Reaktion Books

AUTUMN / WINTER CATALOGUE 2026

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Welcome to Reaktion's books for Autumn and Winter 2026.

John Sutherland's entertaining and hard-hitting history of modern boxing, *97 Fights*, is a passionate and precise account of the pugilist's art and a meditation on its future.

Katie Barclay's *The Kiss* is an entrancing history of a form of intimacy that pre-dates humankind, while Paul Chrystal's *The Romans* is the perfect introduction to the history of ancient Rome from the viewpoint of the the plebeian world of spectacle, violence, politics, food and belief.

Lee Raye's *Creatures of Story and Song* is a superb evocation of Britain's lost species and their legacies, and Camilla Cassidy's *The Ground beneath Our Feet* charts a path through the under-appreciated history of England's lost commons. *Smell: The Tale of a Fading Sense* is Bjørn Berge's survey of the science, culture and history of a sense through which we perceive danger, desire and memory.

Scott Peeples's *How Many Roads* is a fresh reappraisal of the life and work of Bob Dylan that tracks the singer-songwriter's perpetual reinventions from the 1960s to the present day. *Aiming for the Stars: The Life and Times of Odilon Redon* is an extensively illustrated reassessment of the life and work of the Symbolist artist.

New in paperback are popular books including Hannele Klemettilä's *The Medieval Kitchen*, John B. Kachuba's *Shape-shifters*, Alec Ryrie's *The Age of Hitler and How We Will Survive It*, the acclaimed anthology of Icelandic folklore *Ghosts, Trolls and the Hidden People* and two music titles: *Heroes: David Bowie and Berlin* and *Sex Pistols: Poison in the Machine*.

We hope that you will enjoy our new season's books and Reaktion's great backlist.

David Hayden, Managing Director
Michael R. Leaman, Publisher

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Inside front cover: Giuseppe Arcimboldo, *Winter*, c. 1555–60, oil on wood. Alte Pinakothek, Munich (CC BY-SA 4.0).

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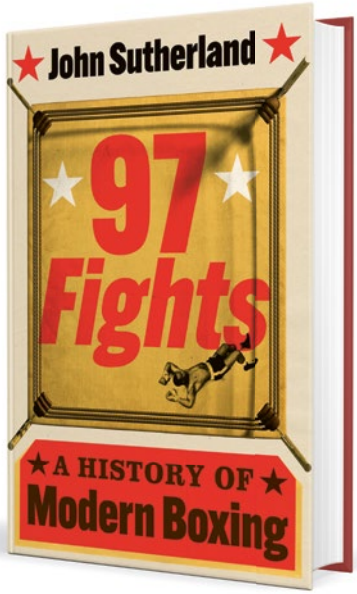
97 Fights

A History of Modern Boxing

John Sutherland



The noble art of boxing is the world's oldest contact sport. Its Big Bang moment was the arrival of Thomas Alva Edison, whose pioneering feature film *Men Boxing* was produced in 1891. From that seed, boxing grew to become the first truly global sport.

Taking *Men Boxing* as its starting point, *97 Fights* is a thrilling, no-holds-barred account that considers all the greats – Joe Louis and Muhammad Ali, Nicola Adams and Oleksandr Usyk among them. Modern boxing has weathered the storms of mob fixing, wayward fighters and personal tragedy, in and out of the ring. With signature precision and humour, and the passion of a true fan, John Sutherland charts the sport's precipitous climb, its golden era and its uncertain future, from the 'Thrilla in Manila' to the unedifying spectacle of Logan Paul's 'Bragging Rights'. Ultimately, the book asks: where will boxing go? Or will it just go? These are the two questions to which Sutherland's authoritative survey leads, and to which he supplies authoritative answers.

A charged, ringside chronicle of boxing's heroes, scandals and ever-shifting future

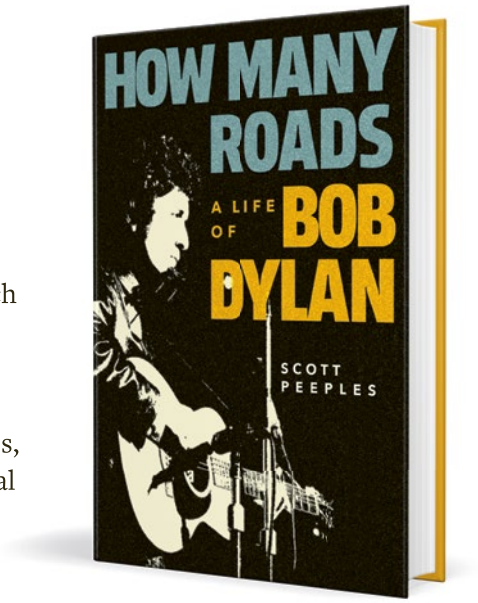
John Sutherland, the Emeritus Lord Northcliffe Professor of Modern Literature at University College London, is a much-published author and journalist, and a familiar figure in the literary world. He has long had the wish to write on boxing, the most hurtful sport, and what it has come to mean in his own lifetime.

September 2026 • History/Sport
ISBN 978 1 83639 268 2
234 × 156 mm • 496 pp
43 illustrations
Hardback • £25/$35
ebook 978 1 83639 309 2
World Rights: Reaktion

How Many Roads

A Life of Bob Dylan

Scott Peeples



How Many Roads chronicles Bob Dylan's rise from apprenticeships in Minneapolis cafés and Greenwich Village folk clubs to international stardom as a breathtakingly original songwriter and singer. Scott Peeples follows Dylan through decades of radical shifts in his writing, recording and performing styles, from the intimate lo-fi *Basement Tapes* to the musical collage art and apocalyptic blues of the twenty-first century. Spanning Dylan's entire career, *How Many Roads* illuminates Dylan's deep respect for tradition alongside his artistic restlessness, a combination that extends into his prose writing, filmmaking and visual art. Weaving lucid analyses of Dylan's major albums and live performances into a briskly paced biographical narrative, Peeples offers newcomers and Dylan die-hards alike a fresh perspective on the most compelling and challenging popular performer of our time.

A dynamic account of Bob Dylan's enduring career

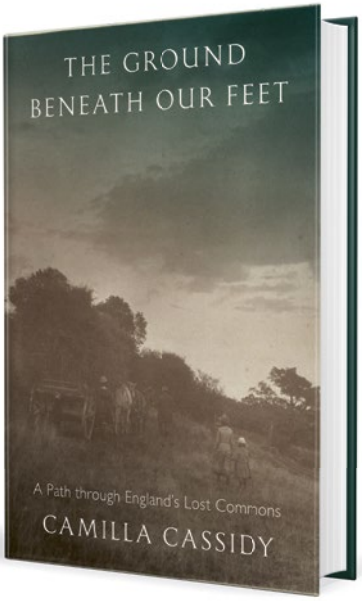
Scott Peeples is Professor of English at the College of Charleston, South Carolina. His previous books include *The Man of the Crowd: Edgar Allan Poe and the City* (2020) and *The Afterlife of Edgar Allan Poe* (2004).

August 2026 • Music/Biography
ISBN 978 1 83639 259 0
234 × 156 mm • 360 pp
26 illustrations
Hardback • £20/$30
ebook 978 1 83639 301 6
World Rights: Reaktion

The Ground beneath Our Feet

A Path through England's Lost Commons

Camilla Cassidy



'Camilla Cassidy's wonderful book forces us . . . to think critically about how rural England came to be closed off from the vast majority of the population. Creative, often profoundly personal, *The Ground beneath Our Feet* is essential reading.'
– Carl Griffin, author of *Protest, Politics and Work in Rural England, 1700–1850*

What can it mean to belong to a place when it doesn't belong to you? *The Ground beneath Our Feet* tells the story of how common land all but disappeared in England. It traces the legal and social process known as enclosure – one that reimagined shared land as private property and put up fences to keep people out. The journey takes us via resistance, rebellion, resignation and resurgence from Norman hunting forests to the deserted villages of the eighteenth century and forward to the stump of Sycamore Gap. Camilla Cassidy brings together the voices of lawmakers and lawbreakers, the high and mighty and the commoners, poets and artists to explore tradition, belonging and alienation in our landscape.

A historical and literary journey through England's embattled landscape

Camilla Cassidy is a writer from North Yorkshire. Her work has been published in the *TLS*, *The Spectator* and *The Telegraph*, among others. She is the author of *Twilight Histories: Nostalgia and the Victorian Historical Novel* (2023) and the recipient of a Northern Writers' Award.

October 2026 • History/Nature
ISBN 978 1 83639 282 8
234 × 156 mm • 288 pp
18 illustrations
Hardback • £20/$30
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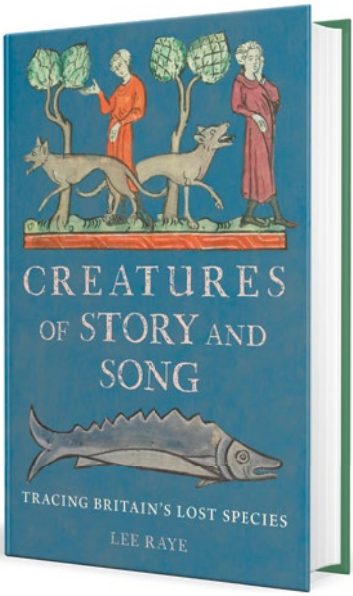
World Rights: Reaktion

Creatures of Story and Song

Tracing Britain's Lost Species

Lee Raye



Discover why a beaver was said to bite off its own testicles, why the baleen of a right whale was prized by medieval knights or why you should give your crush the gift of a great auk.

Creatures of Story and Song pieces together evocative legends, poems and historical accounts from a thousand years of history to remember fourteen of Britain's extinct creatures. More than merely charting their demise, this book explores the rich legacy that creatures such as the eagle, boar and wolf left on our cultural landscape, and sheds light on what it was like to live alongside them. As some, like the beaver, look set for a comeback, Lee Raye's book offers curious readers charming context on these animals' ancestors.

Lee Raye is an Associate Lecturer at the Open University, a Fellow of the Linnean Society and the author of *The Atlas of Early Modern Wildlife* (2023).

The captivating story of Britain's lost species told through its literature and lore

September 2026 • Nature/History
ISBN 978 1 83639 272 9
216 × 138 mm • 304 pp
24 illustrations
Hardback • £16.95/$26
ebook 978 1 83639 313 9
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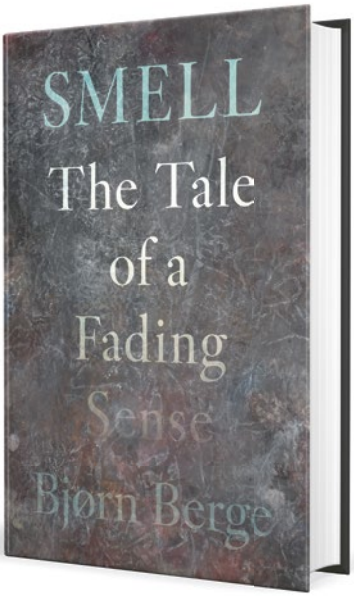
Smell

The Tale of a Fading Sense

Bjørn Berge



'A treasure trove of insight and reflection. The text sharpens your senses and makes you appreciate the endless variety the world has to offer.' – *Dagbladet*

The sense of smell is often linked to the dark, the antisocial, the primitive – the very opposite of modernity and progress. Today we live in an almost odourless world, where everything is reduced to images. Yet smell plays a vital role in how we relate to others and our surroundings, forming our experiences and our memories. Tracing a history of smell from the first ancient cities, through medieval plagues and the Industrial Revolution to the present day, this book is a tribute to the sense of smell in all its beauty and disgust. Along the way Bjørn Berge introduces us to twenty iconic scents and invites readers to reflect on and reawaken their senses.

A celebration of our sense of smell

Bjørn Berge is an architect and author. His books include *The Ecology of Building Materials* (2000) and *Nowherelands: An Atlas of Vanished Countries, 1840–1975* (2017). He lives in Norway.

July 2026 • Essays
ISBN 978 1 83639 250 7
216 × 138 mm • 248 pp
Hardback • £18/$27
ebook 978 1 83639 295 8
English-language Rights: Reaktion
World Rights: Spartacus, Norway

ГОСПОДИ! ПОМОГИ МНЕ ВЫЖИТЬ
СРЕДИ ЭТОЙ СМЕРТНОЙ ЛЮБВИ
MEIN GOTT, HILF MIR, DIESE TÖDLICHE LIEBE ZU ÜBERLEBEN

The Kiss

A History of Passion and Power

Katie Barclay

This book tells the surprising history of our most intimate gesture: the kiss. Richly illustrated, it explores a millennium of kisses, asking how and why the kiss has retained its power over the centuries, and what it might mean today. From the furtive kisses of Heloise and Abelard to *The Godfather*'s 'kiss of death', Katie Barclay shows how the kiss can be romantic, peaceful, transgressive, intimate, erotic and more.

The meanings our kisses engender and the emotions they produce reflect a cultural inheritance transmitted in story and song, art and literature; when we kiss, we kiss with the weight of history.

Katie Barclay is Professor of History at Macquarie University, Sydney. She has published widely in the field of the history of emotions, gender history, law and family life. Her books include *Loneliness in World History* (2025).

