

# W A T E R

## as Social and Cultural Space

### Changing Values and Representations

The object of analysis is the cultural significance of water. The project funded by the Academy of Finland (AKVA) asks:

1. How do cultural discourses reflect the existential importance of water and how do our perceptions of water affect our approaches to water resources and the consumption of water in our every-day lives?
2. How is the spatial order of water constructed in cultural texts and how do imagined and real spaces function in a reciprocal relationship?
3. What changes take place in the meanings, values, and images given to water and its textual and visual representations in time and space?
4. What are the cultural implications of technological innovations and what is the cultural role of water in times of transformation from the pre-modern to the modern and post-modern?

The objectives are:

1. to increase knowledge of the large reservoir of symbols, metaphors and imagery based on water as one of the oldest cognitive systems of civilization
2. to promote cultural competence in the future management of sustainable water resources. One common focus will be on the geographical space of the Baltic Sea region as the "Northern" space of international collaboration
3. to create a productive methodological dialogue between literary, language and cultural studies, historical and environmental studies, and engineering, in a synthesizing process.

THE PROJECT WILL FOCUS ON THREE MAJOR WATER-SPACE DIMENSIONS:

#### I. WATER AS IMAGINARY SPACE

The Trope of the River in Finnish Ballads

Toni Lahtinen

Water Worlds: The River in the American Literary Imagination

Dr. Markku Lehtimäki

An Ecocritical Approach to rivers in Soviet Village Prose

Mika Perkiömäki

Water as Threat and Utopia in Russian Culture

Dr. Arja Rosenholm

Water in Soviet Popular Songs

Dr. Marija Litovskaya

Svetloyar – A Sacred Lake and Its Meanings in Russian Culture

Dr. Jane Costlow

Water Wells and the Culture of Health in Early Modern England

Dr. Päivi Pahta

#### II. WATER SERVICES AS A SPACE OF EVERYDAY LIFE

Waters and Waste Waters in Helsinki

Dr. Petri Juuti

Functions and Importance of Water to People and Changes Over Time in Finland

Dr. Tapio Katko

Building Sustainable Water Services in Finland

Dr. Riikka Rajala

#### III. CHANGING CULTURAL AND SOCIAL VALUES OF WATER SPACES: Connections and disconnections in the Baltic Sea Area

The Baltic Sea as a border and disconnective space during WWII and the cold war era

Dr. Withold Bonner

The Baltic Sea environmental cooperation as a space of contact: Changing meanings and values of protection

Dr. Nina Tynkkynen

Water in humanity's endosomatic and exosomatic metabolism

Dr. Yrjö Haila

Dr. Christian Krötzel

Environmental History of the Danube

Dr. Verena Winiwarter

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