is neither ecologically minded nor noble, but who is still the most environmentally responsible character in the novel, Rufin challenges these definitions that are often taken for granted. As an alternative to traditional notions of environmental ethics, he creates an ethic of emplacement that pervades the narrative, demonstrating that if there is any grain of truth behind the myth of the Ecologically Noble Savage, it is to be found in the idea of living authentically within a place and not in conventional notions of environmental responsibility.

I have already discussed the idea that the Ecologically Noble Savage is a myth constructed by Euro-Americans and imposed onto indigenous culture, much as its predecessor, the myth of the Noble Savage, bore little resemblance to the lived reality of indigenous peoples. While many scholars have called into question the reality behind the myth of the Ecologically Noble Savage, it is much less common for scholars to challenge the terms used when talking about indigenous attitudes toward nature. In his article "Transcending the Debate over the Ecologically Noble Savage: Indigenous Peoples and Environmentalism" Paul Nadasdy points out that Euro-Americans take for granted that there are varying degrees of environmentalism. On one end of the environmentalist spectrum is what he refers to as "brown environmentalism" (300): an attitude toward nature that sees the material world as a collection of resources for humans to exploit. At the other end of the spectrum is "dark green environmentalism" (300), or radical, deep ecology. He places moderate environmentalism – "enlightened anthropocentrism" (300) somewhere in between these two extremes, calling this approach "light green" (300)

environmentalism. Nadasdy asserts that most people, if they think about their attitude towards the environment, will attempt to situate themselves on this spectrum. As relates to the Ecologically Noble Savage, environmental interest groups will most likely also situate indigenous peoples somewhere on the same spectrum (300). The situation of indigenous attitudes on the spectrum depends on the interest group evaluating the attitudes: utilitarian environmentalists on the brown end of the spectrum tend to see Native Americans as the original models of wise-use policy (298). Deep ecologists on the dark green end of the spectrum tend to situate native attitudes closer to their end of the spectrum, and see the Ecologically Noble Savage as a subversive figure that ascribes intrinsic value to the natural world, and therefore stands as the antithesis to brown environmentalism (299). Nadasdy finds it curious, however, that virtually no one thinks to question the spectrum itself (300). He proposes that the use of the terms *environmentalism* and *conservation* to describe indigenous attitudes toward the natural world “necessarily frames indigenous people’s beliefs and values in Euro-North American cultural terms” (291). This only serves to perpetuate colonial power structure and repressive stereotypes, and limits any real understanding of indigenous world views, which naturally vary between groups.

Nadasdy builds his argument on the fact that the terms *environmentalism* and *conservation* are, in his words, “notoriously ill defined” (293). Using ideas presented by Steve Langdon, Nadasdy argues that both terms are based on a

standard, “puritanical” model of conservation [that] retains its power at least in part because its roots lie in Judeo-Christian—particularly Protestant—assumptions that link “the good” with sacrifice and self-denial, while evil is seen as the product of excess and self-indulgence.

Thus, Langdon argues, contemporary wildlife conservation is a constellation of beliefs and practices rooted in a particular set of cultural values rather than in some “objective” understanding of animal population dynamics. As a result, any attempt to use “conservation” as an objective measure of behavior necessarily privileges one particular set of cultural values while simultaneously obscuring the power relations that make that very privileging possible. (294)

In other words, since conservation can be equivocated with austerity, the Euro-American concept of *environmentalism* and *conservation* is likely to be quite different from that of indigenous peoples. Krech maintains that “[w]hen we speak of [Native Americans] as environmentalists, we presumably mean showing concern for the state of the environment and perhaps acting on that concern” (24). This may be characteristic of many – if not most – indigenous peoples, but it does not necessarily follow that the manifestation of this concern will align with the goals of environmental interest groups. Nadasdy cites as an example a conversation with a member of the Kluane First Nation in which the hunter frames the environment as a formidable adversary. For this individual, respecting the environment does not only imply love, but includes an element of fear as well (303-04). Respect can also include conservational practices. Conservation, as I discussed in the introduction, is anchored in the belief that resources should be carefully managed so as not to be wasted. Krech states that “[i]f we describe a Native American as a conservationist, we do not mean that he calculates sustainable yield into the distant future or, in a preservationist-like manner, leaves the environment in an undisturbed, pristine state, but rather that he does not waste . . . and that he does, with deliberation, leave the environment and the resources like animal populations in a usable state for succeeding generations” (25-26). This is

not always the case, however, and Nadasdy refutes this statement by citing the example of the Kluane First Nation (of Canada's Yukon Territory), who believe that catch-and-release fishing is disrespectful to the fish, despite the fact that such practices conform to Euro-Canadian ideas about "no waste" policies practiced by Native Canadians (303).⁴⁴ Such beliefs betray a relationship with the natural world that is much more complex and nuanced than one might believe; terms such as *love* and *respect* – often associated with environmentally sound practices attributed to indigenous peoples – are only Euro-American or Euro-Canadian approximations of indigenous attitudes toward nature, and ignore the intricacies of their beliefs and attitudes.