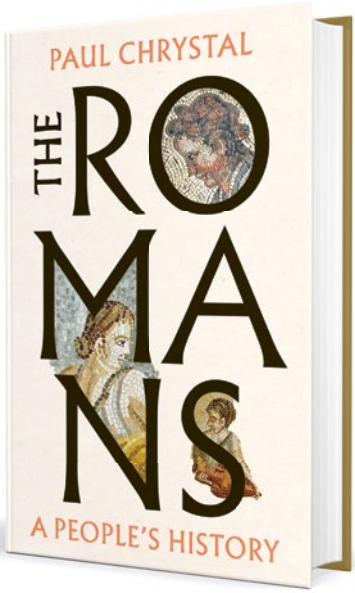
A richly illustrated historical guide to kissing in art, politics, science and literature

August 2026 • History
ISBN 978 1 83639 261 3
216 × 138 mm • 240 pp
34 illustrations, 20 in colour
Hardback • £20/$28
ebook 978 1 83639 297 2
World Rights: Reaktion

The Romans

A People's History

Paul Chrystal



The Romans loom large in the imagination, credited with roads, aqueducts, politics, plumbing and empire – yet these familiar achievements tell only part of the story. *The Romans: A People's History* turns away from generals and emperors to focus instead on the millions of ordinary men and women whose voices rarely made it into history. Drawing on inscriptions, literature, household objects, mosaics and myth, it reveals how plebeian lives shaped the culture that still surrounds us: from food and labour to beliefs, entertainment, violence and political resistance. Not shying away from contentious subjects – misogyny, slavery, racism and the enjoyment of brutal spectacle – Paul Chrystal offers a rich, human-centred account of Roman civilization seen from the ground up, suggesting that what ordinary Romans endured and achieved still echoes in how we live, argue and govern today.

Paul Chrystal is a contributor to a number of history and archaeology magazines, and TV and radio programmes. His numerous publications include *Miracula: Weird and Wonderful Stories of Ancient Greece and Rome* (Reaktion, 2025). He lives in York, UK.

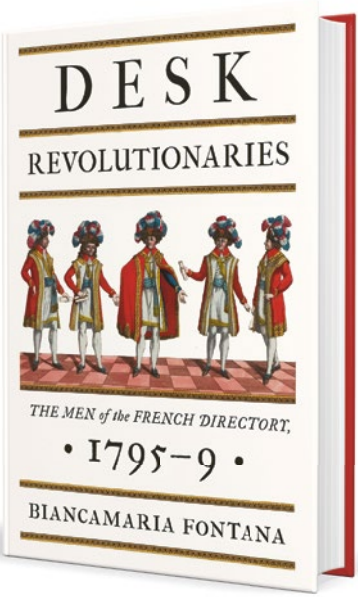
Ancient Rome retold through the lives of ordinary people

October 2026 • History
ISBN 978 1 83639 264 4
216 × 138 mm • 416 pp
51 illustrations
Hardback • £17.95/$27
ebook 978 1 83639 299 6
World Rights: Reaktion

Desk Revolutionaries

The Men of the French Directory, 1795–9

Biancamaria Fontana



'In a series of shrewd and finely etched depictions of political figures during the French Directory, *Desk Revolutionaries* deftly rehabilitates the unjustly neglected years that followed the Terror.' – Colin Jones, author of *The Fall of Robespierre*

'A riveting group biography.' – Ruth Scurr, author of *Napoleon: A Life in Gardens and Shadows*

The French Directory is often dismissed as an uninspiring interlude between revolutionary fervour and Napoleonic legend, yet its story is far richer than its reputation suggests. This book shifts the focus from the regime to the remarkable men who shaped it – a cohort of jurists, engineers and administrators who survived the Reign of Terror and set out to safeguard the Revolution's most important achievements. Working not on battlefields but in offices and council chambers, they built durable laws and institutions that still underpin modern France. As the first English-language study on the topic in fifty years, *Desk Revolutionaries* offers an engaging, character-driven narrative that also sheds light on the enduring power of technical experts in government, inviting reflection on how democracies are made – and maintained.

Biancamaria Fontana is Emeritus Professor of the History of Political Ideas at the University of Lausanne. Her books include *Montaigne's Politics* (2008) and *Germaine de Staël* (2016).

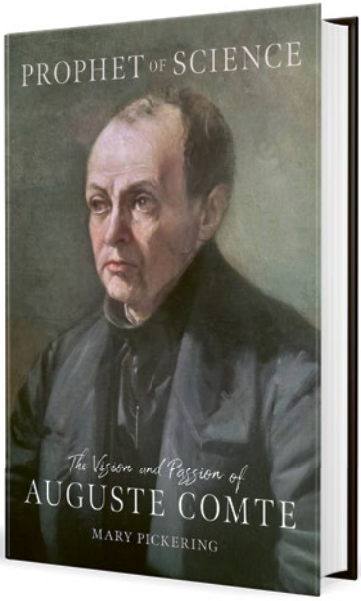
The history and legacy of the forgotten leaders who established Europe's first modern republic

July 2026 • History
ISBN 978 1 83639 249 1
234 × 156 mm • 264 pp
10 illustrations
Hardback • £25/$35
ebook 978 1 83639 292 7
World Rights: Reaktion

Prophet of Science

The Vision and Passion of Auguste Comte

Mary Pickering



Born during the ferment of the French Revolution, Auguste Comte was one of the foremost thinkers of the nineteenth century, whose ideas influenced social reformers, philosophers, politicians and scientists. Advocating for what he called 'the science of society', he contended that facts and reason alone should matter in public discourse. But while Comte strove to create social harmony, he suffered from repeated disasters in his personal and professional life that ultimately endangered his health and undermined his project. An avid self-dramatizer, Comte's increasingly erratic behaviour stood at odds with his philosophy of 'order and progress'.

This intellectual and personal biography of the enigmatic thinker explains Comte's importance to modern Western thought, and provides a fascinating psychological portrait of a deeply troubled yet brilliant man.

Mary Pickering is Professor of Modern European History at San José State University. She is the author of the three-volume *Auguste Comte: An Intellectual Biography*.

A fascinating portrait of Auguste Comte, nineteenth-century mathematician and philosopher

September 2026 • Biography/History
ISBN 978 1 83639 245 3
234 × 156 mm • 392 pp
5 illustrations
Hardback • £25/$35
ebook 978 1 83639 293 4
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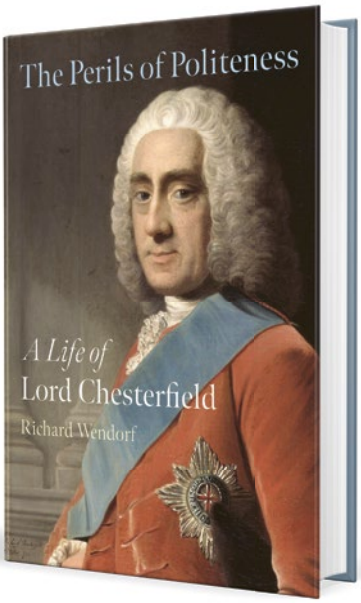
The Perils of Politeness

A Life of Lord Chesterfield

Richard Wendorf



Statesman, wit, writer and arbiter of taste, the 4th Earl of Chesterfield was one of the most influential – and divisive – figures of Georgian Britain. As Lord Macaulay later observed, Chesterfield was 'what no person in our time has been or can be, a great political leader and at the same time the acknowledged chief of the fashionable world'.

This is the first full-scale biography of Chesterfield in nearly a century, drawing on previously unpublished material to reassess his political career, literary output and enduring fascination. Richard Wendorf offers a nuanced reading of Chesterfield's celebrated letters to his son and examines his embodiment of the virtues and perils of politeness, revealing a figure whose views on sex, marriage, women and hypocrisy continue to provoke lively debate.

Richard Wendorf was previously Professor of English and of Art History at Northwestern University, as well as Director of the Boston Athenaeum and the American Museum and Gardens, Bath. He is the author of the award-winning *Sir Joshua Reynolds: The Painter in Society* (1996).

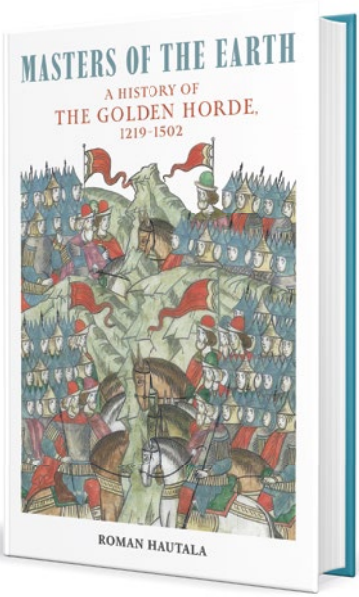
The first major reassessment of Chesterfield's life, politics and provocative legacy

November 2026 • Biography/History
ISBN 978 1 83639 263 7
234 × 156 mm • 376 pp
26 illustrations, 13 in colour
Hardback • £25/$39
ebook 978 1 83639 298 9
World Rights: Reaktion

Masters of the Earth

A History of the Golden Horde, 1219–1502

Roman Hautala



'An essential work. Hautala does a masterful job of untangling the complicated knots of the history of the Golden Horde and weaves an expansive, but lucid, narrative covering 300 years.'
– Timothy May, author of *The Mongol Empire* and *The Mongol Art of War*

The Golden Horde was a powerful nomadic state that shaped Eastern Europe and modern-day Kazakhstan from the thirteenth to the sixteenth century. *Masters of the Earth* traces its rise within the Mongol Empire, its period of independence and prosperity and its eventual decline in the face of continual civil conflict. Roman Hautala introduces the administrative and ethnic structures of the Horde, its religious policies and its wide-ranging commercial ties with both East and West. The Golden Horde emerges not only as a military force but as a dynamic society whose influence reached far beyond the steppe. Understanding this history offers a richer sense of Eurasia's past and the connections that shaped it.

Roman Hautala is Docent in the Department of History at the University of Oulu, Finland. He is the author of *Crusaders, Missionaries and Eurasian Nomads in the 13th–14th Centuries* (2017) and co-editor of *The Routledge Handbook of the Mongols and Central-Eastern Europe* (2021).

A revealing history of the nomadic empire that transformed Eurasia's political world

September 2026 • History
ISBN 978 1 83639 276 7
234 × 156 mm • 256 pp
1 illustration
Hardback • £25/$35
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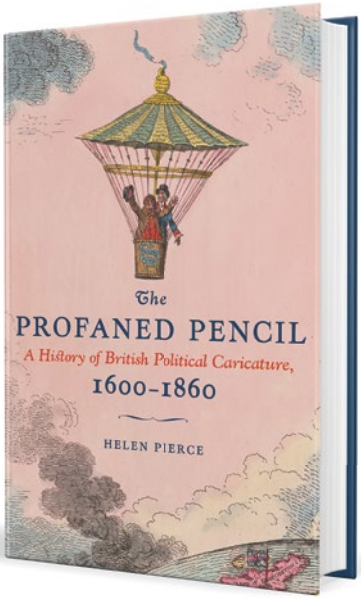
World Rights: Reaktion

The Profaned Pencil

A History of British Political Caricature, 1600–1860

Helen Pierce



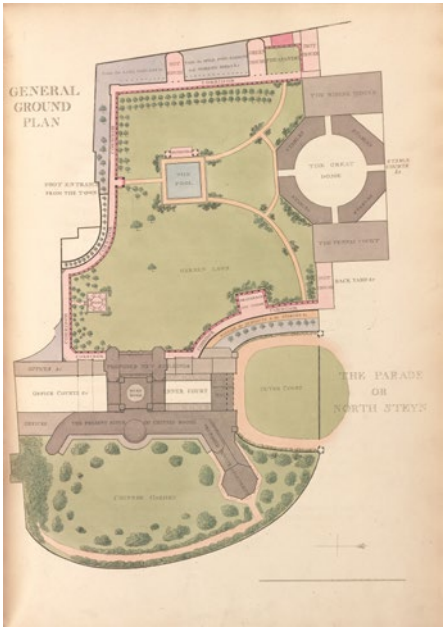
The Profaned Pencil surveys the vivid and unruly world of British political caricature between 1600 and 1860. It follows the rise of graphic satire from polemical seventeenth-century broadsides to the exuberant prints of the Georgian era and the mass-market illustrated press of Victorian Britain. Caricature lay at the intersection of politics, art and the commercial print trade, with satirical images functioning as both entertainment and political commentary.

From attacks on monarchs and ministers to reflections on class, gender and war, caricature became a powerful and popular means of informing public debate. Illuminating the artists, technologies and markets that propelled its spread, Helen Pierce provides new insights into how caricature mediated authority, dissent and identity over two and a half transformative centuries.

A sweeping history of British political caricature and its cultural power

Helen Pierce is Senior Lecturer in Art History at the University of Aberdeen. She is the author of *Unseemly Pictures: Graphic Satire and Politics in Early Modern England* (2008).

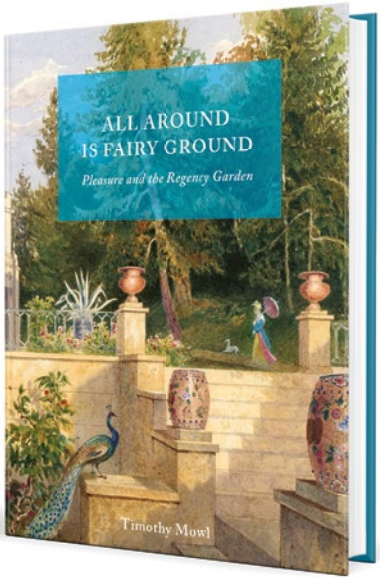
October 2026 • Art/History
ISBN 978 1 83639 285 9
234 × 168 mm • 352 pp
98 illustrations, 47 in colour
Hardback • £29/$42
ebook 978 1 83639 314 6
World Rights: Reaktion


GENERAL
GROUND
PLAN
THE GREAT
DOME
THE PARADE
OR
NORTH STEYN

All Around Is Fairy Ground

Pleasure and the Regency Garden

Timothy Mowl



'Impeccably researched and elegantly written, this beautiful book is a must for anyone interested in historic gardens, in Jane Austen's England or in British cultural history.' – Steven Parissien, author of *Regency Style* and *Building Britannia*

'An absolute delight from beginning to end.' – Adrian Tinniswood, author of *The Long Weekend* and *The Power and the Glory*

Regency gardens dazzled with colour, invention and theatricality: trellises heavy with roses and jasmine, shrubberies designed for intrigue and lawns enlivened with pools, grottoes and fanciful ornaments. Yet behind this world of perfume and spectacle lay a striking social shift. In a domain long defined by men, women began to play an active role, influencing Humphry Repton and other designers to realize their visions of pleasure grounds. These gardens became stages for al fresco entertainments, displays of taste and private encounters alike. This book offers the first sustained account of ornamental gardening in Regency Britain, revealing a vivid, feminine-inflected landscape where horticulture, fashion and sociability intertwined – and where artistry still resonates two centuries later.

