



Meanings and Values of Water in Russian Culture (Routledge Studies in Modern European History)

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Bringing together a team of scholars from the diverse fields of geography, literary studies, and history, this is the first volume to study water as a cultural phenomenon within the Russian/Soviet context. Water in this context is both a cognitive and cultural construct and a geographical and physical phenomenon, representing particular rivers (the Volga, the Chusovaia in the Urals, the Neva) and bodies of water (from Baikal to sacred springs and the flowing water of nineteenth-century estates), but also powerful systems of meaning from traditional cultures and those forged in the radical restructuring undertaken in the 1930s. Individual chapters explore the polyvalence and contestation of meanings, dimensions, and values given to water in various times and spaces in Russian history. The reservoir of symbolic association is tapped by poets and film-makers but also by policy-makers, the popular press, and advertisers seeking to incite reaction or drive sales. The volume's emphasis on the cultural dimensions of water will link material that is often widely disparate in time and space; it will also serve as the methodological framework for the analysis undertaken both within chapters and in the editors' introduction.

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