The ambiguity of terms such as *environmentalism* and *conservation* is exemplified by the varying attitudes toward the natural world in *Globalia*. In Part 1 of this chapter I discussed Globalia's mandated environmentalism, and I would like to return to this idea, because legislated responsibility toward the natural world is a topic that is often debated in our contemporary society, and it has great bearing on the relationship between humans and nature in *Globalia*. The prospect of mandating environmental responsibility calls to mind arguments made by environmental philosophers such as Michel Serres (*Le Contrat naturel*, 1990), Aldo Leopold ("The Land Ethic", 1949), and Christopher Stone ("Should Trees Have Standing? – Toward Legal Rights for Natural Objects", 1972), all of whom have argued in favor of extending ethical rights to the natural world. The idea of extending legal and ethical rights to non-human entities is a provocative one, and Leopold's argument in favor of a land ethic is not only logical, but offers alternatives to present human/non-human relations that closely resemble Michel Serres's concept

⁴⁴ To provide another example, Nadasdy refers to Robert Brightman's study of Cree hunting practices. The Cree believe that a hunter is responsible for killing all of the animals that present themselves to him. Not doing so is disrespectful to the animal, who has offered himself as a sacrifice. Offending animals is risky, because if offended then they will not offer themselves to the hunter again, thus endangering the future food supply. Scarcity is not a factor, because the Cree also believe that an animal treated with respect will reincarnate. Killing in the present is therefore a way to ensure abundance in the future (Nadasdy 308).

of a natural contract: a truce between humans and the natural world that would, as Jonathan Krell points out, restore “legal dignity” (4) to nature. Rufin’s fictive portrayal of such legislation, however, only serves to highlight the idea that environmental action loses all meaning once it loses its sincerity. Instead of creating a more intimate bond between the Globalians and the natural world, environmental legislation only serves to further remove them from any understanding of reality.

What, then, is Globalian environmental legislation aiming to save? The quality of the environment outside of the zones (the protected areas that constitute the state of Globalia – is deplorable, and the quality inside the zones, while seemingly ideal, is so highly mechanized that the actual state of the environment is immaterial. Rufin’s presentation of such ideas within the context of the novel seems to indicate a certain amount of skepticism regarding the formalization of environmental ethics, although as he notes in his postface to the novel, *Globalia* represents the state of democracy pushed to the extremes, and should not be construed as an accurate portrayal of the contemporary world (499). Still, as Stéphanie Posthumus notes, the emphasis on the totalitarian aspects of environmentalism evokes such authors as Luc Ferry and Jean Baudrillard, both of whom are highly critical of environmental ideologies (Posthumus 451). As Posthumus points out, Rufin’s novel avoids the pessimism and inability to propose alternatives that characterize Ferry and Baudrillard’s works, and instead “il fait voir la possibilité d’une autre attitude écologiste bien plus subtile, bien plus nuancée” (451). The critique of such policies in the novel therefore seems to be applicable to the use of environmentalism as means to a political end, and not the motivation of individuals who are genuinely concerned for the health of the ecosystem.⁴⁵ Still, such practices on the part of Globalians rob the term *environmentalism* of all

⁴⁵ For a detailed explanation of how capitalism exploits the public’s environmental sensibilities, see pages 198-201 of *La Dictature libérale*.

meaning, and it becomes evident that within the frame of the narrative, one can call oneself an environmentalist and demonstrate no actual connection to the environment. The Fraiseur tribe, on the other hand, demonstrates that environmentalism as a conscious ideology is not relevant to their lifestyle. Instead, they derive their entire identity from their land and from the mythical journey of their ancestor. As a result of their profound attachment to their *puits*, they protect a natural resource that helps to counteract the atmospheric pollution that is so prevalent in the non-zones (43).

Baïkal's lesson is therefore to learn from Fraiseur how to establish this connection to the environment and thus inhabit a place in an authentic, responsible manner. This is achieved primarily through the rhetorical device of ekphrasis such as it was used in Antiquity, and a look at the history of the term makes it clear that descriptive passages are used deliberately throughout the novel with the goal of persuading both Baïkal and the reader on the importance of place as a more authentic environmental ethic. In *Ekphrasis, Imagination and Persuasion in Ancient Rhetorical Theory and Practice*, Ruth Webb points out that the contemporary use of *ekphrasis* refers to "a text or a textual fragment that engages with the visual arts" (1). This use of the term dates to the nineteenth century, prior to which the term's relation to visual arts was only one facet of its rhetorical function. The broader function of ekphrasis was to present listeners with a vivid scene, thus transforming them into spectators (Webb 8). The goal of this vivid scene was to "aid persuasion by arousing the appropriate emotions in the listener but, far more importantly, [it] could serve to 'colour' the audience's perceptions of the events in question" (155). Frank J. D'Angelo points out that this was achieved in several ways, such as including the judgments and emotions of the describer, an appeal to the audience's senses, and embellishment of the subject through figures of speech (441).

