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## RESEARCH ARTICLE

### THE REFINEMENT OF NATURE AT JEAN-JACQUES ROUSSEAU AND BERNARDIN DE SAINT-PIERRE

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#### ABSTRACT

The race for urbanization represented the ideal. The amenities of a man-made living environment had led to the belief that, in comparison, rustic and exotic landscapes were very little. But in front of the plan drawn by the writers, especially Rousseau in *The New Héloïse* and Bernardin de Saint-Pierre, in *Paul and Virginie*, to find peace and fullness, nature acquires its letters of nobility. In addition, the rustic and exotic landscapes are now places par excellence where one will evacuate the stress and the impact of the unfortunate events of the city. Nature is in a way the escape from the troubles and contradictions of modernity. The human being, in tune with the idea that nature can bring him comfort, no longer hesitates to get back to the point where it speaks to his senses.

#### INTRODUCTION

*The New Héloïse* and *Paul and Virginie* are works of the eighteenth century, respectively Jean-Jacques Rousseau and Bernardin de Saint-Pierre. Thus a recovery in the previous century may be suggestive of the rupture made in the previous century. This century before The Enlightenment, namely, the Classical century, sees at the end of the reign of Louis XIV, under the Regency of Philippe d'Orléans, especially in the aristocratic milieu a revival of libertinage. Parisian gambling houses are happy to appear as fashionable places of sociability where the pleasures of money and debauchery reign. Heirs of the unbridled manners of the Classical century, novelists of the eighteenth century invite to discover nature by proposing to move away from the corruption of Western civilization. To the cold calculations of the evil, Rousseau then Bernardin de Saint-Pierre contrast the refinement of rustic and exotic frames where we are in contact with nature. The discovery of the latter then appears in French thought of the eighteenth century as a way to escape the perversion of the city. The authors thus oxygenate their creation in the image of Rousseau and Bernardin de Saint Pierre who are no longer limited to the humanized nature of the garden. On the other hand, they leave room for the refinement of a wild and sublime nature. Moreover, is it not also, because of a desire for nature, that we have, like the characters, a subject in a state of lack? Does not

this desire intervene to arouse the subject's desire to fill it? But let us know more about semiotics, that the subject who presents himself in this state can, before his possibilities, remain active or inactive. Thus the satisfied desire brings pleasure or happiness to the subject while the unfulfilled desire is, of course, source of displeasure or misfortune. In short, what we will remember is that desire will push the subject to action while making him want the quest for a discovery of nature.

#### The desire of rusticity at Rousseau

The passage from the Enlightenment to pre-Romanticism highlights a desire. The latter is none other than that of hardiness, which finds a strong endorsement. From then on, the provincial universe and the western countryside lead to the discovery of nature. This provincial universe gives the opportunity to glimpse the life as well as the mores related to it. It is for this reason that life in the province shows the actions taken by the individual in this space. This is what Pierre N'Da notes when he writes: "It is the presence of subjects in spaces and places, their movements, their actions that give dynamism and value to these spaces and places." (N'Da, 1988). The provincial space, in *The New Héloïse*, is based on real space to highlight everyday life. "Spaces being the theater of actants, it is a question of seeing the interactions between them and those." (N'Da, 1988). With *The New Héloïse*, the provincial life gives to the work of the fields, as Julie underlines it: "You know my aversion for the

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city, my taste for the countryside, for the rustic works, and the attachment that three years of stay gave me for my Clarens home. (Rousseau, 1967). In Clarens, which refers to country Switzerland, the Wolmar couple enjoys the appeasement provided by healthy rustic activities. Indeed, *The New Héloïse*, novel in the form of letters, the most representative work of the time, with a simple plot, somewhat inspired by a personal adventure, allows Rousseau to paint the picture of a virtuous family life and passionate, in a rustic setting.

