The Riverscape and the River

The study of water in the landscape is a new and rapidly expanding field. Rivers make riverscapes (even if the rivers are frozen) and riverscapes then determine the rivers: except for the ever-increasing human impact. Dr Haslam examines how the quantity, function and ecology of water changes as it moves from watershed to river. The development of river and riverscape, their ecology, the effect of human activities (such as water abstractions, flood control and management for recreational use) and water resources are described both in principle and using case histories. Contrasting examples are given from across the world, including Iceland, Hungary, Malta, Britain and the USA, which enables understanding of how water and riverscape interact with each other, and with human impact. The study, development and loss of water resources is also described, including the extreme example of Malta, whose clean water now depends solely on oil imports. This innovative book is aimed at undergraduate and graduate students and professionals, but is also accessible to anyone interested in how water and riverscape interact.

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The Riverscape
and the River

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To: Mr H. W. Haslam and Mrs J. M. Psaila who (more than others) drove the author hither and drove her thither, in England and Malta, respectively, so that she could study the riverscapes.
Thou makest springs gush forth in the valleys, they flow between the hills, they give drink to every beast of the field; . . . the earth is satisfied with the fruit of Thy work.

Ps.104
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Preface

The study of landscape ecology has developed rapidly in the past two decades, though the limited area of riverscape has not received great attention as such. This book attempts to link river and riverscape in an integrated whole. It has more ecology (natural, cultural and historical) and less mathematics and modelling than is currently usual: reflecting my interests, and my preference for observation and synthesis.

I have worked for over 35 years on rivers, mostly on their vegetation, waters, channels and other contents. More recently I realised the interest of the wider ecosystem, of the river and the riverscape being inextricably joined, both by the water they share, and by the human impact (some interesting, most destructive) inflicted upon them. Changes have been made to allow people to survive, and indeed to live pleasantly. Great changes have also been made from ignorance or greed to remove and contaminate both water and natural heritage. The Riverscape and the River tries to reflect the interest and diversity of that natural heritage, and what has been done to it down the ages.

The book is primarily about Europe (with a little on North America).

S. M. H.

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Finally, I would like to thank the publishers for their patience, waiting for me to recover from concussion caused by a continental lorry driver not knowing he had a ‘blind spot’ on English motorways.

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