Scenes taking place in the zones are rarely described in a way that appeals to the reader's senses. This lack of sensory description highlights the relatively unfulfilling lifestyle that prevails in Globalia. The emphasis on dialogue and on action inside of the zones reinforces the culture of amnesia that is created by the constant bombardment of information. By contrast, descriptive passages stand out, with the results that the non-zones – these places that officially don't exist (333) – are, to the reader, the most vivid places within the narrative. The descriptions are typically used in relation to Baïkal, and therefore mark the various stages of his *Bildung*. Baïkal first becomes aware of the true nature of Globalia in Altman's kitchen. The descriptions of the kitchen, as well as the process of cooking, rely heavily on metaphor to achieve their goal, to the effect that cooking with fresh ingredients is presented by the narrator as a sensual activity that is dangerous enough that only the orchestrator of the entire society can engage in it: “[l]e monde de cette maison et Altman lui-même appartenaient à une époque proche peut-être mais irrémédiablement révolue Ce monde disparu, c'était celui où les hommes décidaient eux-mêmes de leur destin” (85). As if to underline the imminent danger posed by the past – and everything associated with a time when “l'énergie était le feu, le tissu de la toile ou de la laine, la nourriture des produits de la terre” (85) – heavy emphasis is placed on the knives, spits, and stoves that are “dédiés au tourment de la nature” (85). Still, there is something poetic in these descriptions, and the coal stove that is “ronronnante” and “paisible” (84), and the undulating marks left by the knives work together with “les carreaux de faïence bleus et blancs sur les murs, la fraîcheur des victuailles étalées sur la grande table” (85) in order to highlight the “air de gaieté et de légèreté” (85) that reigns in the kitchen. The narrator's description of the food in Altman's kitchen emphasizes its sensual qualities, and this is evident especially in a description of a *clafoutis* that Altman tenderly considers: “de grosses cerises pourpres s'y enfonçaient dans un lit

profond, invitant à célébrer les tendres épousailles du lait et de l'œuf" (91). Such vivid descriptions – you can almost taste the dessert as you read its description – emphasize the disconnect that exists between the images of the food with which all Globalians are familiar, and the reality of the food that they typically consume, which bears little resemblance to the ingredients that their packaging claims they contain (85). The contrast between the attention and intention that are demanded by the act of cooking are highlighted by the frivolity that characterizes the Globalian society. This particular series of chapters within the narrative serve as the setting for Altman and Baïkal's discussion of the importance of history, and the narrator points out that Altman easily passes from the subject of history to the subject of food, with the result that "[u]n ban de tragique se mêlait aux plats et l'histoire devenait quelque peu un plaisir de bouche" (90-91). By blurring the limits between the two subjects, Rufin seems to imply that the deprivation of sensual pleasure serves the same end as the deprivation of history, both of which work together to further separate Globalians from any sense of reality, consequently ensuring the continuation of the regime's power.

Baïkal's introduction to the non-zones is the next instance of heavily descriptive prose. I've already discussed the use of metaphor in the passages where Baïkal first enters the non-zones, and the images created, such as shepherd-less sheep wandering across the sky (130), contrast strongly and vividly with the cloudless blue sky that is characteristic of the zones (129). The narrator's description of Fraiseur is no less vivid, and what stands out to Baïkal is the abundance of wrinkles, which are compared to "des épingles plantées sur une pelote" (133), and his beard, which resembles "de mauvaises algues [qui] s'insinuent dans les failles du béton qui affleure sur le quai des ports" (133). Fraiseur's appearance, which is also characterized by a horrible, bony gauntness and eyes that burn with either fear, fever or famine (133), decries the

deplorable living conditions in the non-zones. Reality here is harsh and unforgiving, but it simultaneously fosters a deep sense of rootedness in the land that is evident in the Fraiseur tribe's attachment to their *puits d'ozone*. This causes them to act in the best interest of their home, which reveals a relationship to the land that, while definitely utilitarian, includes metaphysical aspects as well. This marks the beginning of the longest stage of Baïkal's formation, intended to introduce him to the complexities of reality in the non-zones. As a result, he gains a more comprehensive understanding of how the Globalian government operates.

Fraiseur fulfills the vital function of facilitating Baïkal's movement in the non-zones. This would be impossible without a guide, given the tenuous relationship between the inhabitants of the non-zones and Globalians. Throughout their journey, Baïkal and Fraiseur encounter a wide range of people. Most are hostile, and in general Fraiseur avoids human company (223). One tribe – whose leader dresses himself as a Western pioneer – proves to be friendly, and Fraiseur is able to communicate with them in a creole that serves as the lingua franca (224). These scenes of apparently aimless wandering serve to provide Baïkal with a snapshot of the non-zones: he becomes aware of the violent nature of life there and witnesses the active role that the Globalian government plays in the infliction of such evils on thousands of people arbitrarily deemed unworthy of even basic human dignity (281). The diversity of the tribes in the non-zones also becomes evident through the pair's wanderings, and the lack of homogeneity in the non-zones defies attempts to stereotype the inhabitants. From an environmental standpoint, the author provides no clear indication that those in the non-zones give any thought to the environment – survival is of primary concern. Nor is there any indication that they act in a way that is harmful to the environment. Ironically, the only entity within the narrative that displays any concern for

the environment is Globalia, and they are entirely responsible for the deplorable living conditions and the rampant pollution in the non-zones.

The Fraiseur tribe's relationship with the environment serves as a perfect example of the way in which the inhabitants of the non-zones demonstrate no environmental consciousness while simultaneously living an environmentally responsible lifestyle. At first glance, it is easy to characterize the Fraiseur tribe as stereotypical Ecologically Noble Savages, especially given their responsibility to their *puits d'ozone*. But the Fraiseur tribe's motivation has little to do with environmental responsibility. Fraiseur is completely ignorant of the reason for which he protects the land – in fact he doesn't even know what the ozone is (237). Instead, his tribe is obliged to protect its area of rainforest thanks to the contract between the original Fraiseur and the Globalian government. The exchange between Baïkal and Fraiseur that reveals this information is worth considering:

- Et qu'est-ce que vous y faites dans votre puits ?
- Rien, on empêche juste les gens de venir couper les arbres.
- C'est pour cela qu'on vous paie ?
- Bien sûr ! s'indigna Fraiseur. C'est un travail.
- Le contrat est toujours valable ?
- Ouais, pour neuf cent quatre-vingt-dix-neuf ans, à ce qu'y paraît.