In fact, the life that leads Saint-Preux and Julie is marked by a thwarted love relationship, between the young girl and her preceptor. The latter, in a letter to Julie, recounts the welcome he received on his consolation trip of a few days in the mountainous Valais: "I would have spent all the time of my trip in the the only enchantment of the landscape, if I had not felt a softer still in the commerce of the inhabitants. (Rousseau, 1967). He illustrates, to this end, the customs of the country: "You will find in my description a slight pencil of their manners, of their simplicity, of their equality of soul, and of this peaceful tranquility which makes them happy. (Rousseau, 1967). Through observation, Saint-Preux studies the men of the province and presents their manners marked with disinterestedness, love and hospitality: "But what I could not paint you and that one can hardly imagine, it is their disinterested humanity and their hospitable zeal for all foreigners whom chance or curiosity leads among them. (Rousseau, 1967). In addition, the Western countryside due to its geographical location and from a European point of view is obviously similar to the rustic nature where we easily discover the country life and the landscape. Saint-Preux takes advantage, so to speak, of the occasion of a letter written to Milord Edouard to reveal the order and gaiety which reigns in M. de Wolmar at the time of the grape harvest. This correspondence with Milord Edouard allows us to discover country life, through the play of the writer as Roland Bourneuf states: "The novelist also has his own resources, or that he sometimes shares with the playwright.

For example, the introduction of unknown characters in a confined space may have the effect of opening it, or at least letting others see it. "(Bourneuf, 1970). To his friend, Saint-Preux writes: "M. de Wolmar, whose best field here consists of vineyards, has made all the necessary preparations in advance ... Madame de Wolmar took charge of the harvest; the choice of the workers, the order and distribution of the work, look at it. (Rousseau, 1967). Agricultural tasks and relaxation after hard work are thus orchestrated according to a well-established order: "Madame d'Orbe presides at the harvest feasts and the wages of the workers according to the established police, whose laws never break here". (Rousseau, 1967). Saint-Preux also remembers the sweet and pure emotions within reach of the workers: "You can not conceive with what zeal, with what cheerfulness all this is done. We sing, we laugh all day, and the work is better. Everything lives in the greatest familiarity; everyone is equal, and no one forgets himself. (Rousseau, 1967). That said, the atmosphere is as joyous as it can be seen: "The ladies are airless, the peasant women are decent, the men are naughty and not rude. Who will find the best songs, who will make the best tales, who will say the best features. (Rousseau, 1967). At the same time, the landscape and the painting of souls reveal reverie in rustic nature. In short, Saint-Preux's impressions show the happy activity of the imagination in the magnificent landscape of the countryside: "Sometimes,

on leaving a chasm, a pleasant meadow suddenly delighted my eyes. (Rousseau, 1967). "Suppose the combined impressions of what I have just described to you, and you will have some idea of the delightful situation I was in. (Rousseau, 1967). Saint-Preux thus marvels at the grandiose spectacles of nature: "Imagine the variety, the grandeur of the beauty of a thousand astonishing spectacles; the pleasures of seeing only new objects around oneself." (Rousseau, 1967). The countryside landscape thus reflects a literary préromantism, worthy of an aesthetic seizure of the universe where one has the leisure to discover "strange birds, bizarre plants and unknown, to observe somehow another nature, and to find oneself in a new world." (Rousseau, 1967). The rustic nature is precisely, mentioned by Rousseau who makes it his fat cabbage with *The New Héloïse*.

From an apology of nature, this one also comes to express a panacea to the malaise. Anyway, this apology of the rustic nature reveals the beauty of the landscape where emerges the joy of turning in the open air. Rousseau projects thus, the image of a wonderful rustic landscape. That is why the attraction of country walks and meditations is born from the sight of a transfigured landscape: "At last the spectator has something magical, supernatural, which delights the mind and senses, we forget everything, we forget ourselves, we do not know where we are. (Rousseau, 1967). Replaced in the broader perspective, nature "speaks" when it gives the gaze a kind of panoramic that awakens sensitivity. The beauty that emanates from the rustic landscape shows, therefore, access to the ideal. The process in question is that the Rustic landscape brings into play the celebration of a beauty with which man finds meaning in his existence, in peace with rustic nature. The exuberance of this complicit, consoling, fertile and rich nature permeates the consciousness of the man who finds there a source of inspiration and ecstasy. In the same vein, Saint-Preux, in a letter addressed to Milord Edouard, presents if it needed proof, the small society of Clarens. Still, the grape harvest is an opportunity for a story that exposes the charms of the peace of life in the countryside. From there, the impression that Clarens is a protected universe where there is a social equality that recognizes tolerance. Therefore, the organization of life in the countryside allows to reconnect with the myth of a pure and innocent world, a primitive society whose harmonious family would provide the model.