Timothy Mowl is Emeritus Professor of History of Architecture and Designed Landscapes at the University of Bristol. He is the author of more than thirty books on architectural and garden history.

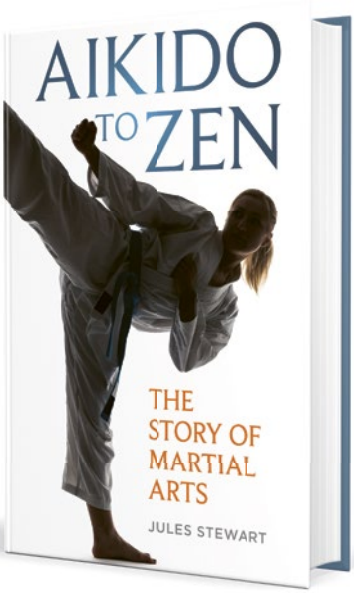
The vivid pleasure gardens that defined Regency Britain's outdoor culture

July 2026 • History/Gardens
ISBN 978 1 83639 248 4
250 × 190 mm • 280 pp
144 illustrations, 100 in colour
Hardback • £35/$49
ebook 978 1 83639 294 1
World Rights: Reaktion

Aikido to Zen

The Story of Martial Arts

Jules Stewart



Martial arts, both traditional and modern styles, enjoy widespread popularity, and many people practise them non-competitively whether for self-defence or physical development. Stars like Bruce Lee and films such as *The Karate Kid* have further contributed hugely to the perception of martial arts in Western popular culture.

Aikido to Zen explores the development of martial arts across the world, from the Shaolin Monastery in China to the present day, and considers how they deploy intuition, rapid physical reaction and mental awareness. It also shines a light on the variety of communities who practise, including women, the young and people with disabilities. With viewpoints from practitioners across the world, this book offers a fresh look at martial arts' significance culturally, physically and psychologically.

Jules Stewart is a London-based author and taekwon-do black belt. His many books include *Strike Up the Band: New York City in the Roaring Twenties* (2024) and *Policing the Big Apple: The Story of the NYPD* (2021), both published by Reaktion Books.

A fresh look at our perennial interest in martial arts

August 2026 • History/Sport
ISBN 978 1 83639 257 6
216 × 138 mm • 192 pp
30 illustrations
Hardback • £18/$27
ebook 978 1 83639 300 9
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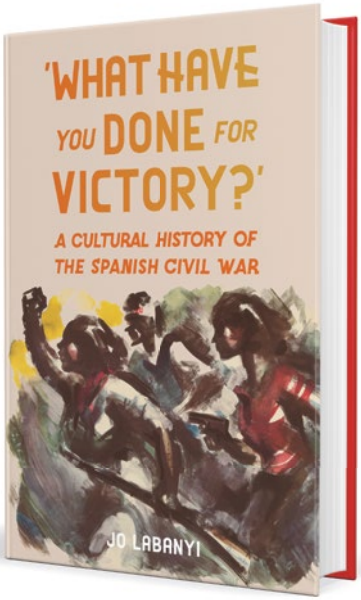
‘What Have You Done for Victory?’

A Cultural History of the Spanish Civil War

Jo Labanyi



‘A tour de force . . . ambitious and thought-provoking.’
– Sebastiaan Faber, author of *Memory Battles of the Spanish Civil War*

‘Excellent, rigorous and well-written.’ – Alison Ribeiro de Menezes, author of *Embodying Memory in Contemporary Spain*

The Spanish Civil War (1936–9) inspired an extraordinary range of cultural production, from literature, theatre, cinema, journalism and radio to visual art, song, dance, memoir and comics. This book – the first comprehensive study of the war’s cultural output – considers works by both Spanish and foreign supporters of the Republic and Franco’s forces, with particular attention paid to women’s contributions, to reveal a conflict more complex than conventional narratives suggest. *‘What Have You Done for Victory?’* offers a nuanced and accessible portrait of a global struggle that continues to shape our understanding of political and cultural engagement.

Jo Labanyi is Professor Emerita of Spanish at New York University. Her recent books include *A Companion to Spanish Cinema* (2013), *Engaging the Emotions in Spanish Culture and History* (2016) and *Modern Literatures in Spain* (2022).

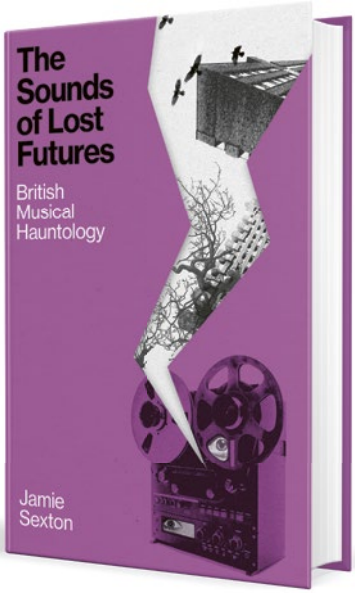
The first complete cultural history of the Spanish Civil War

October 2026 • History
ISBN 978 1 83639 278 1
234 × 156 mm • 504 pp
130 illustrations
Hardback • £29/$40
ebook 978 1 83639 319 1
World Rights: Reaktion

The Sounds of Lost Futures

British Musical Hauntology

Jamie Sexton



Musical hauntology conjures sounds of futures that never arrived: music that reflects on memory and the recent past, drawing on analogue instrumentation, sampling and digital processing to capture how time feels twisted in an age of endless reproduction. *The Sounds of Lost Futures* offers the first sustained overview of this influential British mode, tracing its emergence, cognate genres and wide constellation of media influences. It also unpacks the conceptual forces that shape it – from nostalgia and retro culture to fractured temporal experience – while covering key artists and labels such as Ghost Box, The Caretaker and Mordant Music. With a dedicated focus on audiovisual hauntology, this book provides new clarity on a musical form attuned to the strange echoes of modern life.

Jamie Sexton is Associate Professor in Film and Television Studies at Northumbria University. His publications include *Freak Scenes: American Indie Cinema and Indie Music Cultures* (2022) and *Anonymous Sounds: Library Music and Screen Cultures in the 1960s and 1970s* (2025).

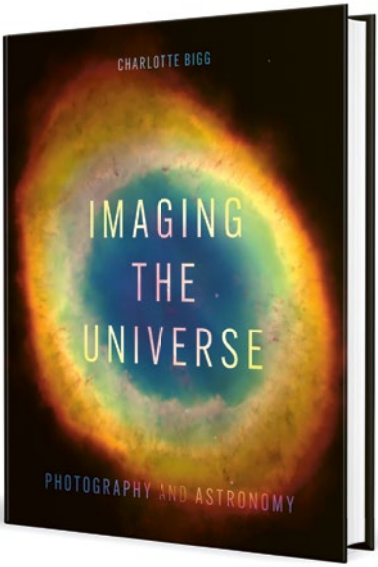
A definitive account of Britain's uncanny music genre shaped by memory and nostalgia

July 2026 • Music/Popular Culture
ISBN 978 1 83639 247 7
216 × 138 mm • 200 pp
12 illustrations
Hardback • £16.95/$24
ebook 978 1 83639 290 3
World Rights: Reaktion

Imaging the Universe

Photography and Astronomy

Charlotte Bigg



'A remarkably intelligent and beautifully illustrated book [that] demonstrates with wit and acuity how skilled judgement and cunning instruments played key roles in these vital histories of arts and sciences.' – Simon Schaffer, Darwin College Cambridge

What does the universe look like? From daguerreotypes of the Moon to colourful vistas of nebulae from space telescopes, photography and astronomy have developed hand in hand, transforming the ways in which our skies have been observed, understood and viewed over the past two centuries. Charlotte Bigg reveals how astronomers, chemists, photographers, electronic experts and other, often forgotten individuals from different walks of life came together to develop new methods to record the light of the Moon, the Sun and the stars, and to share their images with a broad audience. Featuring a wide variety of compelling images, *Imaging the Universe* explores the visual cultures of astrophotography and how they have shaped our visions of the cosmos.

Charlotte Bigg is Director of Research at the Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, Centre Alexandre-Koyré, Paris. She has published widely on the visual and material cultures of science from the late eighteenth century to now.

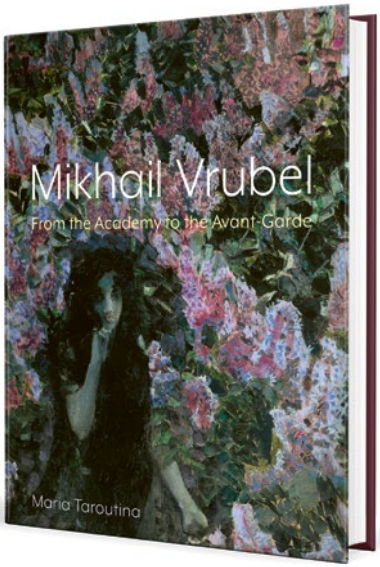
How photography has shaped our understanding of the universe

October 2026 • Popular Science
ISBN 978 1 83639 283 5
220 × 171 mm • 200 pp
110 illustrations, 80 in colour
Hardback • £29/$42
World Rights: Reaktion

Mikhail Vrubel

From the Academy to the Avant-Garde

Maria Taroutina



Mikhail Aleksandrovich Vrubel (1856–1910) was one of Russia's most innovative fin-de-siècle artists, bridging Symbolism, Art Nouveau and the emerging currents of modernism. This biography traces Vrubel's career from his formative years at the Imperial Academy of Arts in St Petersburg to his untimely death, revealing how his visionary work anticipated the formal and conceptual breakthroughs of the twentieth century. Vrubel's paintings, drawings and designs are examined alongside contemporaneous movements in France, Germany, Austria and Britain, highlighting his role in a transnational artistic dialogue. Featuring high-quality reproductions, previously unpublished works and extensive original research, this first English-language monograph in over forty years reassesses Vrubel's legacy and situates him as a crucial precursor to the Russian avant-garde, illuminating his enduring influence on modern art.

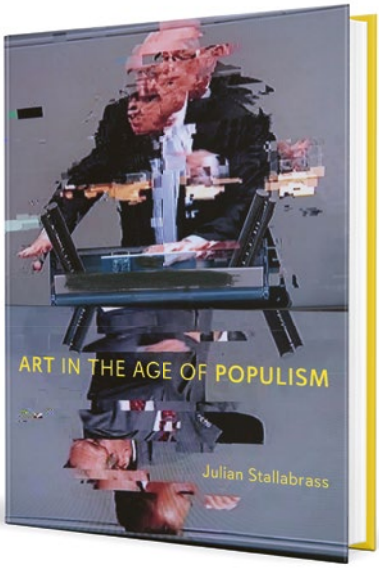
Maria Taroutina is Assistant Professor of Slavic Studies at Brown University. She is the author of *The Icon and the Square: Russian Modernism and the Russo-Byzantine Revival* (2018), which was awarded the 2019 University of Southern California Book Prize in Literary and Cultural Studies.

A definitive English-language study of Vrubel's innovative art and influence on modernism

August 2026 • Art/Biography
ISBN 978 1 83639 262 0
234 × 168 mm • 256 pp
136 illustrations, 114 in colour
Hardback • £35/$49
ebook 978 1 83639 304 7
World Rights: Reaktion

Art in the Age of Populism

Julian Stallabrass



Why do billionaires collect Banksy? How does street art embody both populist politics and the culture of the super-rich? This book examines the curious fusion of elite and popular taste, showing how artists and politicians amplify the ordinary to achieve fame, wealth and influence. From the auction houses of London to images of authoritarian leaders, and from the spectacle of Brexit to the online saturation of culture, Julian Stallabrass reveals how contemporary visual culture reflects and alters broader social and political dynamics. Controversial and incisive, *Art in the Age of Populism* situates the rise of populist art and politics in a critical cultural framework, shedding light on the forces shaping distinction, power and the public imagination in the twenty-first century.

Julian Stallabrass is a writer, photographer and curator. His publications include *Killing for Show: Photography, War, and the Media in Vietnam and Iraq* (2020) and *High Art Lite: The Rise and Fall of Young British Art* (2006).

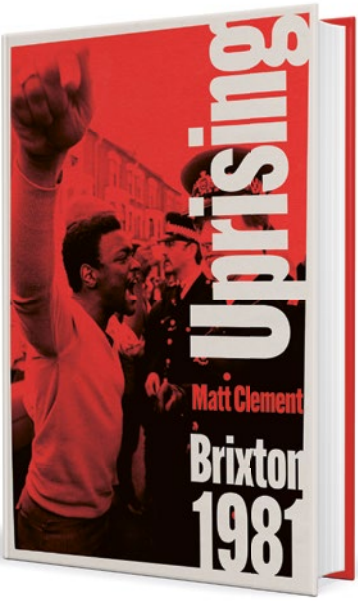
Examines how populist politics and elite art shape modern cultural landscapes

November 2026 • Art/Politics
ISBN 978 1 83639 286 6
234 × 168 mm • 256 pp
75 illustrations, 70 in colour
Hardback • £29/$42
World Rights: Reaktion

Uprising

Brixton 1981

Matt Clement



This book presents a radical, in-depth survey of the Brixton uprising of 1981 and the social inequalities and institutional racism of British politics and policing that led to it. Matt Clement situates the events of April 1981 within the long history of urban oppression and revolt in London, as well as the contemporary Caribbean struggles that shaped the consciousness of the local community. He examines how policing practices, economic marginalization and the enduring legacy of empire produced the alienation that fuelled resistance, and how Rastafarian thought articulated a powerful cultural challenge to Babylon, the name given for the evil values of society that must be resisted for justice to prevail. Bringing together historical analysis and social critique, *Uprising* reveals how and why Brixton fought back – and how its defiant energy helped reshape British culture, politics and anti-racist activism.