Ce n'était pas si surprenant. Les programmes gérés par le puissant ministère des Grands Equilibres étaient élaborés pour des durées adaptées aux phénomènes naturels et non aux courtes vues humaines. (238-39)

This passage makes it plain that Fraiseur's tribe attaches economic value to their *puits*; they provide both a good (ozone, although it is provided unconsciously) and a service (protection of

the trees) in exchange for a fee. Their land thus provides their income, much as farmland for example provides income to the family who works it. At the same time that the Fraiseur tribe is financially motivated, their contract with the Globalian government calls to mind the natural contract as conceived of by Michel Serres. Serres writes that “[p]our sauvegarder la Terre ou respecter le temps, au sens de la pluie et du vent, il faudrait penser vers le long terme, et, pour n’y vivre pas, nous avons désappris à penser selon ses rythmes et sa portée. Soucieux de se maintenir, le politique forme des projets qui dépassent rarement les élections prochaines” (54). In this case, the Globalian government *has* in fact thought in the long term, but as I have already shown in the first part of this chapter, this is probably the only case in the narrative where that is true. The citizens of Globalia, however, think in the extreme short term, and their almost amnesiac incapacity to think outside of the here and now is contrasted with the Fraiseur clan’s very deep sense of history.

It would therefore be difficult to support an argument in favor of the Fraiseur tribe as being environmentalist or conservationist in the Euro-American sense of the term. Their personal motivation for protecting their *puits d’ozone* is financial, and the text does not indicate that they have attached any intrinsic value to their *puits*. Their relationship with their piece of land, however, is much more complex than this exchange between Fraiseur and Baïkal implies, and demonstrates a profound attachment to their home place. This is evident in the great offense that Fraiseur takes when Helen states that his land is in “les Régions inaccessibles” (352) – areas characterized by constant warfare, famine, and epidemic (352). His violent reaction to this statement reveals an emotional attachment to his homeland. This attachment becomes increasingly clear as he relates pieces of his tribe’s myth to Baïkal. The Fraiseur tribe’s myth, like many myths of origin, is a way to establish a tribal cosmology. This is important because, as

Clara Sue Kidwell and Alan Velie have pointed out, the purpose of Native American myths of origin “is to give Indian people their sense of place in the world and establish human relationships with existing environments, those environments being physical manifestations of spirituality and the source of tribal memory” (Porter 25). According to anthropologists James Hamill and John Cinnamon, Native American myths of origin – especially those recreated after tribal displacement at the hands of the American government – typically follow a very particular structure: free and content in their original homeland, the group is forced to move elsewhere as a result of a conflict. The displacement, which is typically accomplished by walking, entails great hardship and suffering. Once in the new homeland, a peaceful community is reestablished (93-94). In the case of traditional origin myths, the movement takes place between two worlds, thus explaining how a group came to exist in this world. Hamill and Cinnamon have studied the use of story as a way to reestablish tribal identity after the infamous Trail of Tears,⁴⁶ but a strikingly similar structure can be seen in the Fraiseur tribe’s myth of origin: the original Fraiseur and his wife are forced to move from their homeland of Brazil (Manaus, to be specific) after a natural disaster. After years of walking, economic necessity eventually directs them to Detroit (*Globalia* 219). So this is the first episode of displacement. After many (apparently) happy years working for Ford, the civil wars that eventually lead to the formation of Globalia also drive the original Fraiseur and his wife from Detroit. Economic necessity once again motivates their return to the Amazon, since the Globalian government contracts them to return to the *puits* (238). As Fraiseur explains to Baïkal, the tribe’s stories and rituals – their cultural memory, lost during the first Fraiseur’s movement to Detroit, were completely reinvented upon his return to Brazil (379): “[o]n retrouvait dans les rites de la tribu des mythes indiens, aussi bien que des chansons

⁴⁶ Forced displacements of southeastern tribes to Oklahoma as a result of the Indian Relocation Act of 1831.

américaines du Xxe siècle. Et naturellement, les souvenirs liés à l'automobile constituaient autant d'idoles propres à susciter un culte" (379-80).

The philosophy of place is a complex topic that has motivated a great many scholars over the centuries. The goal of this chapter, however, is not to trace the historical development of ideas concerning place,⁴⁷ but rather to explore the relationship between place-attachment and the myth of the Ecologically Noble Savage. In *Getting Back into Place*, Edward Casey states that "Being guarantees Place" (x). Since place is such a fundamental element of our existence, the prospect of being out of place is one that very often induces feelings of "homesickness, disorientation, depression, desolation" (x). This is typical of our contemporary society, characterized by frequent displacement or movement between places. Referring to Proust, Freud, and Bachelard, Casey states that in order to "re-find place – a place we have always already been losing – we may need to return, if not in actual fact then in memory and imagination, to the very earliest places we have known" (x). This is precisely the idea that is at work in *Globalia*. Place-attachment is one of the most fundamental differences between Globalians and the *tribus* in the non-zones. The displacement that prevails in the zones seems to also be present in the non-zones, with the exception of the Fraiseur tribe. Fraiseur's surprise at the conditions in the non-zones, despite having travelled great distances within them, indicates that his tribe's contented existence on their *puits d' ozone* is highly exceptional (353), and the fact that he and Helen both agree that he must live "*au-delà des Régions inaccessibles*" (353) serves only to further separate the Fraiseur clan from the rest of the non-zones.