What's more, the spectacle of nature that draws on visual perceptions is the joy of an eyewitness: "All this makes the eyes an inexpressible mixture, whose charm increases even more by the subtlety of the air that makes the colors more vivid, more marked traits, brings all points of view closer together ... "(Rousseau, 1967). Of course, the joy of living in the open air concretizes a satisfaction, generator of balance and sensation. Through its benefits, the rustic nature as a panacea to the ill-being contributes to the purity of the air not without being an enchantment for the man in front of the marvels of which it overflows. As such, rustic nature gives an outstanding example of clean air: "It was there that I substantially disentangled in the purity of the air where I was the real cause of the change of my mood, and the return of that inner peace I had lost for so long. (Rousseau, 1967). By the purity of the air, rustic nature marks a state of stability that dispels moral depression. The rustic air, therefore, gives some strength to the mind. The empire that the purity of the rustic air has on the depth of being unveils the surprising and beneficent

effects which reveal in their turn this rustic nature as a panacea to the ill-being. Sensibility appears as an essential engine of the novelistic creation. With Rousseau, she plays an even more important role in developing an approach to nature. After all, Rousseau succeeds in creating a singular climate, due to a mixture of realism and fantasy: "At the rising of spring flowers, at midday the fruits of autumn, at north the ice of winter: it united all the seasons in the same moment". (Rousseau, 1967). As it should, the discovery and the observation of the rustic nature raise the amazement in front of "continual scenes which never ceased to attract my admiration, and which seemed to be offered to me in a true theater..." (Rousseau, 1967), as Saint-Preux would have expressed it. Admiration, a source of bliss, particularly inspires admiration for a rustic nature that is more than attractive. In front of the order of the rustic universe, the wonder hastens the blossoming of the man who explores its charms.

Like a return, *The New Héloïse* also develops the impression of loneliness that emerges from the rustic nature: "On entering this so-called orchard, I was struck by a pleasant sensation of freshness that obscure shades, a greenery lively and lively, flowers scattered on all sides, a chirping of running water." (Rousseau, 1967). The calmness of rustic nature now arouses recollection as Saint-Preux feels by his statements in relation to the imaginary. Thus, according to his own words, "The song of a thousand birds, carried to my imagination at least as much as to my senses; but at the same time I thought I saw the wildest and most solitary place in nature, and it seemed to me to be the first mortal who had ever penetrated into this desert." (Rousseau, 1967). Moreover, after a trip into the mountainous nature, Saint-Preux expresses himself in these terms: "I doubt that no violent agitation, no illness of vapor could hold against such a prolonged stay". (Rousseau, 1967). The helping nature, the two lovers, Julie and Saint-Preux, a prey to sorrow, managed nevertheless to dominate their hearts so much so that Saint-Preux was "surprised that the baths of the salutary and beneficent air of the mountains are not one of the great remedies of medicine and morality. (Rousseau, 1967). In peace with their conscience and faithful to their refined passion, Julie and Saint-Preux will live together under the protective eye of her husband Wolmar. To be included in the file, Maurice Blanchot indicates that: "Writing is never about perfecting the language that is current, to make it purer. Writing begins only when writing is the approach of this point where nothing is revealed, where in the midst of dissimulation, to speak is still only the shadow of speech. (Blanchot, 1955). It was there that the reflection on the speech of the characters brought back to the rustic nature to its refinement, relates on the major axes which are the field of deployment of an overview, "language which is still only its image imaginary language and the language of the imaginary, the one that no one speaks, the murmur of the incessant and interminable, to which one must impose silence, if one wants, finally, to make one's voice heard. (Blanchot, 1955).

