

## Into the wild - Nature in Dreams of Rivers and Seas and Rapids by Tim Parks



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GRIN Verlag Mai 2013, 2013. Taschenbuch. Book Condition: Neu. 211x149x7 mm. This item is printed on demand - Print on Demand Neuware - Seminar paper from the year 2013 in the subject English - Literature, Works, grade: 1, 3, University of Basel (Englisches Seminar), language: English, abstract: Hurricane sandy, which raged over the Eastern United States last autumn and caused widespread damage and claimed the lives of over hundred people, was a reminder of how relevant the first quote still is. And Goethe was also right in writing that nature goes its own way. His last sentence, however, is not true anymore. Humanity influences nature, causes these exceptions, and is affected by the results. In this paper, I am going to examine Tim Parks' novels Dreams of Rivers and Seas and Rapids from this point of view. In both novels the protagonists try to gain control over nature and to overcome the hardships which it imposes upon them, but finally have to recognize that it has not only prevailed, but has also altered them and their lives profoundly. As nature has a wide-ranging meaning in literature, the term needs to be narrowed down at first. While the lexical definition is understandable, describing it as 'the phenomena of the physical world collectively' (OED 2013), the debate in philosophy is more complex, discussing whether nature exists in reality or only as a social construction in our heads. Dingler (2005: 29-30) concludes that in modern thinking humans consider nature to be a 'Teil der Realität [...] der vom Menschen unabhängig ist.' Only through knowledge is it possible to acknowledge the reality of nature. This theory is based on the Cartesian dualism, which distinguishes between the sphere of nature and the sphere of culture (31). As humans we live in the sphere of culture,...

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