

SUMMARY OF ARTICLES

Jerzy Prokopiuk THE MYTH OF PARADISE

This article is a review of variegated forms of the image and myth of paradise created by human imagination both among primitive people as well as in polytheistic and monotheistic religions of the world. Such a survey permits us to formulate a quintessential description of paradise which appears to be a mythical and basically spiritual – rarely physical – "place" of residence, once accessible to all and today only to a chosen few.

Kirsten Hastrup NATURE AS HISTORICAL SPACE

The author presents the range of contemporary anthropological knowledge about Nature. The thesis of the rather general paper concerns Nature as a category, geography, landscape, motion and history. The intention of the author is to demonstrate that our knowledge is sufficient to enable us to formulate the outline of a new anthropological conception of Nature.

Mircea Eliade THE MYTH OF THE GOOD SAVAGE, OR THE PRESTIGE OF THE BEGINNING

The sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries produced the concept of the "noble savage" which corresponded to their moral, political and social prejudices. This text focuses on the mythicised recollection of the model-like vision of the "noble savage".

Marcin Brocki CULTURE AND NATURE. REMARKS ON THE MARGIN OF RESEARCH INTO GESTURES

The distinction between culture and Nature is not a problem concerning the world but a certain discourse. The source of the latter is to be found in the philosophy of Plato and in the mathematical paradigm of science established by Descartes. Investigations into gestures reveal that the use of language whose conceptual structure contains distinction, puts an end to the project of a complete description of bodily expression. It becomes necessary, therefore, to determine the category of culture and Nature anew and in a different perspective.

Jagna Knittel THE MYTH OF NATURE. WHAT IS NATURE LIKE?

"Nature" is one of the most significant concepts with which human thought expressed itself. The call for "a return to Nature" constitutes a leitmotif which systematically recurred in reflections pursued by the humanities. An examination of the history of conceptions of Nature makes it clear that they comprise a record of human longings that change with time. In this aspect, the vision of Nature can bring to mind the myth of paradise: "the return to Nature" is an endeavour to recapture something which we have lost while Nature is perceived as an opposite of culture. The author proposes deliberations on the myth of Nature starting with a presentation of the views expounded by Jean Jacques Rousseau.

Maria Janion, Maria Żmigrodzka ROUSSEAU – THE EXISTENTIAL HERO

The middle of the eighteenth century marked an important date in the European history of ideas. The impact exerted by Rousseau not only shaped for decades to come all perception of relations between nature and culture but it essentially altered the very perception of man.

Rousseau – the rebellious son of the Enlightenment and a master of the Romantic men of letters – must be envisaged as an author of a transitory period.

Małgorzata Łukasiewicz IN ONE HOUSE

Die Wahlverwandschaften, Leipzig 1976 by Johann Wolfgang Goethe is a pretext for presenting remarks about Nature and culture. A ruthless war is waged between people and Nature, and the prime tactical principle observed by the former is to reject the tactics of the enemy. If Nature appears to be chaos, a haphazard accident or the activity of unforeseeable forces – then people will counterpoise order, deeds, purposefulness and a plan. The slightest neglect signifies defeat. This model resembles to a certain extent the conceptions propounded by Freud and in particular the view which claimed that culture predominantly defends against Nature and essentially is anti-Nature.

Zygmunt Krzak MAN OF THE GOLDEN AGE

The article discusses the oldest distinguishable stage in the development of human thought: the structure of thought pursued by man of the Stone Age – the Golden Age. All narratives depicting the primeval period when human beings could enter heaven and maintain contact with the deities mention that this universal contact was severed by to a certain event. From that moment on, only shamans were capable of communicating with the heavens.

The author maintains that myths about the presence of mankind in paradise should be regarded as testimonies of original pan-shamanism. He also proposes an interpretation of myths about paradise and the Golde Age in categories of pan-shamanism conceived as the prime cognitive paradigm.