Through the confidences of the characters of *The New Héloïse*, we perceive that hypocrisy, pride, jealousy, artifice is banished in favor of transparency, the communion of hearts, the innocence and purity. As such, the Elysee, Julie's refuge orchard offers itself as the symbol of this harmony. Whoever looks at it is a natural art that is perfect, left to its free course through the order that reigns: "It is true, she says that nature has done everything, but under my direction, and there is

nothing there that I have ordered." (Rousseau, 1967). By dint of art, Julie, like the other characters, joins the rustic nature, not a disorderly nature, but a neat nature. The city and Paris, on the contrary, very often opposed to the orderly life of Clarens, reveal themselves in the mouths of the characters as a place of moral decadence because of the pernicious corruption of civilization: "The crude beginnings of vice could not first of all to seduce you, but bad company has begun by abusing your reason to corrupt your virtue, and is already making the first attempt of your maxims on your morals." (Rousseau, 1967). Once again, liberal ideology is turning values around, transforming what was considered wrong and vice versa. On this subject, André Morali-Daninos about the manners of the eighteenth century tells: "If the sexual carelessness is quite general, however, only the rich have an easy and enjoyable sex life, with many experiences." (Morali-Daninos, 1955). Men of letters then intervene to act as moralizers. "However, a category of man is more and more important: that of philosophers, artists, writers who, for a long time, will live rich, and teach them in return a little philosophy, art, literature." (Morali-Daninos, 1955). But very often, the literati are carried away by the libertine fashion of the century preached by the rich: "They sometimes compete on the sexual level and are sought by women". On the other hand, a certain awareness begins with them emerging because "They are often full of repressed aggression towards their masters; they are not yet revolutionary, but their writings carry in germ the great changes to come." (Morali-Daninos, 1955). Julie, for instance, will be in a rage over her friend, who has yielded under the influence of the gallant society of Paris to the sexual frenzy: "You let yourself be insensibly driven into the trap I had feared." (Rousseau, 1967).

*The New Héloïse*, for its part, is a correspondence between several people. Individuals, therefore, in the work, have no direct physical contact as seen in the usual romantic stories, where the characters are rather announced by a narrator. Here, the sign of the letter replaces the narrator who allows the meeting of the characters. This form of the epistolary novel in Rousseau's work is not unrelated to the fact that desire feeds on the absence caused by separation and that the letter is proof of a desire to restore contact. However, this novel, through the letter, shows the presence of the other. The complete series is displayed with the recipients who are subjects or characters who benefit from the action and / or the state expressed in the quest for nature. Thus the addressers are unhappy when their desires remain unfulfilled. They reach happiness only in the realization of the desires that animate them. So Julie will see in *The New Héloïse* asking Saint-Preux to undertake a trip to the country, so that he may free himself a little bit from the loving attachment that binds him to her. Therefore, Saint-Preux is the addressee to whom will be able to benefit the consolation trip in Valais: "It is important my friend that we part for some time [...] It's a long time since you have a trip to Valais." (Rousseau, 1967).

On the other hand, the departure for rustic nature is motivated by the grief of a thwarted love, coupled with the beauty of nature and the soothing calm that reigns there. As an illustration, there is the fact that Saint-Preux did not hesitate to return to the Elysee, Julie's refuge orchard, to indulge in admiration and dreams in this natural space: "This morning I got up early and with the eagerness of a child; I went to lock myself in the desert island." (Rousseau, 1967). As we can see,

the emotions that invite rustic nature are in a controversial situation, with the dysphoria of sorrow and the exaltation that leads once again to her once she is discovered: "What pleasant thoughts I have. I hoped to carry in this solitary place, where the sweet aspect of nature alone was to drive out of my memory all this social and factitious order which made me unhappy!" (Rousseau, 1967).