Throughout the narrative, physical distance from the zones corresponds to metaphorical distance; the closer the physical proximity between a group or an individual and Globalia, the

⁴⁷ Edward S. Casey's *The Fate of Place: A Philosophical History* (1998) provides an excellent in-depth study of the history of the idea of place, beginning with Ancient Sumerian and Hebrew civilization and continuing through twentieth century philosophers such as Deleuze, Guattari, and Irigaray (to name but a few).

greater the similarity between themselves and Globalians. Thus the *mafieux* who are “à la solde de Globalia” (340) and who live on the borders of Globalian cities use products similar to those available in Globalia, are conversant in *anglobale* (the language spoken in Globalia), and are familiar with Globalian customs (Part III, Chapter 4). The *Déchus*, who live somewhat further from Globalia, but who are still in relatively close proximity, are also familiar with Globalian customs, but are actively resistant to Globalian influence and live in a relative state of deprivation (352). Baïkal encounters various other inhabitants of the non-zones throughout the narrative, and for the most part they are almost all referred to in terms of body parts: “les visages endormis et fatigués” (225); “les peaux tendues, les muscles durcis, les yeux brillants” (173); “les mains [qui] se tendirent enfin . . . Les bouches avides” (174). The result is that the reader perceives “la foule” (173) as an anonymous group of humans driven almost entirely by instinct. The Fraiseur tribe, though, is even more remotely withdrawn from Globalian influence, to the point that even the *Déchus*, who are well-versed in geography (355), are unaware of their location.

The Fraiseur tribe’s land therefore represents an almost mythical place that exists apart from the non-zones. In order to return to the *puits d’ozone*, Baïkal and Fraiseur must first travel several days through a hostile landscape devoid of any human presence save that of the bones of a family who perished in a famine (377). This wasteland that is characteristic of the non-zones calls to mind “la Terre Gaste” from Chrétien de Troyes’s *Conte du Graal* or – for a more contemporary example – T.S. Eliot’s “Wasteland”. Wastelands are precisely the types of places that Casey refers to as “empty places” (*Getting Back*, xi), or places that resist human presence. The wasteland described in this passage is resistant to human presence while simultaneously containing vestiges of prior human activity: “[p]artout gisaient des décombres industriels, des

friches agricoles, des vestiges de routes, de ponts, de pylônes. Partout, la nature avait corrompu ces ordres éphémères pour y semer une confusion de racines, de ronces, de trous et de feuillages” (375). Still, Baïkal finds this landscape oddly welcoming despite its hostility. Casey points out that desolate landscapes often, paradoxically, provide solace, since “the lonely individual and the desolate landscape form a silent but powerful pact” (193). In Baïkal’s case, this pact that Casey refers to takes the form of a sort of mutual resistance against Globalia, and the result – for Baïkal at least – is a sense both of liberty and of peace (*Getting Back* 375, 76). This particular landscape, which is characteristic of the non-zones, also exemplifies Gary Snyder’s frequent assertion that “nature bats last” – that human society (and perhaps even human existence is, to borrow Rufin’s term from above, ephemeral, but that nature will eventually have the last word. Serres presents a strikingly similar argument in *Le Contrat naturel* in the context of Goya’s painting *Two Men Fighting with Clubs* (1819-23). Krell provides a brief overview of Serres’s argument, writing

The men are knee-deep in mud, and the viewer can imagine that as they beat each other, their efforts will only force them deeper into the quagmire as they fight to the death. Serres advises that if placing a bet on this fight, we would do well to put our money on the mud Serres interprets this painting as an illustration of the current standing of our relationship to nature. Long a victim of human aggression, nature will soon be unable to endure anymore, and will swallow us up. (2)

The succession of wars that ushered in the Globalian government can be compared to the two men in Goya’s painting: the violent conflict between the zones and the non-zones, as well as the conflicts within the non-zones, are presented as perpetual (163-65). The landscape presented to

the reader is profoundly damaged by these wars and by Globalia's ongoing destructive activities, but as we see in the description of the "confusion de racines, de ronces, de trous et de feuillages" (375), nature has already begun to reassert itself.

Eventually, however, the landscape changes : "[l]a forêt devint de plus en plus haute et dense. Sa voûte captait la lumière et la filtrait dans d'étroits vitraux de feuillage. Après les stridulations des terrains découverts, la forêt apportait toute une luxuriance de bruits : cris d'oiseaux, craquements de branches, sifflements de singes montaient comme d'étranges oraisons dans cette nef tropicale" (378). The religious vocabulary in this passage ("voûte," "vitraux," "oraisons," "nefs") is clearly intended to imply that Baïkal and Fraiseur have stepped into a holy sanctuary. If the vocabulary were not enough to create this impression, it is evident that the "vivants piliers" of Baudelaire's "Correspondances" lurk just under the surface of this description. Just as Baudelaire's text appeals to the reader's senses, thus limiting any truly religious interpretation of his work, elements of this passage stop the reader short of a purely theological interpretation. The vaulted ceiling formed by branches blocks the view of the sky, thus creating a closed system that is limited to the physical world of the forest. The light performs the same function, and redirects the reader's attention to the cacophony of natural "oraisons" that fill the air. The emphasis is therefore entirely on the seemingly intrinsic sacred qualities of the forest. The image of a primeval forest teeming with life also calls to mind Rousseau's description of "la terre abandonnée à sa fertilité naturelle, et couverte de forêts immenses que la cognée ne mutila jamais" ("Discours" 27) that provides the setting for his man in the state of nature.