A radical history of Brixton's uprising and the forces that sparked it

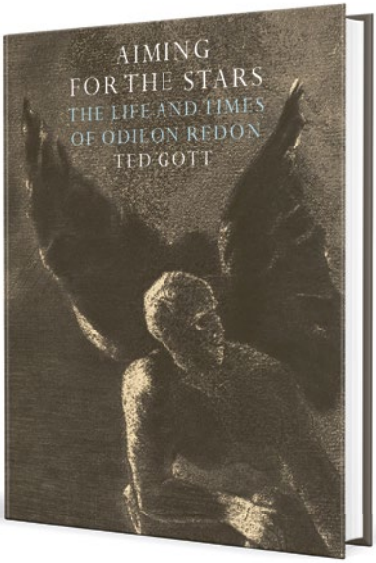
Matt Clement is Senior Lecturer in Criminology at Royal Holloway, University of London. His publications include *A People's History of Riots, Protest and the Law* (2016) and *No Justice, No Police?: The Politics of Protest and Social Change* (2023).

October 2026 • History/Politics
ISBN 978 1 83639 279 8
234 × 156 mm • 336 pp
10 illustrations
Hardback • £20/$30
ebook 978 1 83639 316 0
World Rights: Reaktion

Aiming for the Stars

The Life and Times of Odilon Redon

Ted Gott



Aiming for the Stars is the first comprehensive English-language biography of Odilon Redon in decades, offering a fresh and vivid reappraisal of an artist whose work fascinated and perplexed his contemporaries. Ted Gott traces Redon's lonely youth in the south of France, his experience of the Franco-Prussian War and his gradual emergence within avant-garde literary and artistic circles in Paris. Redon's involvement with occult, Symbolist and Wagnerian circles, alongside his late renaissance as a master of decoration and colour, are brought into focus with clarity and nuance. Particular attention is given to the artist's remarkable technical command of charcoal drawing and lithography, illuminated through the lens of abundant press commentary and correspondence. Ted Gott's book restores Redon as a singular, restless presence in modern art.

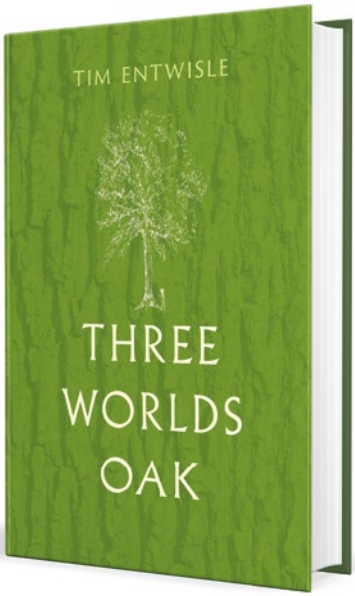
Ted Gott is Senior Curator of International Art at the National Gallery of Victoria. He is the author of the groundbreaking study *The Enchanted Stone: The Graphic Worlds of Odilon Redon* (1990).

A vivid, authoritative portrait of Redon's strange genius and artistic transformation

September 2026 • Art/Biography
ISBN 978 1 83639 270 5
250 × 190 mm • 544 pp
220 illustrations, 180 in colour
Hardback • £40/$55
ebook 978 1 83639 308 5
World Rights: Reaktion

Three Worlds Oak

Tim Entwisle



'If an oak could speak, what would it say? I revelled in this vital, epic story, wittily told by one tree. Tim Entwisle charmingly animates the history and biology of the oak and brings to life its uneasy relationships with fungi.' – Jonathan Drori, author of *Around the World in 80 Trees*

'A remarkable book.' – Charles Watkins, author of *Trees in Art*

A dying hybrid oak in Melbourne's Royal Botanic Gardens sets off on an imaginative search for its parents, and in doing so reveals the extraordinary diversity of the genus *Quercus*. From the Himalaya to Mexico, from knee-high scrub to rainforest giants, more than four hundred species of oak shape landscapes, cultures and histories. Their leaves can blaze red and gold, acorns can be the size of a hand, and while only a few cross the equator to the south, oaks survive in diverse conditions, including mountains to 4,000 metres.

Including specially drawn illustrations, this witty and uniquely eccentric memoir shows that there is far more to oaks than the familiar English tree, inviting readers to look anew at one of the world's most beloved plants.

A witty botanical memoir revealing the astonishing diversity and wonder of oaks

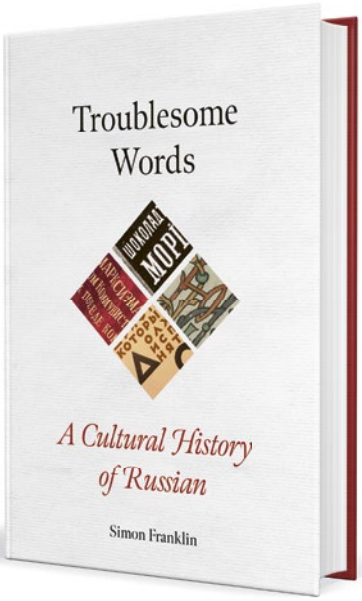
Tim Entwisle is Honorary Professor at the University of Melbourne and a former Director of Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria and Botanic Gardens of Sydney. He is the author of *Evergreen: The Botanical Life of a Plant Punk* (2022).

September 2026 • Nature
ISBN 978 1 83639 277 4
216 × 138 mm • 296 pp
41 illustrations, 35 in colour
Hardback • £18.99/$27
ebook 978 1 83639 311 5
World Rights: Reaktion

Troublesome Words

A Cultural History of Russian

Simon Franklin



'It's hard to imagine a more seductive presentation [on] all manner of aspects of Russian culture and politics.'
– Simon Dixon, Sir Bernard Pares Professor of Russian History, University College London

Language can be a battleground of ideas, and nowhere is this more vivid than in the Russian context. Across 350 years, Russian has been shaped by competing visions of what it should be, from early grammarians defining a literary standard to digital-era debates about slang, obscenity and online identity. Simon Franklin traces how tradition and disruption have continually reshaped the language, from the linguistic experiments of writers and revolutionaries to the rhetoric of empire and politics, and examines the global diversity of Russian today. Clear, concise and engaging, *Troublesome Words* is both a history and a cultural portrait, revealing how language reflects power, imagination and the changing world.

Simon Franklin is Emeritus Professor of Slavonic Studies at the University of Cambridge. He is the author of *The Russian Graphosphere, 1450–1850* (2019) and co-editor of *The New Cambridge History of Russian Literature* (2024).

How Russian was shaped by centuries of conflict, creativity and cultural change

LANGUAGE WORLDS
August 2026 • History/Linguistics
ISBN 978 1 83639 266 8
234 × 156 mm • 272 pp
47 illustrations
Hardback • £25/$35
ebook 978 1 83639 303 0
World Rights: Reaktion

The Age of Hitler and How We Will Survive It

Alec Ryrie

'A brilliant exposition of Hitler's role as the embodiment of evil in the collective imagination of the West – and of what may happen as it starts to fade.' – Tom Holland, author of *Dominion: The Making of the Western Mind*

'Offers a wealth of reflections . . . Ryrie is to be commended for encouraging dialogue between progressive secularists and conservative traditionalists.' – *Los Angeles Review of Books*

We live in an age where Hitler and the Nazis dominate our cultural imagination, shaping values once defined by religion. Historian Alec Ryrie explores why society remains captivated by this struggle, exploring history and fiction as well as modern myths such as *Star Wars* and *Harry Potter*. He examines the costs of our Nazi obsession and questions what will come as our anti-Nazi moral consensus frays. With a fresh take on modern history and pop culture, *The Age of Hitler and How We Will Survive It* offers a thought-provoking look at the culture wars and our shifting political crises, challenging assumptions on both the Left and the Right and asking what a new moral vision might look like.

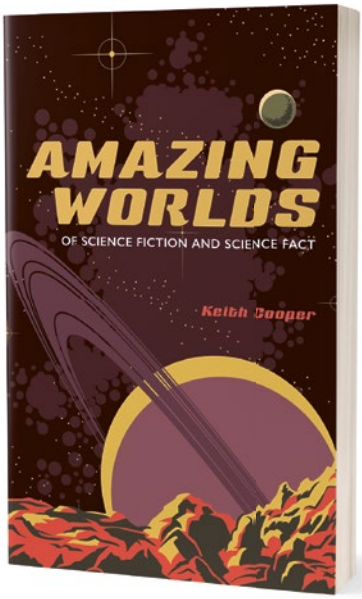
Alec Ryrie is Professor of the History of Christianity at Durham University and a Fellow of the British Academy.

An examination of our Nazi fixation and the unravelling of post-war moral consensus today

October 2026 • History
ISBN 978 1 83639 269 9
198 × 129 mm • 160 pp
Paperback • £10.99/$16.99
ebook 978 1 83639 124 1
World Rights: Reaktion
Rights sold: Spanish, Catalan

Amazing Worlds of Science Fiction and Science Fact

Keith Cooper



'[This] engaging book examines what science fiction has got right and wrong, and what science can learn from it.' – *Nature*

'A captivating, cutting-edge view of worlds beyond our Solar System that explores the intersection of fiction and fact. An essential read.' – Sara Seager, Professor of Planetary Science, MIT, and author of *The Smallest Lights in the Universe*

'[An] informed account of the ways that science-fiction planets correspond to their real counterparts.' – *Wall Street Journal*

Have you ever wondered what it would be like to watch a double sunset on Tatooine, stand among the sand dunes of Arrakis or gaze at the gas-giant planet Polyphemus from the moon Pandora? In *Amazing Worlds of Science Fiction and Science Fact*, Keith Cooper explores the fictional planets of films such as *Star Wars*, *Dune* and *Avatar*, and discusses how realistic they are based on our current scientific understanding and astronomical observations. Featuring insights from over a dozen scientists and award-winning science-fiction authors, this book is perfect for readers of popular science and fans of science fiction.

Keith Cooper is a science journalist who has written for *New Scientist*, *Physics World* and *Sky and Telescope*, among others. He has edited *Astronomy Now* magazine for nearly twenty years and his books include *The Contact Paradox* (2019).

Surveys the realism of planets in sci-fi films like *Star Wars* and *Dune*

October 2026 • Popular Science/Film
ISBN 978 1 83639 271 2
198 × 129 mm • 248 pp
12 illustrations
Paperback • £12.95/$18
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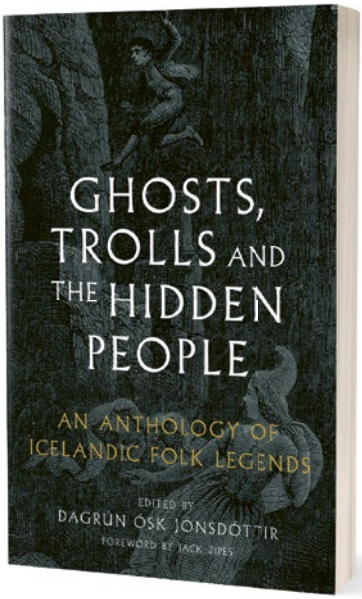
Ghosts, Trolls and the Hidden People

An Anthology of Icelandic Folk Legends

Edited by Dagrún Ósk Jónsdóttir



'Many of the legends assembled blend the otherworldly with the everyday . . . these charming stories deserve a readership far beyond those murky Icelandic farms.' – Pablo Scheffer, *TLS*

'These are vividly told, sometimes brutal, sometimes hilarious tales which offer a wonderfully representative and engrossing conspectus of the long Icelandic past.' – Carolyne Larrington, *Fortean Times*

This unique and enchanting book opens the door to a captivating world of Icelandic folk legends. Its six chapters are each based on a different setting: farm, wilderness, darkness, church, ocean and shore. It provides translated tales from the nineteenth and twentieth centuries of legends of hidden people, trolls, ghosts, sea monsters and even polar bears, exploring themes of love, revenge and conflict. The book highlights the tension between Christianity and paganism, past and present, nature and humanity, and divides within society. Drawing from a wide variety of Icelandic sources, this book makes these colourful, entertaining, lively folk legends available to non-Icelandic speakers, many for the first time.

Dagrún Ósk Jónsdóttir teaches folkloristics at the University of Iceland and has published widely in the field of Icelandic folk legends.

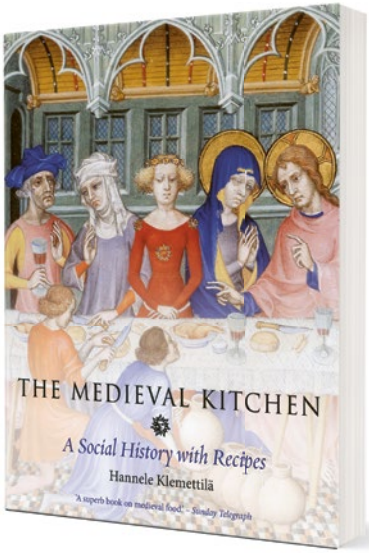
A unique and enchanting window into the world of Icelandic folk legends

July 2026 • Folklore
ISBN 978 1 83639 256 9
198 × 129 mm • 288 pp
23 illustrations
Paperback • £13.95/$20
ebook 978 1 83639 026 8
World Rights: Reaktion

The Medieval Kitchen

A Social History with Recipes

Hannele Klemettilä



'A superb book on medieval food . . . lavishly illustrated.' – *Sunday Telegraph*

'This social history with recipes is as delicious in its details as it is mouthwatering in its presentation . . . a splendid banquet of forgotten flavours.' – *The Scotsman*

'Reveals the delicacy, craft and complexity that underpinned medieval food.' – *TLS*

The Medieval Kitchen reveals a world in which food was central to daily life, status and belief. From lavish banquets scented with exotic spices to humble meals of bread, greens and porridge, Hannele Klemettilä paints a vivid picture of how people across Western Europe and Scandinavia prepared, transported and enjoyed food. Richly illustrated and grounded in original sources, the book unveils the surprising sophistication of medieval cooking and dispels long-standing myths about what people ate and why.