### The desire of exotism at bernardin de saint-pierre

Beyond rustic desire, there is the desire for exoticism. Following the rustic nature treated by Rousseau, the exotic nature for its part is found intensely under the pen of Bernardin de Saint-Pierre. The attraction of the exotic nature leads one to believe that the praise given to it stems from its beauty, which suggests an earthly paradise. Bernardin de Saint-Pierre then proceeds to an exotic description of the picturesque landscape: "It was one of those delicious nights, so common among the tropics, and whose most skilful brush would not make beauty." (Bernardin de Saint-Pierre, 1788). The beautiful exotic nature reaches an almost incomparable perfection with Bernardin de Saint-Pierre, who manages to make the harmony complex and penetrating where "The stars sparkled in the sky and reflected in the sea that repeated their shaking images. (Bernardin de Saint-Pierre, 1788). The very personal quality of Bernardin de Saint-Pierre's descriptions still captivates the reader because he discovers a subtle communion with things. The reflection of the colors and the inspiring magic of the exotic landscapes expose the illustration of a divine order: "The foliage of the trees, illuminated below its saffron rays, shone fires of the topaz and the emerald; their foamy and brown trunks seemed changed into columns of antique bronze." (Bernardin de Saint-Pierre, 1788). The eye of Bernardin de Saint-Pierre knows how to analyze the things he sees to make them, if possible, more expressive, more authentic than nature, which then becomes a garden of delights such as "The birds already removed silently under the dark foliage to spend the night, surprised to see a second dawn, all greeted both the star of the day by a thousand and a thousand songs." (Bernardin de Saint-Pierre, 1788).

In truth, going through the trip to the islands this quest for exoticism is also a function of a fascination with the change of scenery and flight of the Parisian civilization. The distant elsewhere, in Western thought, considered for a long time barbaric, finds thanks to the rapture due to the exotic landscape nature, a valorization. The transformations made in the mentalities are determined by the testimonies of the travelers on the enchanting space of the islands and by the approval of the writers, in particular Bernardin de Saint-Pierre, who open themselves to the world by the voyage. The exotic nature, a valued and rewarding space, creates an emotional and sought-after tone with *Paul and Virginie* as it is supposed to stem the malaise. The discovery of the exotic nature participates in the elevation of the human condition which is reconciled with it. The access to the exotic life establishes a harmony between the landscape and the vibrations to the heart that it awakens. The graceful and poetic painting of the exotic nature in *Paul and Virginie* recalls the splendor and the powerful scenes, until giving an intense sensation of truth. Nevertheless, the voyage towards the islands, integrates in the XVIIIth century, the sea crossing by the boats if you intend to stay there. Bernardin de Saint-Pierre exiles in particular, the action of his work in the remote Ile-de-France, former Mauritius, in Port-Louis, in a small corner of the forest operated by Mrs de la Tour,

Marguerite and their servants. Roland Bourneuf remarks, however, an important point in the novel plot: "Most novels have spaces nested: one in which live characters immediately, where usually takes place the most visible part of the plot." (Bourneuf, 1970). However to extend the springs of the history it happens that is summoned "The more or less distant backgrounds, to which the narrator sometimes returns to enlighten the past of the characters or to introduce new dramatic springs that can expand to the dimensions of the earth." (Bourneuf, 1970). Nevertheless, it continues that the narrator of *Paul and Virginie* delivers the aspiration that Virginie feels in Paris. She wishes to find the simple and happy life of the Ile-de-France; as for Paul, he lives in the constant thought of the girl and despairs to see her return. But one evening, we bring a message announcing the arrival of the girl on the Saint-Géran. The ship, moreover, is pushed on reefs by a very rough sea, in the middle of the night. "When we were at the entrance to the valley of the lataniers river, black people told us that the sea was throwing a lot of debris from the ship into the bay opposite." (Bernardin de Saint-Pierre, 1788).