Here Rufin clearly highlights the paradisiacal aspect of the myth of the Noble Savage, which, as Mircea Eliade points out, is one of the defining elements of the myth, and the one

most relevant to a contemporary audience (42). For Baïkal, this landscape represents nostalgia for his lost origins that the narrator makes evident from the beginning of the novel. Eliade makes the case that this nostalgia is typically associated with islands – especially tropical ones –, nudity, the beauty of native women, and sexual freedom (44). Baïkal is not particularly interested in the sexual connotations of paradise, simply with the freedom that one finds in an exotic landscape. It is important to note, however, that the Fraiseur tribe, despite their deep attachment to their *puits*, are also nostalgic for their own lost paradise: Detroit. Eliade highlights the fact that Noble Savages such as they were conceived of during the fifteenth through nineteenth centuries also had their own version of a Noble Savage myth: “son propre Ancêtre mythique [qui] avait vécu réellement une existence paradisiaque, et le moindre effort lui était épargné. Mais ce Bon Ancêtre primordial, comme l’Ancêtre biblique des Européens, avait perdu son Paradis. Pour le sauvage aussi, *la perfection se trouvait aux origines*” (45). For the Fraiseur tribe, this ancestor is quite clearly the first Fraiseur, and their lost paradise is Detroit during the early twentieth century. For Baïkal the *puits* is paradise on earth, but for the Fraiseur tribe it represents at the same time a return to their ancestral homeland and exile from the revered city of Detroit. While the first Fraiseur’s journey does not strictly speaking qualify as a story of cosmogenesis (it is clear that the world existed prior to the first Fraiseur), it does explain the genesis of this particular tribe. In order to commemorate their origins, the Fraiseur tribe organizes certain rituals around the automobile, as well as the first Fraiseur’s clarinet (379): a “General Motors” logo is an integral part of their spring festival, a universal joint from a Chevy is used to bless marriages (380), and a procession led by someone carrying a tailpipe from a Pontiac, accompanied by a choir singing *Rain and Tears* (Aphrodite’s Child, 1968) is deemed the appropriate ceremony for sending Baïkal off to fight Globalia (385). The “General Motors” logo is particularly important

to the tribe, and every spring it leads a procession around the perimeter of the *puits* (380). Given the tribe's reverence for the automobile, this ritual can be interpreted as way to reenact a cosmogony: a reenactment of the moment that the first Fraiseur returned to his ancestral land. The "General Motors" logo functions as the *axis mundi*, or a sacred center of the world. The ritual therefore not only recreates the act of walking (an integral part of the Fraiseur tribe's myth), but also designates the *puits* as sacred space by connecting the land with Detroit – "de là que tout vient" (220). As Casey indicates in *The Fate of Place*,

Such a ritual bears on a particular place not in its idiosyncrasy or newness but in its capacity to stand in for a preexisting cosmogonic Place. If it is true that "settling in a territory is equivalent to founding a world," (Eliade, *Sacred and Profane* 34) the settling is a settling of place in terms of place. It is a modeling and sanctifying of this place in view of, and as a repetition of, that place—that primordial Place of creation (and not just the primordial Time of creation: in illo tempore). (*FP* 5)

Still, Baikal's introduction to the Fraiseur tribe's rituals once again calls into question the validity of the image of the Ecologically Noble Savage while emphasizing the importance of the territory to the Fraiseur tribe's world view. The Fraiseur tribe's veneration of petroleum-powered (as opposed to K8, the "clean" Globalian gas) automobiles serves as a severe critique of the role that such objects play in our culture, and the integration of such overt symbols of environmental destruction is ironic given that the *puits d'ozone* exists purely to counteract the result of years of pollution for which automobiles are – at least partially – responsible. It is obvious, however, that the original purpose of these objects is of little significance to the Fraiseurs; once the parts are

taken from the whole, they are deprived of their context and thus of their destructive connotations.

At the conclusion of the novel, Baïkal and Kate return Fraiseur (who has been killed during the battle with Globalia) to the *puits*. The novel's final message is therefore one of place-attachment. Not only is Fraiseur being returned to his place to be buried, thus becoming physically integrated into the land, but Baïkal and Kate are also returning, and Baïkal states that in their new home, they will be “[p]lus libres que libres . . . [e]t nous le serons plus encore quand nous arriverons au fond de notre puits d’ozone” (493). The use of the possessive “our,” repeated later in reference to the first Fraiseur, who has become “mon ancêtre” (494) indicates the effectiveness of Fraiseur's example. The *puits*'s environmental significance, which is so important to Globalia, is negligible to the Fraiseur tribe (and now Baïkal). Its significance as a sacred place, however, is incredibly important to the tribe, and as a result they continue to ensure its integrity, which in turn ensures the continued (relative) integrity of the atmosphere and thus the environment as a whole.