Dionizjusz Czubała IN THE WORLD OF CONTEMPORARY MYTHS. MONGOLIAN AND SIBERIAN TALES ABOUT THE SNOWMAN

In Mongolia, the myth about the existence of the *almas* (the "snowman") is ancient and firmly enrooted in social consciousness. At present, it has been revived probably under the impact of a global fascination with the mysterious figure of the mountain-dwelling recluse. The old legendary motive is made topical and conceivable by its introduction into the world of contemporary reality and by determining the time of the events. The author penetrates the ancient folklore of Central Asia and the Far North and demonstrates that we are dealing with a traditional and ancient myth shared by many people.

Aleksander Jackowski THE MYTH OF ART BEYOND CULTURE. ART BRUT

The creativity discussed by the author is closer to that extremity of Nature whose characteristic feature is independence from tradition transmitted by way of memory or writing; this is not to say that it is completely severed from the experiences of memory. The concept of *art brut* can be regarded as helpful for reflections on the phenomenon of this variety of creativity. It was introduced in 1945 by the French artist Jean Dubuffet who wished to present creativity free from the pressure of culture. Brut denotes raw, rough and not alleviated by any sort of conventions. Dubuffet claimed that in order to be truly oneself, and emancipated from the impact of culture one must oppose social norms and customs.

Adam Czyżewski ARCHITECTS AND THE PROTECTION OF BIRDS

Contemporary town planning, projects and visions dating from this century are part of an all-present heritage of the departing epoch. It is interesting that in their studies on formal solutions accepted in the praxis of architectonic design, historians of architecture and town planning do not notice their ecological lineage. Twentieth-century town planning is simply an organic ecological reflection. In the opinion of the author, this fact means that it is impossible to conduct within its range any sort of a discourse which would not exploit texts shared by the two disciplines, a procedure which calls for the intervention of the anthropologist of culture.

Monika Sznajderman "JARDIN DES PLANTES: POSTCARDS", OR THE PLANT METAPHOR OF JAMES CLIFFORD

Here the author translates and subsequently comments upon a brief chapter of J. Clifford's *The Predicament of Culture. Twentieth-century Ethnography, Literature and Art, "Jardin des Plantes: Postcards"*. The literary and at times even poetic impressions about plants and people conceal elements of a broader anthropological theory of culture which Clifford shares with other contemporary philosophers and ethnographers.

Wojciech Michera THE DEATH OF HANS AND GRETEL

"Home" and "Nature" are radically opposite categories of the imagination. The image of Nature is created in our imagination predominantly by areas free from traces of civilization: mountains, seas, deserts, and forests. If one were to examine freedom (from the subjugating norms of civilization) which is sought in Nature without Arcadian optimism then it becomes apparent that it is tantamount to death. The author cites texts by Mickiewicz, Dante and Rilke and portrays the forest as a mythical space full of assorted obstacles which radically separate Civilization from Nature and which make it impossible for man to penetrate the regions forbidden to him. Nature is an element, a life whose intensity is unrestrainable and which, therefore, turns into its own negation, chaos and death.

Jacek Ołędzki FILÓDZOAŃ. THE ONE WHICH ENJOYS LIFE OR OGLAWIANIE. THE CULTURE OF THE WILLOW

The foremost issue examined by this article concerns different beliefs and the general attitude towards trees disclosed by Slavs, Fins and Germans; it also contains an attempt at presenting the causes for the existing differences. The author proposes a classification of trees outlined by Kazimierz Moszyński and Adam Fiszer using the categories of their meaning in assorted beliefs. He devotes particular attention to the symbolics of willows and poplars which, by means of concepts and images that were connected with them in culture, introduced order into a comprehension of reality and coded knowledge concerning the latter.

Elżbieta Umińska PLANTS IN FOLK BELIEFS

This is an outline of research concerning folk beliefs and knowledge about plants, conducted by Polish scientists in the 1842–1939 period and the historical region of the Commonwealth.

The nineteenth century witnessed the emergence of two trends of research: mythological which sought the roots of beliefs about plants in pan-Slav mythology, and positivistic which described the function, significance and application of plants in folk science and beliefs.

This was the period of the appearance of three scientifically important herbaria: two Polish-language publications by Bronisław Gustawicz (1882) and Józef Rostafiński (1895) and a work in German by Adam Fischer (prior to 1939 and intended as a Polish contribution to an unrealised general work on Slav beliefs about plants, initiated by professor E. Schneeweis at the first Congress of Slav Philologists in Prague).