This episode, the most dramatic of the work shows how dangerous the boat trip is, because the traveler is not safe from danger, when it comes to brave a sea dismounted: "We went down there; and one of the first things I saw on the shore was Virginie's body." (Bernardin de Saint-Pierre, 1788). But long before, the author of *Paul and Virginie* celebrates an ideal of happiness: "It was on this rock that these families gathered in the evening and enjoyed in silence the freshness of the air". (Bernardin de Saint-Pierre, 1788). He illustrates it by the images of a country where this happiness had been possible in the light of the perfume of flowers, the murmur of fountains, and the last harmonies of light and shadows. (Bernardin de Saint-Pierre, 1788). At the same time, one of the episodes of the stay in the Ile-de-France of Virginia is that of his approach with Paul, after having crossed mountains and forests, in order to go to implore with a cruel master the grace for a negress. "This is where I learned from an inhabitant that you had brought him a brown-haired negress, and that he had granted you his pardon." (Bernardin de Saint-Pierre, 1788). Above all, Paul and Virginie, two children of nature, far from the artificial and corrupt society of the civilized world, evolve into a graceful and poetic painting of adolescence, pure souls, tenderness awakening unconsciously in the world innocence and piety. Moreover, apparently, it seems to be noted that through Paul and Virginie, Bernardin de Saint-Pierre presents a scene reminiscent of the prehistoric origin of fire where, with regard to Paul "... with the angle of a stone he made a little hole on a dry branch of a tree, which he fastened under his feet. (Bernardin de Saint-Pierre, 1788). This situation burst into Paul's adventure, without a match, in a remote corner of the dense forest: "Then with the sharpness of this stone he made a point to another piece of dry branch [...] in a few moments, he saw smoke and sparks coming out of the point of contact." (Bernardin de Saint-Pierre, 1788).

But before reaching this point, the fascination of the change of scenery leads to the departure to the island where the installation of families gives rise to the establishment of a peaceful life in permanent contact with the landscape. In the picturesque island, adds the spice of the exotic Ile-de-France charm with the happiness of two unfortunate families. With regard to the relation of man to the world, Georges Gusdorf summed up in summary that "The dissociation of the physical

world and the moral world has perverted the sense of reality in man." (Gusdorf, 1985). In other words, man is at once a physical domain and a spiritual domain related to ethics. Thus, "By separating from the world, neutralizing the world to oppose it better, man has reduced the universe to an operative field for his speculation and action." (Gusdorf, 1985). It opens up that by reconnecting with the exotic nature, this primitive society in its original beauty is associated with a life of contemplation and simplicity. If not for the Parisian civilization, "Man has become a stranger to himself, he has lost all possibility of fulfilling the profound wish of his nature." (Gusdorf, 1985). In the island, on the contrary, Paul and Virginia are learning life. These unexpected contacts with nature of which they discover mysteries participate in their moral, intellectual and spiritual formation, in a pleasant and peaceful life: "Paul and she amused themselves with transport of their games, their appetites, and their loves." (Bernardin de Saint-Pierre, 1788). It may be supposed that the landscape of the islands appears at first sight as a euphoric space. In this space, life seems more beautiful. The man sings his happiness and the nature itself makes him a feast and participates in his joy. This island landscape is a place of hospitality where bloom and regeneration breathe. Serge Moscovici who takes a critical look at nature notes that "The idea of natural process and the form in which (...) [he] proposes it invite to abandon the image of nature as inert receptacle." (Moscovici, 1968).