CONCLUSION

Moderation seems to be the most appropriate way to describe Rufin's broad environmental aesthetic. It is clear in each of the three novels that I have discussed that zealousness is the root of all evil, so to speak. In the spirit of the French environmental movement and the protests of May 1968, these novels all call into question the values and mentality associated with the civilization of modern industrialism. This is done comprehensively through the representation of the past, the present, and the future. *Rouge Brésil* therefore challenges the very foundations of Western dualism and the attitudes that result in the subjugation of those deemed inferior: in this case, the natural world as well as the indigenous Brazilians. *Le Parfum d'Adam* considers these same attitudes, but over five hundred years later, thus providing the reader with an accurate representation of the effects of destructive attitudes on both the natural world and on minority indigenous groups. The narrative also takes aim at radical environmentalists who unfairly assign the role of scapegoat to the victims of Western exploitation. *Globalia* envisions the possible outcome of such attitudes should our present society continue on its current trajectory: all aspects of the natural world, including human lifespans, are carefully controlled, and any aberrance to the system, including minority groups who would not submit to government control, have been literally pushed to the margins. In each novel, the critique of the relationship between humans and nature is achieved through the *Bildung* of either a pair of primary characters or – in the case of *Le Parfum d'Adam* – a single protagonist. In each case, the character or characters are forced by circumstance or by choice out of their comfort zone and into contact with an unfamiliar world.

In *Rouge Brésil*, both Just and Colombe undergo a drastic transformation throughout the course of the narrative. At the beginning, Just is attuned to nature while Colombe displays a thoroughly Cartesian attitude toward the world. These attitudes are slowly exchanged as a result of circumstance: Just is taken under Villegagnon's wing while Colombe is sent as a translator to the Tupi for months on end. The result is that each swings temporarily to the other extreme, as Just aligns himself – albeit with serious misgivings – to Villegagnon, and Colombe rejects Western dualism so completely that she considers joining the Tupi permanently, despite their anthropophagous rituals. Thanks to time spent with a guide, however, they come to realize that a constructive lifestyle involves an incorporation of nature and culture, of Western and indigenous values. For Just, this involves rejecting his Villegagnon's attempts to teach him the proper way to govern a colony. Throughout the narrative, Villegagnon has gone to great lengths to exert control over both the colony and the people living in it. The island on which the colony is established is virtually unrecognizable within two years of their arrival, and is no longer able to sustain the colonists. As his protégé, Just becomes increasingly invested in the success of the colony. After sustaining a stab wound, Just is temporarily removed from colonial society in order to recover in the infirmary. This distance, although mostly psychological, provides him with the objectivity needed to understand that Villegagnon has become a despotic ruler who wreaks havoc on the world around him. As a result, Just comes to realize that the Western tendency to exploit natural resources to the point of depletion is an extremely destructive attitude. He consequently abandons the colony, which history tells us is doomed to failure anyhow.

Colombe's *Bildung* follows a similar structure. In order to make the journey from France to Brazil she has been disguised as a boy. This disguise, intended to allow for her integration into the group, has in fact only served to isolate her. Her only role within the colony is to serve as

translator to the Tupi, and consequently she spends the majority of her time with them. Through a series of revelations, most significantly regarding the Tupi's cannibalism, and through Pay-Lo's guidance, she comes to the realization that although she condemned her fellow colonists for ignoring the beneficial aspects of Tupi society, she is equally guilty of ignoring the harsher side of their society which violates a fundamental taboo of European society; if the other French are partial to the mythical representations that portray indigenous groups as monsters, then Colombe is equally partial to the myth of the Noble Savage. As is typical, reality falls somewhere in between the two extremes, and this becomes abundantly clear to her thanks to Pay-Lo. Her lesson is therefore one of live and let live: Tupi traditions and beliefs can (and should) be incorporated into Colombe's European value system without necessitating that she become a cannibal. The novel's ending, in which Just and Colombe are suggested to be the characters in a Tupi creation myth, leaves the reader with the impression that hybridity – between nature and culture, between male and female, between European values and indigenous beliefs – is the hope for the future.

In *Le Parfum d'Adam*, Juliette fulfills a similar function. Juliette does not exhibit any particular character flaw, but she suffers from bipolar disorder. Like Just and Colombe, she is established as an isolated character from the beginning of the narrative. This is established first by showing that she is the sole participator in the theft of the cholera virus, and then by her decision to use her possession of the virus as leverage to facilitate her continued participation in the New Predators' mission. As background motivation, the narrator reveals that Juliette's parents were thoroughly denatured, both in the sense that they disliked the natural world and in the sense that they demonstrated no filial love towards Juliette. Her choice to engage in environmental activism results more from her desire to rebel against her parents than from any

real love for the natural world. Thanks to her time spent with Harrow in the Colorado Desert, she begins to appreciate the natural world for its inherent qualities, thus extending her code of ethics to include the non-human as well as the human. Juliette ultimately comes to realize, however, that in extending ethical consideration to the non-human, Harrow has deprived a large portion of humanity – the poor – of the consideration that they are due. Juliette's lesson is therefore two-fold. First, thanks to Harrow's misanthropic mission, she comes to realize that nature cannot be privileged to the detriment of humans, and vice versa; a balance must be established. This is shown throughout the novel by a depiction of nature that combines the natural with the urban, thus creating an aesthetic of nature that is highly relevant to contemporary readers. Second, Juliette comes to realize the fallacies inherent in the myth of the Ecologically Noble Savage, of which Harrow is presented as the embodiment. The contradiction between Harrow's professed ideals and his way of life highlight the idea that placing any one group of people on an environmental pedestal is potentially destructive since it ignores the complexities inherent in the reality behind stereotypes.