Hannele Klemettilä is Adjunct Professor of Cultural History at the University of Turku and a Life Member of Clare Hall, Cambridge. She is the author of *Animals and Hunters in the Late Middle Ages* (2015).

A richly illustrated history of medieval Europe's cuisine

July 2026 • Food & Drink/ Medieval History
ISBN 978 1 83639 254 5
250 × 190 mm • 232 pp
112 illustrations, 87 in colour
Paperback • £20/$30
ebook 978 1 78023 254 6
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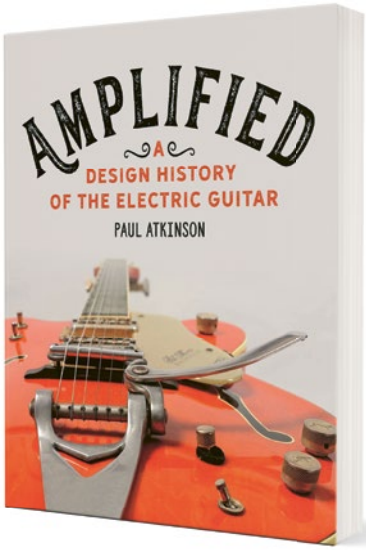
Reverted: German

Amplified

A Design History of the Electric Guitar

Paul Atkinson



'A truly compelling, fact-packed read all about how guitars are made, look, sound and play.' – KT Tunstall, singer-songwriter and guitarist

'Atkinson's rigorous scholarship and clear affection for the subject shine.' – *Library Journal*

'Paul has put a fantastically exhaustive amount of work into this book for all of us global guitar nerds to enjoy. It's so much fun to dive into it full immersion, and glean everything from details on iconic artist guitars to strange inventions from creatives on the fringe!' – Jennifer Batten, guitarist for Michael Jackson and Jeff Beck

The electric guitar is an exceptional object. Its sound is heard every day by hundreds of millions of people. Yet this beloved instrument started as an experimental project, hand-built by lone inventors and warily regarded by audience and players alike. *Amplified* traces the history of the design and development of the electric guitar as it became a mass-produced object made, sold and played all over the world. Featuring new interviews with players and makers, this book shows how the electric guitar went from an instrument to an icon.

Paul Atkinson is Professor Emeritus of Design and Design History at Sheffield Hallam University. He is the writer of the BBC guitar documentary *Cigar Box Blues: The Makers of a Revolution* (2019).

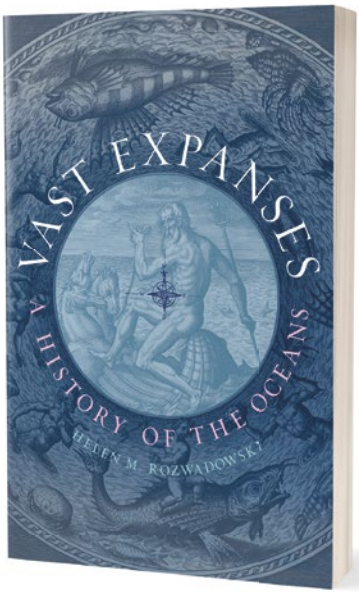
An in-depth look at the invention and evolution of the electric guitar

August 2026 • Music/Design
ISBN 978 1 83639 258 3
250 × 190 mm • 272 pp
129 illustrations, 114 in colour
Paperback • £20/$30
ebook 978 1 78914 273 0
World Rights: Reaktion

Vast Expanses

A History of the Oceans

Helen M. Rozwadowski



'Thought-provoking, intelligent, entertaining, yet still compact . . . a great book on an important subject [that] is anything but a dry history!' – Kurkpatrick Dorsey, author of *Whales and Nations: Environmental Diplomacy on the High Seas*

'A timely, concise and compelling book . . . a work of the first importance for students of the sea.' – *Northern Mariner*

Vast Expanses is a cultural, environmental and geopolitical history of humanity's relationship with oceans, stretching across geological and evolutionary time as well as cultures. It traces ancient connections with the sea and shows how industrialization and globalization multiplied them. The book argues that knowledge of the ocean has been central to defining our relationship with this vast, trackless and opaque place. Ultimately, the story of the oceans is also the story of ourselves: what we have taken, what we have imagined and what we must now learn to protect.

Helen M. Rozwadowski is Professor of History and Founder of the Maritime Studies Program at the University of Connecticut. She is the author of *Fathoming the Ocean: The Discovery and Exploration of the Deep Sea* (2005), winner of the 2008 Watson Davis and Helen Miles Davis Prize.

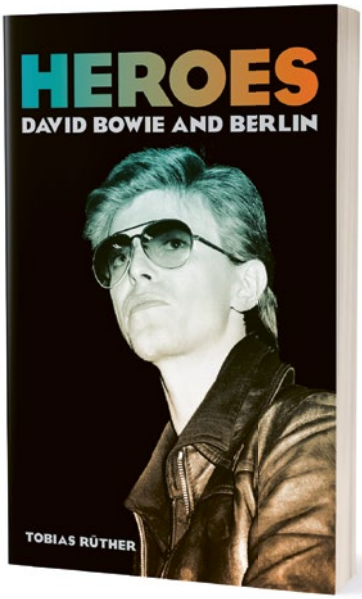
A history of humanity's relationship with oceans across cultures and centuries

September 2026 • Nature/Popular Science
ISBN 978 1 83639 267 5
198 × 129 mm • 264 pp
65 illustrations
Paperback • £12.95/$18
ebook 978 1 78914 029 3
World Rights: Reaktion
Rights sold: Simp. Chinese, Korean

Heroes

David Bowie and Berlin

Tobias Rüther



'Engaging . . . puts Bowie in the context of heavyweights like Michel Foucault, Max Frisch and Erich Heckel.' – Paul Burston, *The Independent*

'An accessible read which can stand proud in the sure-to-expand Bowie bibliography.' – Paddy Kehoe, *RTÉ Entertainment*

In 1976 David Bowie fled the chaos of Los Angeles in search of renewal and found it in a divided Berlin, a city whose artistic legacy had captivated him since childhood. Over three transformative years, he created the groundbreaking 'Berlin Trilogy'– *Low*, *'Heroes'* and *Lodger* – some of the most critically acclaimed and innovative albums of the late twentieth century. Tobias Rüther traces Bowie's intense collaborations with Iggy Pop, Brian Eno and Tony Visconti, his immersion in the city's streets and nightlife and his return to painting and performance. Set against Berlin's reinvention as a cultural metropolis, this compelling portrait captures an artist and a city remaking themselves in tandem. It is a story of innovation sparked by ruin – and of futures forged from unlikely places.

Tobias Rüther is editor of the culture section of the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Sonntagszeitung* in Berlin.

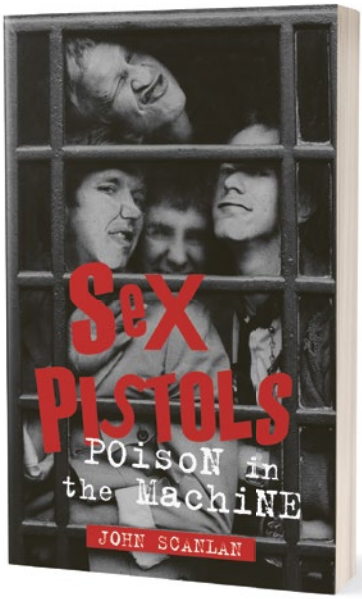
The story of Bowie's rebirth in Berlin, where a city's revival shaped his most innovative work

July 2026 • Music
ISBN 978 1 83639 253 8
198 × 129 mm • 184 pp
17 illustrations
Paperback • £12.95/$19
ebook 978 1 78023 400 7
English-language Rights: Reaktion
World Rights: Rogner & Bernhard, Germany

Sex Pistols

Poison in the Machine

John Scanlan



'Ambitious . . . Scanlan breaks from the intellectual slumming that often smothers the band.' – Kris Needs, *Record Collector*

'A fascinating read.' – *Dying Scene*

'[This book] dares to be different.' – *SexPistols.net*

The appearance of the Sex Pistols in 1976 seemed less like the arrival of a band than a warning from a nightmarish future. *Sex Pistols: Poison in the Machine* examines the group's explosive impact by placing Malcolm McLaren's audacious, self-sabotaging art project at its centre – a scheme forged from radical politics, cultural fatigue and a genius for provocation. John Scanlan traces how this volatile experiment collided with the Pistols' own musical force and John Lydon's uncompromising originality, reshaping its purpose and accelerating the band's implosion. Scanlan reveals the personalities, pressures and accidents that gave punk its charge and altered popular culture far beyond its brief, chaotic lifespan.

John Scanlan is a cultural historian and analyst whose previous books include *Van Halen* (2012), *Easy Riders, Rolling Stones* (2015) and *Rock 'n' Roll Plays Itself* (2022), all published by Reaktion Books.

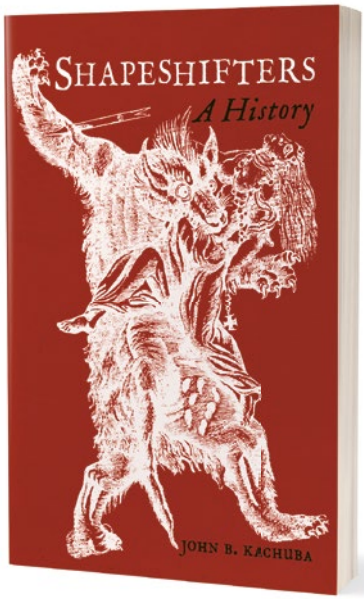
The Sex Pistols reimagined as an explosive, world-shaking art experiment

July 2026 • Music
ISBN 978 1 83639 289 7
198 × 129 mm • 240 pp
45 illustrations
Paperback • £12.95/$19
ebook 978 1 78023 800 5
World Rights: Reaktion

Shapeshifters

A History

John B. Kachuba



Horror Writers Association, Bram Stoker Awards for Superior Achievement in Non-Fiction – Finalist

'Were you to want a primer on were-anything, this is a fine start.' – *The Spectator*

'A thorough survey of shapeshifters worldwide, past and present.' – *Fortean Times*

'[An] absorbing and comprehensive conspectus of mutation.' – *TLS*

There is something about a shapeshifter – a person who can transform into an animal – that grips our imagination, that tempts us to howl at the moon or flit through the night like a bat. Werewolves, vampires, demons and other strange beings appeal to our animal nature, our 'dark side', our desire to break free from society and proper behaviour. Across early cultures, rituals seemingly allowed shamans, sorcerers and witches to transform at will. Today millions believe shapeshifters walk among us and may even be world leaders. Real or imaginary, they lurk deep in our psyches and remain potent cultural icons. John B. Kachuba brings these myths and magic to life in a compelling and original history.

John B. Kachuba is an award-winning author and creative writing instructor at Gotham Writers Workshop. He has investigated over one hundred haunted locations around the world and his books include *Ghosthunters* (2007) and the novel *Dark Entry* (2012).

A compelling and original cultural history of shapeshifters

September 2026 • History/Folklore
ISBN 978 1 83639 255 2
198 × 129 mm • 200 pp
20 illustrations
Paperback • £10.99/$16.99
ebook 978 1 78914 097 2
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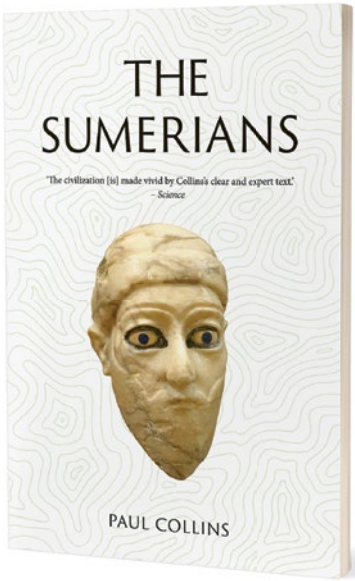
The Sumerians

Lost Civilizations

Paul Collins



'The civilization [is] made vivid by Collins's clear and expert text.' – *Science*

'In this fascinating [book], Collins provides a thought-provoking study of the Sumerians as representing the most ancient of all civilizations.' – *Choice*

The Sumerians are widely believed to have created the world's earliest civilization on the fertile floodplains of southern Iraq from about 3500 to 2000 BCE. They have been credited with inventions no lesser than cities, writing and the wheel, and therefore hold an ancient mirror to our own urban, literate world. But is this picture correct? Paul Collins reveals how the idea of a Sumerian people was assembled from the archaeological and textual evidence uncovered in Iraq and Syria over the last 150 years. Reconstructed through the biases of those who unearthed them, the Sumerians were never simply lost and found, but reinvented a number of times, both in antiquity and in the more recent past.

Paul Collins is Keeper of the Middle East Department at the British Museum. His books include *Mountains and Lowlands: Ancient Iran and Mesopotamia* (2016) and *The Assyrians* (Reaktion Books, 2024).