By extrapolation, the evasion that nature evokes, in particular the landscape of the islands, leads to the ecstasies that elevate the soul towards the Great Being. To believe Moscovici to the inert nature "it is necessary (...) to substitute a representation which puts in evidence the relations of the human forces and the non-human forces". (Moscovici, 1968). The landscape of the islands thus participates in the real and the surreal where the individual reaches a higher status: "Each day was for them a feast day, and all that surrounded them a divine temple, where they unceasingly admired an infinite Intelligence, all-powerful, and friend of men ..." (Bernardin de Saint-Pierre, 1788). From a point of view, at the extreme, exoticism and virtue derive from innocence. It is hardly surprising that in the exotic nature described by Bernardin de Saint-Pierre, happiness is not the finality of virtue because it is above all this virtue which in itself provides this happiness to those who convenient. The exotic nature of Paul and Virginie highlights the original innocence of man; which guarantees him an infused knowledge of good: "Kind children, you thus passed in innocence your first days by exercising yourself for the benefit!" (Bernardin de Saint-Pierre, 1788). The harmony that reigns in Ile-de-France stems from this innocence of a happy life and cut off from the rest of the world, like the families of Paul and Virginie: "How many times in this place do your mothers, shaking you in their arms, blessed the sky with the consolation you were preparing for their old age, and to see you enter life under so happy auspices!" (Bernardin de Saint-Pierre, 1788).

The interval separating the Ile-de-France from corrupt civilization favors the natural expression of goodness. We find here that the simple, hospitable and enchanting setting of the island accentuates the idea of nature in the care of the fragile being. Whence comes the dream of a future happiness associated with the exotic nature: "... but they consoled themselves thinking that one day their children, happier, would enjoy at the same time, far from the cruel prejudices of the

Europe, the pleasures of love and the happiness of equality." (Bernardin de Saint-Pierre, 1788). However, the plenitude of happiness in the paradise of the Ile-de-France is nevertheless precarious. Indeed, Bernardin de Saint-Pierre refuses to build a blissful utopia. In the words of Jean Cazeneuve on happiness: "... the relationship between the social framework and the notion of happiness lies between two areas that escape him: on the one hand, the one where the social framework is too doomed to misfortune so that the idea of happiness can shine there. (Cazeneuve, 1966). Thus, the idyll written by Bernardin de Saint-Pierre ends on a tragic note. Still on the subject of happiness there is "On the other hand, the one where on the contrary, this idea is too high and too absolute to have a common measure with living society." (Cazeneuve, 1966). Here again, the intention is deliberate. The author of *Paul and Virginie* intends to illustrate a lifestyle. Happiness can not be perfect and one feels the price only when it has disappeared. The idea is that *Paul and Virginie* is the story of a wonderful life, in a setting of wild nature. As such, the exotic nature of the Ile-de-France is partly linked to the recipients. The latter hold a special place and play a key role in the rest of the story. Mr. de la Tour and his wife are thus led to expatriate themselves from France, a dysphoric space for them: "... Mr. de la Tour, having solicited in vain for service in France and the help of his family, decided to come to this island to seek his fortune. He had with him a young woman whom he loved very much and of whom he was loved." (Bernardin de Saint-Pierre, 1788). In the same vein, as in *La Nouvelle Héloïse*, there is a thwarted love, for the beautiful family of M. de la Tour is opposed: "She was from an old and rich house of her province; but he had married her secretly and without a dowry, because his wife's parents had opposed his marriage, since he was not a gentleman." (Bernardin de Saint-Pierre, 1788).

Marguerite's case, for its part, is a disappointment in love: "She was born in Brittany of a simple peasant family of which she was darling, and which would have made her happy, if she had not had the weakness of to believe in the love of a gentleman of his neighborhood who had promised to marry him." (Bernardin de Saint-Pierre, 1788). In Brittany, Marguerite was abused by a gentleman: "But this one having satisfied his passion, went away from her, and even refused to assure him a subsistence for a child of which he had left her pregnant. (Bernardin de Saint-Pierre, 1788). The decision will therefore be taken by her to rebuild her life in Ile-de-France: "She had determined then to go and hide his fault to the colonies, far from his country, where she had lost the only dot of a poor girl and honest, reputation. (Bernardin de Saint-Pierre, 1788). According to the description still made by André Morali-Daninos: "The seducer (noble family) courts a girl of modest condition and, for his sexual pleasure, he loses (usually with a pregnancy) that is to say to say that she can neither marry nor be received in her family." (Morali-Daninos, 1955). It was as Marguerite would have experienced in *Paul and Virginie*, a victim of the mores of society. Like Marguerite in her case, "She becomes almost an outlaw. The woman, until now temptress, becomes the victim, and victim because she is of another class." (Morali-Daninos, 1955). Thus Marguerite was obliged to expatriate herself in Ile-de-France to escape the shame. Life in France, or, as far as Margaret is concerned, was both melancholy for her and for Mr and Mrs de la Tour, provoking their departure to the Ile-de-France. Their life in this first space therefore plays the decisive role of

