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By investigating how the  
most fundamental element -  
water - was 'conquered' by  
draining fens and marshes,

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straightening the courses of rivers, building high dams and exploiting hydro-electric power, The Conquest of Nature explores how over the last 250 years, the German people have shaped their natural environment and how the landscapes they created took a powerful hold on the German imagination.

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[David Blackbourn] --

History takes place in space  
as well as time. This book  
tells how the German

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landscape was dramatically  
reshaped in the 200 years  
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The modern idea of 'mastery'  
over nature always had its  
critics, whether their  
motives were aesthetic,  
religious or  
environmentalist. By  
investigating how the most  
fundamental element - water  
- was 'conquered' by  
draining fens and marshes,  
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"The Conquest of Nature" is a groundbreaking study that opens new vistas on the history of Germany. It also shows that while mastery over nature delivers undoubted benefits, it has often come at a tremendous cost to both the natural environment and human life.

The Conquest of Nature by  
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It was a "conquest from barbarism". This use of science and technology to tame the wild beast of nature is as old as man himself but found a special expression in Germany. The

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next section of the book examines the taming of the Rhine river and the harnessing of it to agriculture and the state.

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By investigating how the most fundamental element - water - was 'conquered' by draining fens and marshes, straightening the courses of rivers, building high dams and exploiting hydro-electric power, *The Conquest of Nature* explores how over the last 250 years, the German people have shaped their natural environment and how the landscapes they

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MAKING OF MODERN GERMANY is  
a recommended pick for any  
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and German history and  
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David Blackbourn tells the  
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people transformed their  
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into one of the most  
powerful countries in the  
Western world. His account,  
in which he shows how  
Germans set out to  
"conquer"...

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