The article makes use of the contemporary methodology of investigations into myths: the semiotics of folk culture and the phenomenology of religion by M. Eliade in order to present Polish exemplifications of biological hierophancies in which it discovers the myth about the tree of life and traces of the cosmogenic myth; it also considers the question of sacral time in rituals of gathering plants. The author demonstrates the existence of a composition of blessed plants which has remained unchanged for over 200 years and which at that time became surrounded with so-called duplications of the centre. Finally, the article proves that in Poland too medicinal herbs are rationalised and devitalized variants of the archetypes of herbs of eternal youth and immortality. The author discusses the ritual gathering of herbs and their blessing during Corpus Christi and the feasts of the Assumption of the Virgin Mary and St. John the Baptist.

Zbigniew Libera EARTHLY DEITIES

This article indicates the reasons why rural communities are unwilling to seek the advice of trained medical doctors (a phenomenon unexplained by insufficient money, distances to town or village xenophobia but primarily by the chasm between scientific and folk medicine). Subsequently, the author lists persons predestined to be medically treated (the elderly, children, women, the ill and outsiders). The article basically deals with the institution of witch doctors and magicians. The author maintains that the witch healer in folk culture is a functional continuum of the image of the Master of the Thunderbolt while the magician should be perceived as a transformation of the mythical antagonist of the God of the Thunderbolt.

Andrzej Różycki TRAVEL NOTES FROM POLAND

The author – a film director – noted down his impressions from journeys to various interesting places. He describes, for instance, the old and

little-known ritual of floral decorations along the route of a church procession held on Corpus Christi in Spycymierz (a village on the river Warta). He also visited the borderland settlement of Krynki (in the voivodeship of Białystok) once "the heart of European (world) Jewry" where he was fascinated with the stone matzevas – tombstones whose Hebrew inscriptions recall the buried persons.

Ewa Korulska ON THE PEASANT – UNTITLED

Thanks to tens of literary works of varying rank, the author examined mythicised images of the Polish peasant which function in universal consciousness. She concluded that such images were moulded in the second half of the nineteenth century by the literature and art of the intelligentsia; the "positive" and "negative" portrayal of the peasant co-exists in time and produces a highly contrasted, black-and-white picture.

Wiesław Myśliwski, Roch Sulima, Aleksander Jackowski WE ESTABLISHED NATURE

The conversation deals with Nature, birds, animals and cruelty. In testimonies of peasant culture, signs denoting Nature are conventional. Nature does not occur here as an object of contemplation which according to Roch Sulima, appeared when peasants began to write. The written word set free a certain perception of Nature. For Wiesław Myśliwski, the manner in which peasants express nature is totally original and remains outside our conventions. The drawing of conclusions must primarily lead to reflections on the system of the language in which the peasant described his situation. Aleksander Jackowski declared that aesthetic evaluation is a privilege enjoyed by people who are not compelled to pay attention to other functions.

W. Myśliwski is of the opinion that our view of peasant culture, behaviour and aesthetics cannot apply our concepts, habits or language. For the peasant there are no superfluous or unnecessary things; nor are there any things which exist only for our admiration. Under the impact of civilizational progress we have distinguished Nature and endowed it with a new function – that of an object; one could say that we have brought Nature into being.

Ryszard Ciarka THE KILLING OF ANIMALS

Killing animals is one of the most universal activities pursued by man in order to satisfy his basic needs. The intention of the author is to review the cultural determinants of a phenomenon when an animal which is often connected with various symbolic and mythological connotations, suddenly changes into nourishment or, on the contrary, lives and becomes as if part of society, receives a name and enjoys considerable esteem.

"Ways of killing animals" consists of two separate paradigms which

determine our attitude towards the suffering and death of animals; "deception" – a form of a cultural game with the environment which creates a veritable bond between man and the surrounding world, and the "lie" – a form of a game played with oneself when the supreme aim of concealing the fact of death is to obtain a rapid and superficial answer.