a sender who will lead them to another, in an exotic nature. *Paul and Virginie*, in the same vein, present the exotic nature of the Ile-de-France, whose discovery comes to heal the old social tears: "This feeling of confidence in the supreme power filled them with consolation for the past, courage for the present, and hope for the future." (Bernardin de Saint-Pierre, 1788). As such, the exotic nature brings happiness to those who refer to it by espousing the feelings inclined to its attraction: "Such as these women, forced by the misfortune to return in the nature, had developed in themselves and in their children these feelings that gives nature to prevent us from falling into misfortune." (Bernardin de Saint-Pierre, 1788). In addition, the Ile-de-France sees grow Paul and Virginia who come to combine the languages of poverty and nobility. Now, it happens that the governor of the island invites Virginia to go to France, to an aunt who wants to give him a worldly education and bequeath his fortune. For Madame de la Tour and Marguerite, only money brings happiness. The old man, meanwhile, will give an opposite opinion: "I hold for certain principles of happiness that we must prefer the benefits of nature to all those of fortune." (Bernardin de Saint-Pierre, 1788). He invites us to content ourselves with happiness, even if it is simple, which we already have in nature because "We must not go beyond what we can find at home." (Bernardin de Saint-Pierre, 1788).

The prejudices of the world and the lure of money would have had nothing to do with Mrs de la Tour if she had had complete confidence in the paradise she had taken refuge in. Thus, Virginie obeys her mother, but on her return, she will perish in the sinking of Saint-Géran. It followed that Paul was overwhelmed with grief, his mind misplaced, he will not survive his despair, as will Madame de la Tour and Marguerite. Nevertheless, Maurice Blanchot argues that "When all has been said, when the world is imposed as the truth of all, when the story wants to be accomplished in the routing of the speech, when the work has nothing more to say and to disappear, it is then that it tends to become word of the work." (Blanchot, 1955). Of course, Paul and Virginia is a challenge to life that the final denial and death make even greater, to the point of not listening to the wise old man. Happiness fertilized by nature is the true wealth, such is the lesson.

### Conclusion

Rousseau, in concert with Bernardin de Saint-Pierre, praises nature through the respective works, *Julie or the New Heloise* and *Paul and Virginie*. The spatialization which influences these works gives to see two reasoned apologies of the human duties in a rustic and exotic frame.

The approach adopted by Rousseau and Bernardin de Saint-Pierre to achieve their goal is antithetical. They contrast rustic and exotic natures with the city, Paris in this case. The latter reveals a decadent world where freedom and pleasure of money and flesh come together. In the city, in Paris, the man defies the morals and pushes the limits of this one from time to time. Jean-Jacques Rousseau and Henri Bernardin de Saint-Pierre expose, for this purpose, a look at a society that luxury and worldly pleasures rot. Rustic and exotic natures, on the other hand, are valued. The happiness that they generate not only consists in open-mindedness but even more in the blossoming of sensitivity in a climate of harmony. The beauty of the landscape where feelings of love, friendship and virtue intertwine provide man with the liberation of material constraints. Even if the action is exiled in a setting of wild nature, the textual analysis shows that the characters do not return to the primitive state. Rustic and exotic natures worthy of refuges of calm remain solutions of restoration of the personality. These works also maintain a rediscovery, because they show with other eyes what the habit hides most often. The starting point of these two writers is therefore a message of emotion contained in the subject of nature as a new aesthetic object, stimulating by its very simplicity.

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