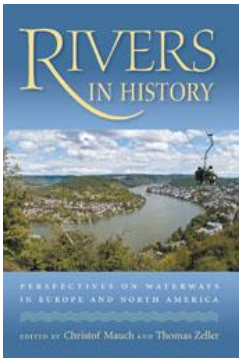
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Rivers in History: Perspectives on Waterways in Europe and North America

Mauch, Christof and Thomas Zeller



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Throughout history, rivers have run a wide course through human temporal and spiritual experience. They have demarcated mythological worlds, framed the cradle of Western civilization, and served as physical and psychological boundaries among nations. Rivers have become a crux of transportation, industry, and commerce. They have been loved as nurturing providers, nationalist symbols, and the source of romantic lore but also loathed as sites of conflict and natural disaster. *Rivers in History* presents one of the first comparative histories of rivers on the continents of Europe and North America in the modern age. The contributors examine the dynamic relationship between rivers and humans through political, cultural, industrial, social, and ecological perspectives in national and transnational settings. As integral sources of food and water, local and international transportation, recreation, and aesthetic beauty, rivers have dictated where cities have risen, and in times of flooding, drought, and war, where they've fallen. Modern Western civilizations have sought to control rivers by channeling them for irrigation, raising and lowering them in canal systems, and damming them for power generation. Contributors analyze the regional, national, and international politicization of rivers, the use and treatment of waterways in urban versus rural environments, and the increasing role of international commissions

in ecological and commercial legislation for the protection of river resources. Case studies include the Seine in Paris, the Mississippi, the Volga, the Rhine, and the rivers of Pittsburgh. Rivers in History is a broad environmental history of waterways that makes a major contribution to the study, preservation, and continued sustainability of rivers as vital lifelines of Western culture. (Text adapted from University of Pittsburgh Press website.)

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