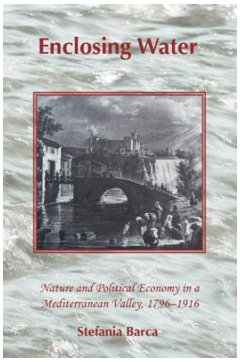
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Enclosing Water: Nature and Political Economy in a Mediterranean Valley, 1796–1916

Barca, Stefania



Enclosing Water. Cover.

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Barca, Stefania. *Enclosing Water: Nature and Political Economy in a Mediterranean Valley, 1796–1916.* Cambridge: The White Horse Press, 2010.

Enclosing Water is an environmental history of the Industrial Revolution, as inscribed on the Liri valley in Italy's Central Apennines. Amid forces of revolution and empire, and Enlightenment discourses of "improvement" and political economy, the Liri's natural wealth—water power—generated sweeping changes in its landscape and working and living environments. This book tells the story of how defining water as property—both materially and discursively—led to the emergence of an industrial riverscape and of a concomitant new ecological consciousness; to heightened environmental risks and awareness of those risks. A dramatic century in the Liri's socio-environmental history, with its cast of new industrial bourgeoisie, engineers, and civil servants, illuminates how material developments and ideological currents completely reshaped the relationship between society and nature at the periphery of nineteenth-century Europe. By integrating political economy into the narrative of European environmental history, this pioneering book offers a critical new view of discourses of water disorder and environmental politics in the Mediterranean region.

Stefania Barca is a senior researcher at the Centre for Social Studies, University of Coimbra, Portugal. Her previous publications include *Storia dell'ambiente: Una introduzione* [Environmental History: An Introduction], co-authored with Marco Armiero, 2004 and *Elettrificare la Puglia: Impresa, territorio e sviluppo in prospettiva storica, 1900–1945* [The Electrification of Apulia], 2001.

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