



Sincerity after Communism: A Cultural History (Eurasia Past and Present)

Ellen Rутten

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A compelling study of “new sincerity” as a powerful cultural practice, born in perestroika-era Russia, and how it interconnects with global social and media flows

The global cultural practice of a “new sincerity” in literature, media, art, design, fashion, film, and architecture grew steadily in the wake of the Soviet collapse. Cultural historian Ellen Rутten traces the rise and proliferation of a new rhetoric of sincere social expression characterized by complex blends of unabashed honesty, playfulness, and irony. Insightful and thought provoking, Rутten’s masterful study of a sweeping cultural trend with roots in late Soviet Russia addresses postsocialist, postmodern, and postdigital questions of selfhood. The author explores how and why a uniquely Russian artistic and social philosophy was shaped by “cultural memory, commodification, and mediatization,” and how, under Putin, “new sincerity” talk merges with transnational pleas to “revive sincerity.” This essential study stands squarely at the intersection of the history of emotions, media studies, and post-Soviet studies to shed light on a new cultural reality—one that is profoundly affecting creative thought, artistic expression, and lifestyle virtually everywhere.

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