In *Globalia* the same pattern is repeated: Baïkal and Puig are both separated from society by circumstances beyond their control. Although Baïkal has made several attempts to escape Globalia, he is only able to do so when granted permission from Altman. The majority of Baïkal's *Bildung* comes from his contact with Fraiseur, who serves as his guide in the non-zones. As a result of Fraiseur's guidance, Baïkal comes to realize that embracing one's personal history simultaneously demands the acceptance of the natural landscape that has informed one's traditions and stories. This is the most effective means to resisting Globalian domination. Even if the revolt fails on a larger level, Baïkal, Kate and Puig have still succeeded in personally resisting Globalia, since they are free to make their own way in the non-zones. The relationship

between storytelling or myth-making and nature is implicit in the text, since all of Fraiseur's stories are inspired by his and Baïkal's surroundings. Baïkal's *Bildung* also serves to highlight the author's choice to portray the Ecologically Noble Savage as one who is not environmentally conscious, but who nonetheless acts in a very responsible manner toward the environment. This is a result of Fraiseur's profound attachment to his *puits*, which demonstrates to Baïkal (and to the reader) that place-attachment is a more authentic and more responsible way to relate to nature than the prescriptive environmentalism practiced by Globalians.

Puig, on the other hand, is socially and professionally (but not physically) exiled because he attempts to expose the truth behind a government orchestrated terrorist attack. His guide throughout his formation is not a person, but rather Thoreau's iconic text *Walden*. This helps Puig understand the relationship between writing, nature, and resistance; in order to reclaim his heritage, Puig writes his childhood memories – his stories – all of which take place in Carcassonne. Acknowledging such a strong attachment to one's home place is illegal in Globalia, just as writing is highly discouraged. By choosing to assert his ancestry in writing, Puig renders doubly potent his resistance against Globalia. Thanks to a series of personal revelations inspired by *Walden*, as well as a series of educational revelations instigated by the founder of the Walden society, Puig comes to understand that resistance is the strongest when it incorporates nature and culture as well as personal history and official History.

The aesthetic of nature that pervades these three novels is one of hybridization. In each of the three, nature is defined as something that exists between raw wilderness and unchecked human activity, destroying the generally accepted idea that nature and culture are antipodes. The jungle of Brazil, for example, is not completely wild; the Tupi villages are cultivated spaces that exemplify a harmonious relationship between humans and their environment. The cityscapes that

are found throughout *Le Parfum d'Adam* attribute natural characteristics to urban phenomenon. The landscape in *Globalia* is one in which nature, abused for many years by human activity, is beginning to reclaim human artifacts to the point that discerning between the natural and the manmade is virtually impossible. Wilderness, often seen as the salvation of the world – to borrow Thoreau's phrase – is not presented by the author as a tenable state. While the Amazon seems to be the ideal wilderness, in both *Rouge Brésil* and *Globalia* it is presented as a space where the human and the non-human come together in a productive, albeit more primitive, relationship. Raw wilderness such as that idealized by the American environmental movement is only portrayed in *Le Parfum d'Adam*, and while it has a strong impact on Juliette, it is ultimately rejected in favor of Rio de Janeiro, which despite being urban is presented as a mélange of nature and culture. True wilderness instead serves as a place apart that encourages introspection and reflection.

If Rufin deconstructs contemporary notions of nature and culture, he also challenges the myth of the Ecologically Noble Savage that is held dear by many environmental interest groups. The portrayal of indigenous culture in each of the three novels insists on the complex reality that has served to form the myth. The Tupi practice of cannibalism is portrayed as morally suspect, although it is not as reprehensible as Villegagnon's despotic dictatorship. The Brazilians in *Le Parfum d'Adam*, who live in abject poverty, do just about anything to ensure their continued existence. In *Globalia*, Fraiseur's tribe protects their *puits* in order to profit financially rather than from any sense of environmental responsibility. Still, these groups of characters tend to be portrayed as morally and ethically superior to their European counterparts, and the protagonists always have something to learn from their indigenous guides, who, as Rufin noted in a 2007 interview, demonstrate a certain amount of humility before nature.

Rufin frequently points out in interviews and in notes on his novels that the work of good novelists is to entertain, not to present to their reader a fictionalized version of an essay. His novels should therefore be interpreted as such, and not as environmental how-to manuals. Still, the reader is always left with the overwhelming sense that place attachment is the most important element of these three novels. At the conclusion of each, the main characters have made a decision to inhabit a specific place, and one that is always different from their place of origin, which is typically characterized by having a dysfunctional relationship with nature. Perhaps coincidentally this place is always in Brazil. This suggests that the global south, with its emphasis on local economy and agriculture, may perhaps be preferable to the lifestyle in the global north, which is almost entirely responsible for the depletion of the world's resources and for the untenable environmental situation in which we find ourselves. Responsibility for a place – for a community, a bioregion, a watershed, etc – is an idea for which American deep ecologists often advocate as the starting point of a viable solution to global climate change. Through fiction, Rufin is able to attain a similar goal, therefore contributing to the growing body of French ecocritical literature.

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