The loss, discovery and reinvention of the world's earliest civilization, the Sumerians

LOST CIVILIZATIONS
August 2026 • History/Archaeology
ISBN 978 1 83639 265 1
216 × 138 mm • 208 pp
52 illustrations, 37 in colour
Paperback • £12.95/$19
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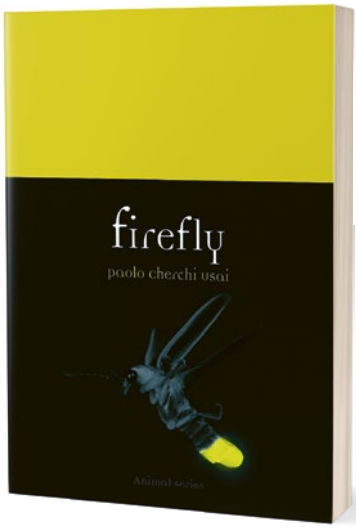
Firefly

Paolo Cherchi Usai



Fireflies have inspired poets, songwriters and scientists for centuries. Their brief, flickering light has stood for love, destiny, wealth and cosmic mystery, while also attracting Renaissance alchemists and modern researchers determined to understand bioluminescence. Long celebrated in Japanese folklore, the firefly is not without a dark side: witchcraft and black magic have represented it as a forlorn, mischievous or bloodthirsty spirit. Its real life is equally dramatic: predatory behaviour both within and from outside the species and the growing threat of extinction challenge the insects that illuminate our summer nights. This book brings together biology, legend and art, accompanied by a remarkable portfolio of field photographs and international artworks. The result is a luminous portrait of a fragile creature with enduring power over the human imagination.

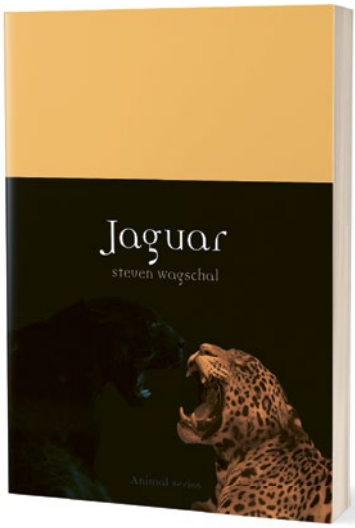
Paolo Cherchi Usai is Senior Curator-at-Large of the George Eastman Museum in Rochester, New York. His previous books include *The Death of Cinema* (2001) and *The Art of Film Projection* (2019).

A global cultural history revealing the luminous fascination and fragility of fireflies

ANIMAL
September 2026 • Nature
ISBN 978 1 83639 273 6
190 × 135 mm • 184 pp
103 illustrations, 80 in colour
Paperback • £14.95/$24
ebook 978 1 83639 306 1
World Rights: Reaktion

Jaguar

Steven Wagschal



Jaguars have long captivated human imagination, inspiring awe, fear and reverence across the Americas and beyond. This book examines both the biology and behaviour of this iconic apex predator and the deep cultural history of human–jaguar interactions, from prehistoric civilizations to the modern era. Drawing on artefacts, literature and textual sources in English, Spanish, French, Latin, Mayan K'iche' and Nahuatl, it traces how jaguars have been represented in art, cinema and popular culture. Steven Wagschal also considers the role of jaguars in shaping evolutionary theory and the global conservation efforts aimed at protecting them today. This richly illustrated book celebrates jaguars as both living creatures and enduring cultural symbols.

Steven Wagschal is Professor of Hispanic Literatures and Cultural Studies at Indiana University Bloomington. His books include *Minding Animals in the Old and New Worlds* (2018).

A cultural, scientific and conservation-focused history of the iconic jaguar

ANIMAL
October 2026 • Nature
ISBN 978 1 83639 284 2
190 × 135 mm • 192 pp
100 illustrations, 80 in colour
Paperback • £14.95/$24
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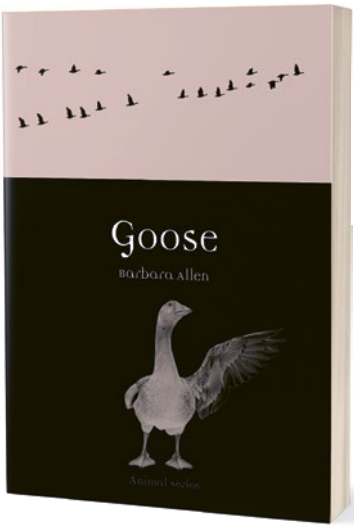
Goose

Barbara Allen



Long dismissed as the dull cousin of ducks and swans, the goose proves to be a bird of astonishing significance. From medieval legends and the myth of the barnacle goose to Konrad Lorenz's pioneering work on imprinting and the first human-led migration, geese occupy a rich place in science and story. Their quills helped write Magna Carta and the Declaration of Independence. They wander through haiku, appear in art by Escher and Pissarro and leave tracks along the Camino de Santiago. Geese inspire conservationists, from Sir Peter Scott's search for breeding grounds to efforts to save endangered species like the ruddy-headed goose. This book is a warm, curious account of a bird that has shaped human imagination, history and community more than we might think.

Barbara Allen is a minister in the Uniting Church in Australia. Her books include *Pigeon* (2009), *Animals in Religion* (2016), *Pelican* (2019) and *Lost Animals, Disappearing Worlds: Stories of Extinction* (2025), all published by Reaktion Books.

A surprising cultural and natural history of the goose's beauty, influence and resilience

ANIMAL
September 2026 • Nature
ISBN 978 1 83639 274 3
190 x 135 mm • 208 pp
97 illustrations, 82 in colour
Paperback • £14.95/$24
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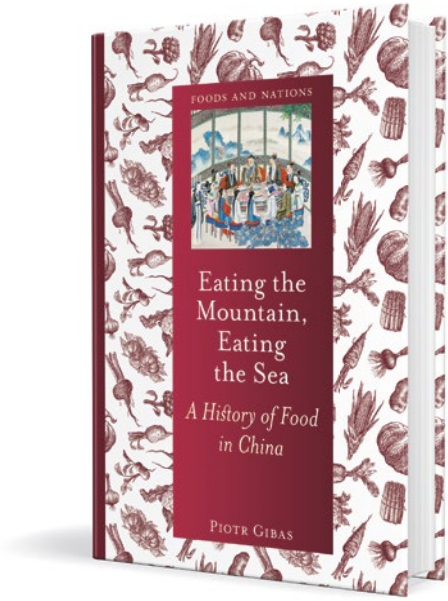
World Rights: Reaktion

Eating the Mountain, Eating the Sea

A History of Food in China

Piotr Gibas



Chinese cuisine is one of the world's most celebrated and complex culinary traditions, yet much about it remains misunderstood. Beyond the stereotypes of exotic ingredients or the familiar dishes served in Chinese restaurants in Western countries, the reality of Chinese food is deeply regional, historical and culturally significant. This book demystifies Chinese cuisine by examining five foundational ingredients that underpin its foodways and traces how they are employed across eight major regions, from Sichuan's fiery flavours to Guangdong's delicate dim sum. *Eating the Mountain, Eating the Sea* shows that understanding what Chinese people really eat offers insights into China's culture, identity and global influence. A fascinating guide for food lovers, students and anyone interested in China's culinary heritage.

Piotr Gibas is Associate Professor of Chinese and Director of Chinese Studies at the College of Charleston, South Carolina. He is the author of several articles on Chinese food and early Chinese thought.

An authentic guide to Chinese cuisine's diversity and significance worldwide

FOODS AND NATIONS
October 2026 • Food & Drink
ISBN 978 1 83639 281 1
234 × 156 mm • 288 pp
100 illustrations, 70 in colour
Hardback • £25/$35
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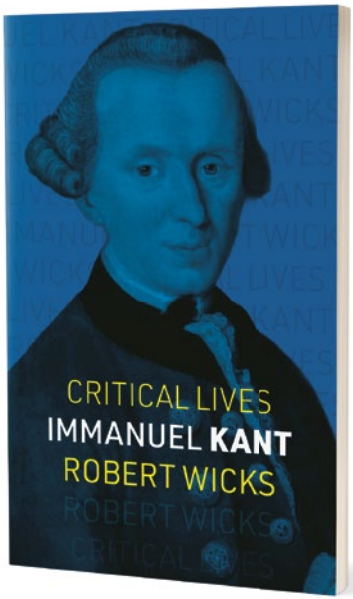
Immanuel Kant

Robert Wicks



The great German philosopher Immanuel Kant (1724–1804) had astonishing conversational skills, was intelligently attentive to his frail physical constitution and lived with a single-minded dedication to the moral education of humanity. This concise biography highlights Kant as someone who embodied extreme intellectual ambition and unshakeable self-discipline. Robert Wicks explores the long-term influence of Kant's pietistic upbringing, the initial frustrations in his search for intellectual fame, his impressive friendships and his reactions to momentous historical events such as the French Revolution. He also considers critically the accusations that Kant was sexist, antisemitic and racist, and he describes his final years and philosophical legacy. This is an accessible, illuminating account of Kant's complex philosophical ideas in the context of his life and times.

Robert Wicks is Professor of Philosophy at the University of Auckland. Among other books on nineteenth-century philosophy, he is the author of *Kant on Judgment* (2007) and *Introduction to Existentialism: From Kierkegaard to 'The Seventh Seal'* (2020).

Illuminating account of a key philosopher's life and ideas

CRITICAL LIVES
August 2026 • Biography/Philosophy
ISBN 978 1 83639 251 4
200 × 130 mm • 240 pp
35 illustrations
Paperback • £12.99/$22
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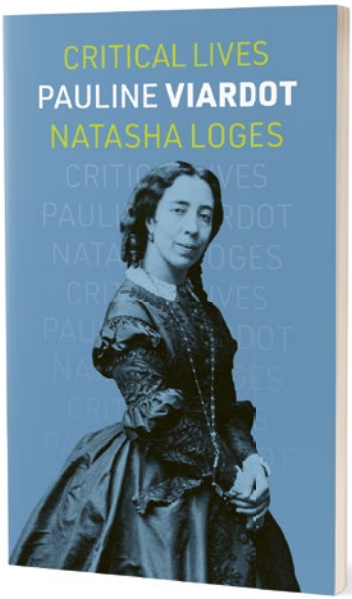
Pauline Viardot

Natasha Loges



Pauline Viardot, née García, emerged from one of Europe's most celebrated musical families to become a renowned singer and a cultural icon. Her life spanned the glittering cosmopolitan circles of nineteenth-century Europe, where music, theatre, literature and politics intersected, and she moved effortlessly among languages, styles and genres. Yet Viardot was more than a performer: she was a lifelong composer whose songs reflected her vision of a Europe without borders. This biography places her music at its heart, revealing how her compositions embodied transnational ideals and creative independence. Accessible and engaging, it illuminates the personal and professional life of a remarkable woman whose artistry and intellect left a lasting mark on European culture.

Natasha Loges is Professor of Musicology at the Hochschule für Musik Freiburg. She writes on nineteenth- and twentieth-century music, specializing in song, concert culture and gender. She is the author of *Brahms and His Poets* (2017).

Highlights Pauline Viardot's music, cosmopolitan life and transnational European vision

CRITICAL LIVES
November 2026 • Biography/Music
ISBN 978 1 83639 288 0
200 × 130 mm • 192 pp
30 illustrations
Paperback • £12.99/$22
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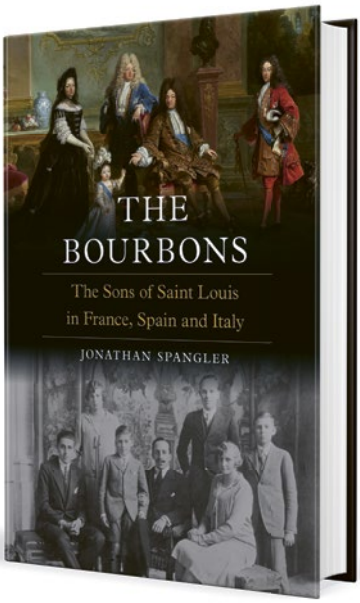
The Bourbons

The Sons of Saint Louis in France, Spain and Italy

Jonathan Spangler



The Bourbon dynasty is one of Europe's most enduring and influential royal families. This comprehensive history traces the Bourbons from their medieval origins to the twenty-first century, weaving together the lives of famous figures such as Louis XIV and Marie Antoinette with lesser-known princes, princesses and even illegitimate offspring. Stretching across France, Spain and Italy, the narrative highlights how Louis IX forged a dynastic identity that would shape European politics for centuries. Beyond individual biographies, Jonathan Spangler situates the dynasty within the broader political culture of early modern and modern Europe – from the War of the Spanish Succession to the French Revolution and the Italian Risorgimento – offering a richly textured account of power, family and legacy across generations.

Jonathan Spangler is Senior Lecturer in History at Manchester Metropolitan University. His previous books include *The Society of Princes* (2009) and *Monsieur: Second Sons in the Monarchy of France, 1550–1800* (2021).

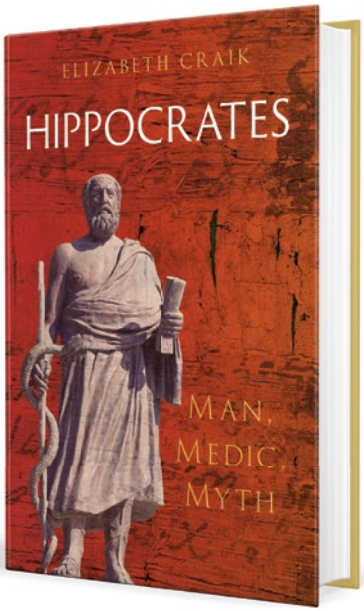
A comprehensive, transnational history of the Bourbons and their European legacy

DYNASTIES
November 2026 • History
ISBN 978 1 83639 287 3
234 × 156 mm • 512 pp
60 illustrations, 34 in colour
Hardback • £29/$45
ebook 978 1 83639 322 1
World Rights: Reaktion

Hippocrates

Man, Medic, Myth

Elizabeth Craik



Who was the so-called 'father of medicine', commonly associated with the celebrated Hippocratic Oath? Elizabeth Craik explores evidence for the historical Hippocrates, who lived in the fifth century BCE, and combines it with evidence and compelling excerpts from the 'Hippocratic Corpus', a vast and varied collection of Greek medical texts, linked in transmission with his name. Through a focus on locality and innovatory attention to language, Craik shows how several different 'voices' may all be regarded as Hippocratic.

