The English poet Ted Hughes (1930-1998) and novelist Brian Clarke (1938-) were both fishermen whose art celebrated river life but also expressed concerns about river pollution. Hughes in his acclaimed poetry collection River (1983) and Clarke in his environmental novel The Stream (2000). These two writers have penetrated deeply into British culture with their profound insights. Indeed, this essay argues that when fishermen are also creative writers, culture can intervene on behalf of nature; that is, when nature is thus constructed for literary readers, culture becomes nature’s own means of helping the human animal adjust to its place within the natural world. Here, then, the artistic achievements of these two writers are directly tied to their scientifically informed backgrounds as well as to their experience with writing in other modes, journalistic and polemical, as well as fictional and poetic ones. This reconnection of all aspects of an artist’s work—the linking of art and activism, science and imaginative writing, aesthetics and environmental education—has important implications for cultural and literary studies. There is, after all, an urgent need to heal the rift between scientific and artistic modes of knowing in our confrontation with an environmental crisis here more specifically the issue of water quality—that threatens the life of every living creature on the planet.

HENRY WILLIAMSON AND TED HUGHES 355 the concept of the new fascist man derived from heroic vitalist and creative evo-lutionist philosophies. Man, through overcoming his own nature, would be able in a disciplined and socially responsible movement to transform himself and his society to create a new stage in the evolutionary development of mankind.6 Ideas of heroism and natural law shaped Williamson’s writing, even before he became actively involved in fascist politics. ‘Stay true to the pull of the spot as opposed to the nation and you have a longing for belonging that is the essence of ecopoiesis’, he writes.8 Yet in the work of Ted Hughes and Henry Williamson, real or imagined geographical regions such as counties One of Ted Hughes’ primary ideals was the superiority of animals over man because of their inability to understand death and thus they do not fear dying; they are free from inhibitions, focused in life and innocent of corruption, thus acting as agents for the immoralties and impurities of mankind. In Hawk in the Rain, the graceful hawk is contrasted against the lumbering weight of the hunter – notice the different words used to signify movement for the hunter (‘drag up’, ‘clutches my each step’) and the hawk (‘steady as a hallucination’). Given the