Agnieszka Taborska THE ART OF POSITIVE EATING

Although Kansas is still covered in cattle farms, forty years after the "invention" of hamburger, McDonald's is now introducing ecological food for growing numbers of vegetarians. Fast food, which until recently was universally accepted, is being rejected by the today's thirty-year-olds. In the "food pyramid" noodles are placed above meat in importance. Macrobiotic cuisine triumphs. The supermarket chains of the end of this century are using slogans like "Cultivate the Art of Positive Eating".

Jeremy Rifkin THE ANATOMY OF A CHEESEBURGER

In the mid-1950s the hamburger became the foremost form of American "fast food". Ray Kroc, one of the founders of the McDonald network which specialized in hamburgers, altered the eating habits of the Americans. Today, 200 Americans purchase one or more hamburgers every second. The production process has been divided into several precisely described stages. They exclude improvisation, and deviations are strictly forbidden. All hamburgers are always identical and the consumers were advised to resign from requests to take into consideration their personal tastes.

Małgorzata Haładewicz PEARLS BEFORE SWINE

The author considers some aspects of relations between thought, language and culture. By basing herself on the accomplishments of *general semanticists* she conducts a synchronic analysis of one of the traditions of our culture – subsistence on animal products. The article shows the degree in which language assists the creation of concepts which reduce animals to the role of raw material in accordance with the demands of contemporary civilization. The ensuing register which made this operation possible is divided into words which conceal the relation between living creatures and the end product (words such as *pork* in the sequence: *pig, pork, pork chop*), words and collocations which objectivise animals intended for consumption (*industrial production, meat plants*), prototypes which serve the promotion of the commodity and, finally, words which conceal the overly drastic provenance of certain dishes (*blood sausage, pottage*).

Iga Czackowska THE COMMUNITY OF NATURE, GOD AND MAN

Contemporary Christian theological thought is experiencing distinct changes as regards its mode of speaking about Nature. To a considerable

extent these alterations have been produced by a harsh critique of Christianity which is charged with the present-day state of the natural environment. The author demonstrates the way in which theologians examine their own tradition and seek within it trends which could have truly contributed to shaping the overly anthropocentric mentality of modern man whose concern for the welfare of Nature is by no means excessive. In the first place, they point to the much too strong connection between Christian thought and Greek dualistic philosophy as well as the hierarchic, patriarchic manner of thought pursued by the Hebrew tradition. A more careful acquaintanceship with Biblical texts and the context of their origin, however, does not entitle us to claim that Christianity is incapable of proposing the contemporary world and intellectually and morally more profound reflection about nature. An example of such a current could be the intuition revealed by theologians representing various currents, for example, the theology of the process, the theology of liberation, ecofeminism and the theology of creation. Theologians of assorted creeds reach for heretofore little emphasized Biblical texts and theological intuitions from past centuries in order to show the community of Nature, God and man. They talk about a God who remains in close contact with His creatures and establishes relations which man is unable to perceive to the very end. They also depict Nature as a creation beloved by God, and endowed with beauty, goodness and sanctity. On the other hand, they do not sever man from the world as a whole; on the contrary, they disclose the common peregrination of man and all the other creatures towards an ultimate fulfilment in God. In this great community God, man and Nature mutually shape themselves.

Jadwiga Rodowicz A DIALOGUE WITH EARTH

In the Far East the traditionally interpreted attitude towards the Earth and the environment stemmed from a particular perception and was totally dominated by categories incompatible with ours. The best example are rock gardens situated next to Buddhist temples which served the purposes of contemplation and meditation. The contemplation of a garden became the contemplation of the inner state of the person who found himself in the garden, and the order of the latter and its innermost dynamics in a certain fashion organized the intimate world of the observer.

Koji Kamoji THE RYŌANJI ZEN GARDEN AND MY DREAM ABOUT THE GARDENER

The Zen garden is closely connected with Buddhism and Zen philosophy. It is composed of water, plants, sand and rocks similarly to other gardens all over the world but its characteristic feature is the fact that the purpose of these items is not to stir up emotions of a solely aesthetic or intellectual nature. This is a garden which introduces us to a world which is devoid of relations.

On Haiku – Haiku is poetry in which the descriptive form is diminutive.