Hippocrates: Man, Medic, Myth brings a vital new orientation to important questions of origins and authorship and provides a novel interpretation of a key figure in the history of medicine.

A vital new look at the 'father of medicine'

Elizabeth Craik is Honorary Professor in the School of Classics at the University of St Andrews. She has published widely on literature, social history and history of medicine in ancient Greece, including *The 'Hippocratic' Corpus* (2015).

GREAT LIVES OF THE ANCIENT WORLD
September 2026 • Biography/History of Science
ISBN 978 1 83639 275 0
216 × 138 mm • 240 pp
22 illustrations
Hardback • £15.99/$22.50
ebook 978 1 83639 310 8
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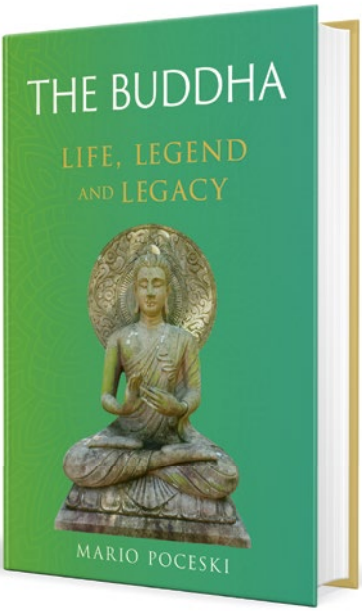
The Buddha

Life, Legend and Legacy

Mario Poceski



To this day the Buddha remains an object of worship for hundreds of millions of people. For many others he is the subject of quiet admiration, reflection or inspiration. Exploring this iconic figure, his vision of spiritual cultivation and his teachings on the Dharma, Mario Poceski considers the social, cultural and religious contexts that shaped the major stages of the Buddha's life. He also examines the Buddha's enduring legacy, shaped by the evolving beliefs and ideas of later generations of Buddhists, including the main monastic disciples, male and female, as well as prominent lay followers. Aimed at general readers, *The Buddha* offers a view into Buddhist history, philosophy and practice, as well as the ways the Buddha has been represented and reimagined worldwide over subsequent centuries.

Mario Poceski is Professor and Chair of the Department of Religion at the University of Florida. His numerous publications include *The Records of Mazu and the Making of Classical Chan Literature* (2015).

A concise exploration of the Buddha and his tradition

GREAT LIVES OF THE ANCIENT WORLD
October 2026 • Biography/Religion
ISBN 978 1 83639 280 4
216 × 138 mm • 240 pp
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ebook 978 1 83639 318 4
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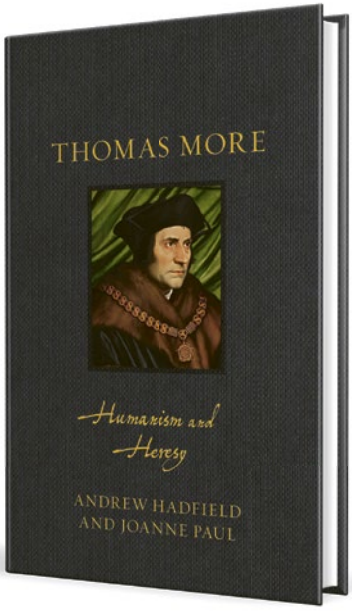
Thomas More

Humanism and Heresy

Andrew Hadfield and Joanne Paul



'Offers tantalizing fresh insights . . . a valuable and compelling new study.' – Mark Rankin, Professor of English at James Madison University and Fellow of the Royal Historical Society

Thomas More: Humanism and Heresy offers a clear and engaging introduction to one of the most influential and contested figures of the English Renaissance. Situating More's major works within the humanist movement and the debates surrounding the Lutheran 'heresy' and the Tudor court, Andrew Hadfield and Joanne Paul reveal how his ideas grew from – yet often strained against – the intellectual currents of his time. Through vivid contemporary illustrations and quotations, they bring fresh clarity to More's texts, from *Utopia* to his late polemics, while offering original insights into the character and convictions behind them. By tracing both the brilliance and tensions of More's legacy, this book invites readers to reconsider the man who helped shape modern debates about faith, reason and political conscience.

Andrew Hadfield is Emeritus Professor of English at the University of Sussex. He is the author of *John Donne: In the Shadow of Religion* (2021) and *Thomas Nashe and Late Elizabethan Writing* (2023), both published by Reaktion Books.

Joanne Paul is Honorary Associate Professor in Intellectual History at the University of Sussex. She has published extensively on Thomas More, including *Thomas More: A Life and Death in Tudor England* (2025).

An accessible reappraisal of Thomas More's thought, context and enduring legacy

RENAISSANCE LIVES
July 2026 • Biography/History
ISBN 978 1 83639 252 1
216 × 138 mm • 224 pp
42 illustrations, 30 in colour
Hardback • £17.95/$25
ebook 978 1 83639 291 0
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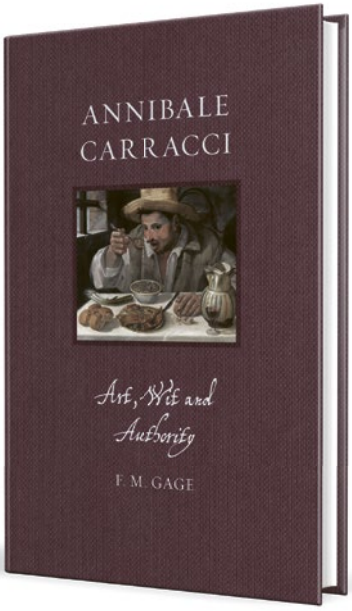
Annibale Carracci

Art, Wit and Authority

F. M. Gage



In late sixteenth-century Bologna, Annibale Carracci reinvigorated painting through a renewed study of nature in vivid depictions of a bean-eater and butchers and moving religious images. In Rome, Annibale painted the exuberant loves of the gods in the Farnese Gallery – frescoes comparable to Michelangelo's Sistine Chapel and Raphael's Villa Farnesina – which catapulted him to fame as a 'new Raphael'. He was celebrated as a man of wit and a devoted teacher. This first modern biography in English highlights Annibale's incisive pictorial and verbal wit and the shifts in taste that later obscured his legacy. Reassessing his art with clarity, the book brings into focus a painter of remarkable breadth and intelligence who profoundly shaped European art.

F. M. Gage is Associate Professor of Art History at SUNY, Buffalo State University. Her publications include *Painting as Medicine in Early Modern Rome: Giulio Mancini and the Efficacy of Art* (2016).

Reveals the wit and brilliance of Renaissance master Annibale Carracci

RENAISSANCE LIVES
August 2026 • Art
ISBN 978 1 83639 246 0
216 × 138 mm • 264 pp
72 illustrations, 52 in colour
Hardback • £17.95/$25
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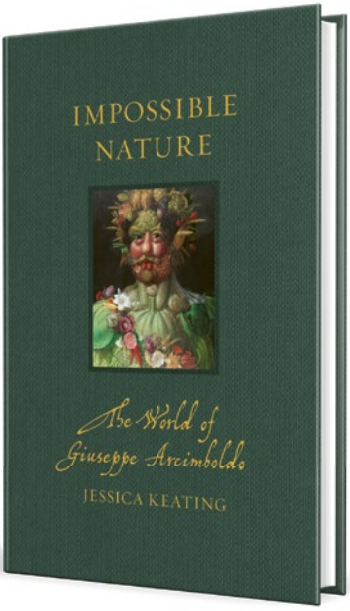
Impossible Nature

The World of Giuseppe Arcimboldo

Jessica Keating



Impossible Nature offers a fresh reassessment of Giuseppe Arcimboldo, the Lombard painter whose fantastical composite heads became fixtures of the Habsburg court and emblems of imperial imagination. Moving beyond the familiar images, this book argues that court art was never merely decorative: it upheld power even as it subtly unravelled the narratives that power wished to project.

Through incisive visual readings, Jessica Keating shows the ways in which Arcimboldo's work pictured and contemplated anew the codependency of art, nature and sovereignty, and reveals an artist far more conceptually daring – and more urgently relevant – than his playful surfaces suggest.

Jessica Keating is Associate Professor of Early Modern Art History at Carleton College, Minnesota. She is the author of *Animating Empire: Automata, The Holy Roman Empire, and the Early Modern World* (2018).

A reappraisal of Arcimboldo's visionary, startlingly subversive art

RENAISSANCE LIVES
August 2026 • Art
ISBN 978 1 83639 260 6
216 × 138 mm • 224 pp
75 illustrations, 60 in colour
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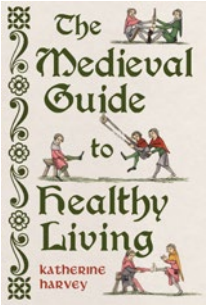

The Medieval Guide to Healthy Living
Katherine Harvey

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234 × 156 mm • 336 pp
25 illustrations
Hardback • £20/$26
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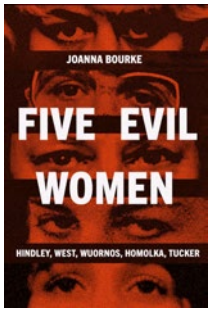

Five Evil Women
Hindley, West, Wuornos, Homolka, Tucker
Joanna Bourke

ISBN 978 1 83639 174 6
234 × 156 mm • 344 pp
11 illustrations
Hardback • £20/$27.50
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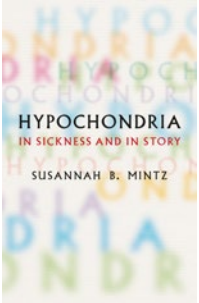

Hypochondria
In Sickness and in Story
Susannah B. Mintz

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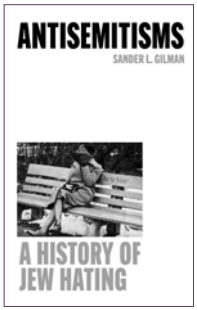

Antisemitisms
A History of Jew Hating
Sander L. Gilman

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216 × 138 mm • 304 pp
24 illustrations
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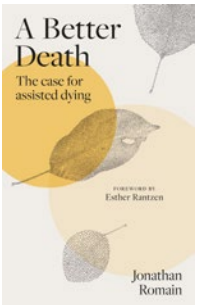

A Better Death
The Case for Assisted Dying
Jonathan Romain

ISBN 978 1 83639 164 7
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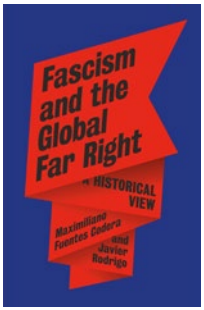

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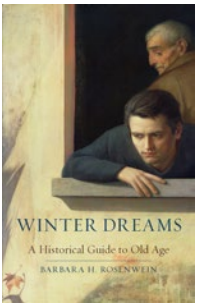

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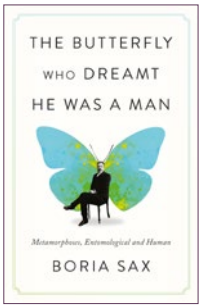

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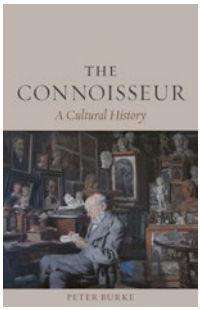

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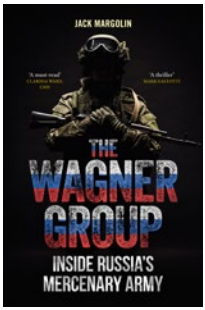

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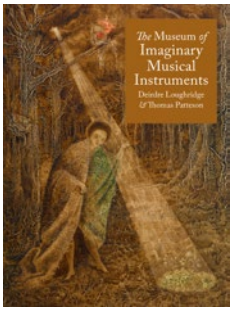

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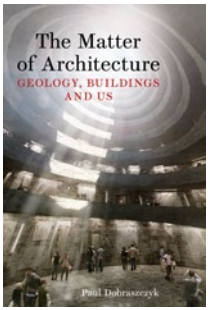

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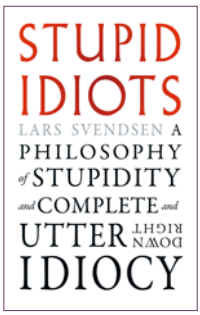

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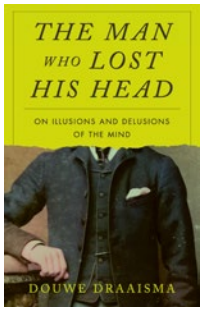

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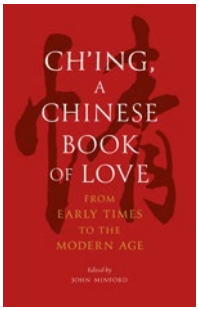

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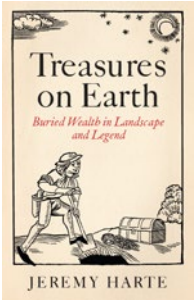

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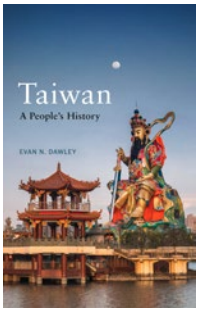

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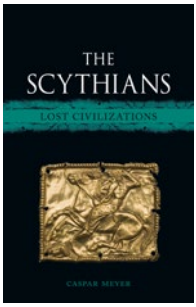

