



# The Spiritual History of Ice: Romanticism, Science, and the Imagination

*Eric G. Wilson*

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## **The Spiritual History of Ice: Romanticism, Science, and the Imagination** Eric G. Wilson

At the turn of the nineteenth century, crystallographers, glaciologists, and polar explorers for the first time demonstrated that frozen shapes are not dead but bearers of vital powers. Aware of this new scientific information, Romantic figures in England and America--including Coleridge and Poe, Percy and Mary Shelley, Emerson and Thoreau--challenged traditional representations of ice as waste and celebrated crystals, glaciers, and the poles as revelations of life as well as models of poetic composition. *The Spiritual History of Ice* explores this ecology of ice in fascinating detail, revealing not only a neglected context of the Romantic age but also the esoteric history and psychology of frozen phenomena

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