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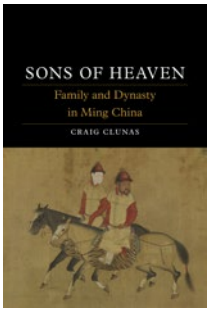

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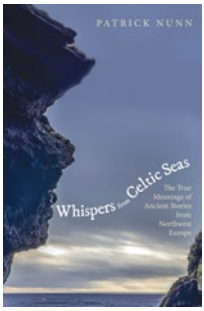

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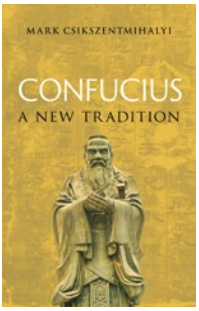

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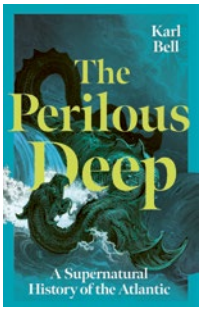

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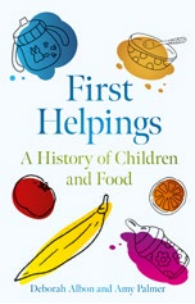

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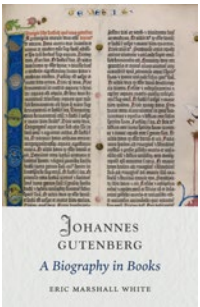

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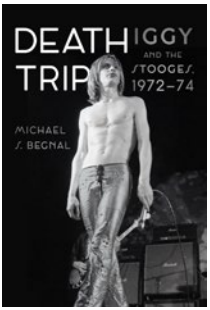

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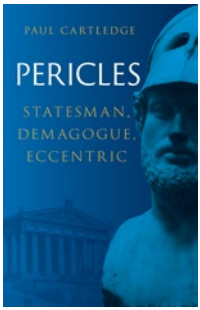

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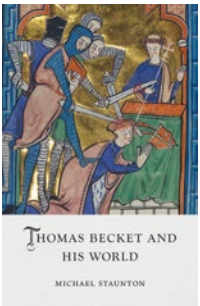

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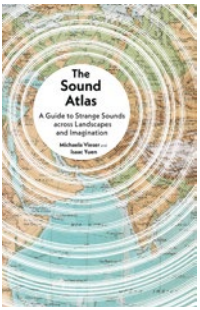

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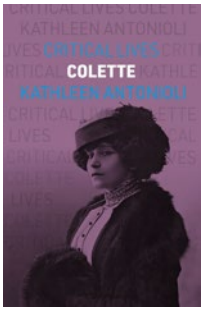

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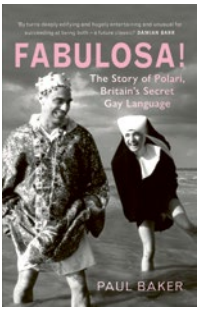

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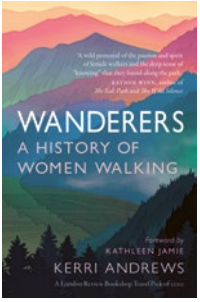

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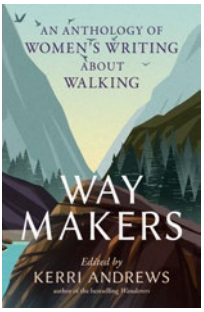

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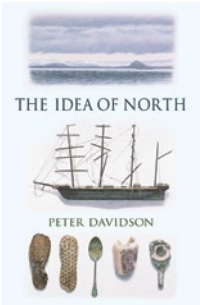

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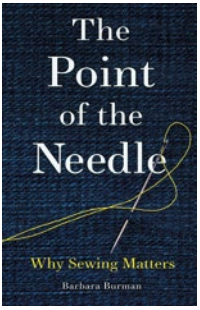

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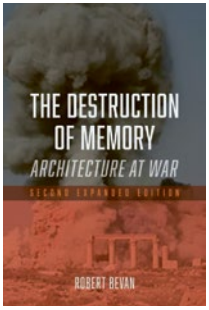

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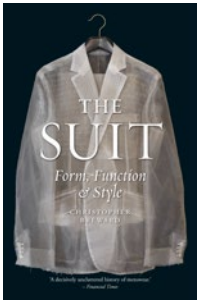

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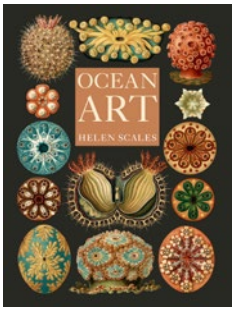

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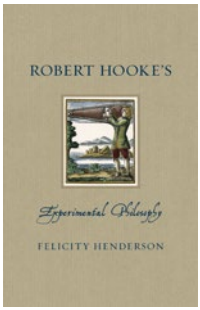

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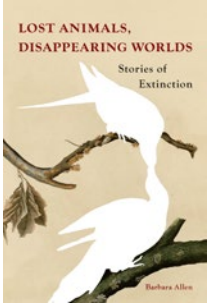

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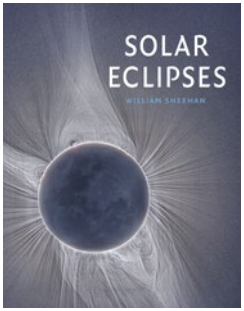

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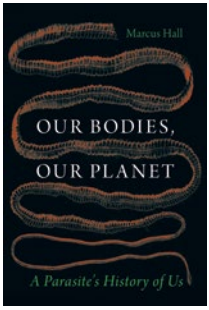

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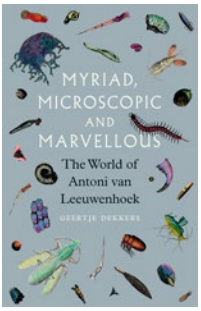

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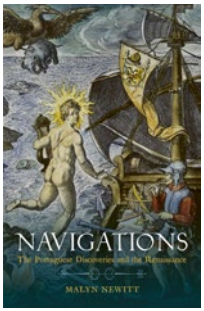

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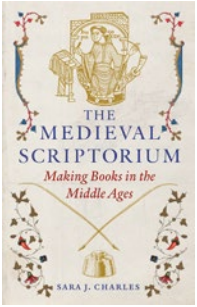

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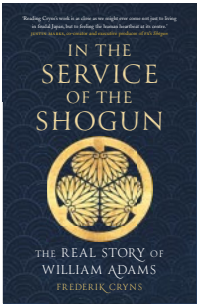

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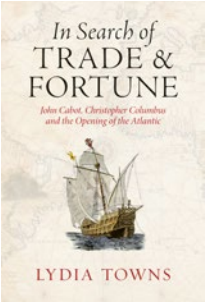

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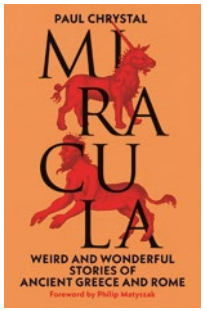

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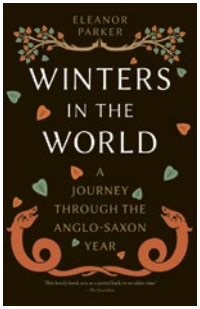

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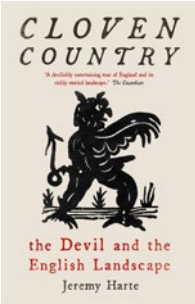

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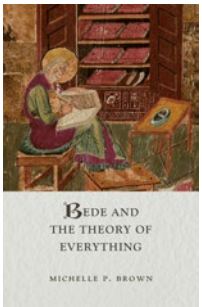

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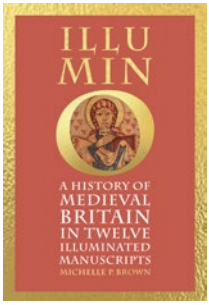

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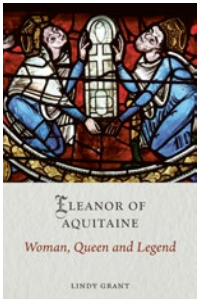

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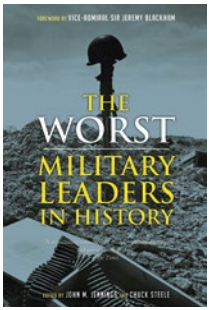

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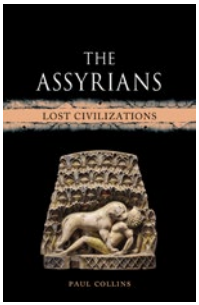

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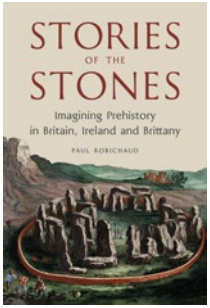

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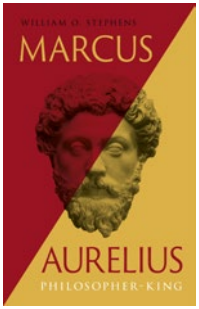

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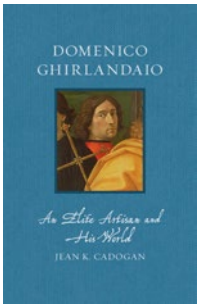

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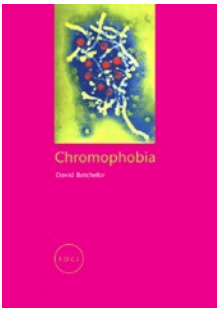

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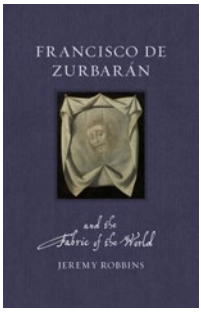

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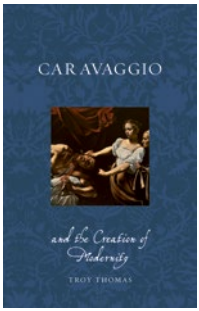

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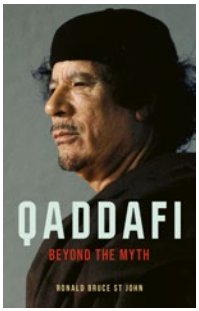

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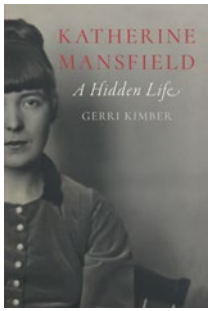

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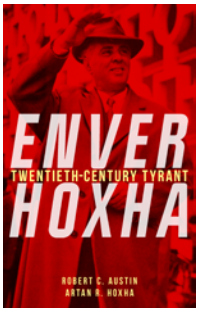

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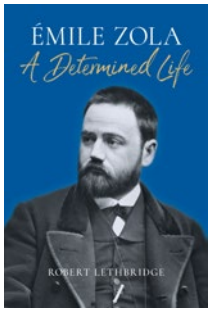

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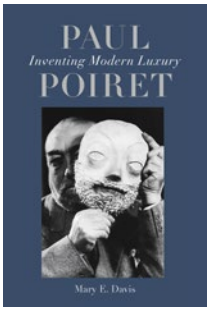

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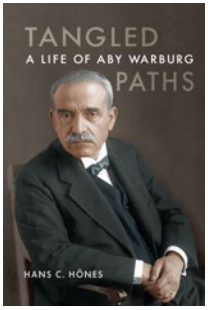

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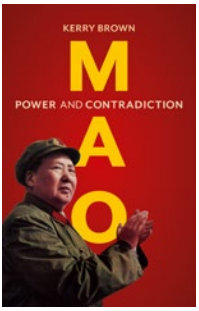

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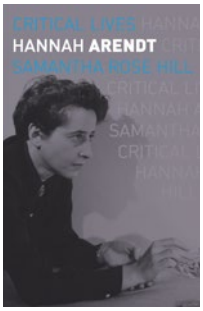

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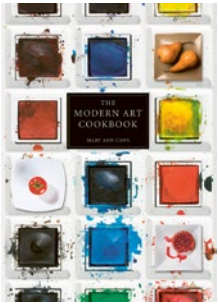

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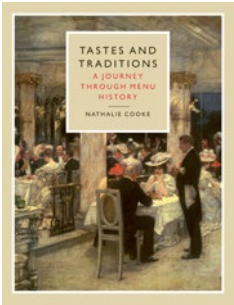

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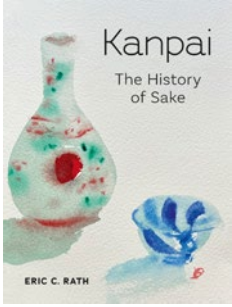

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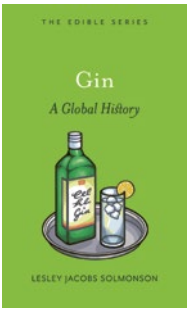

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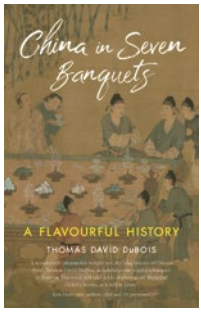

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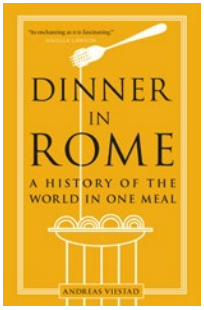

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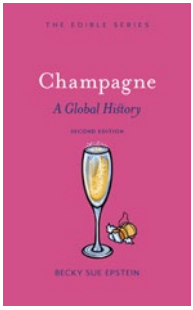

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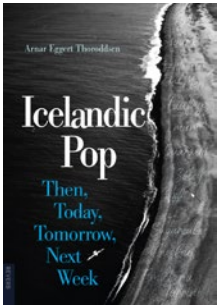

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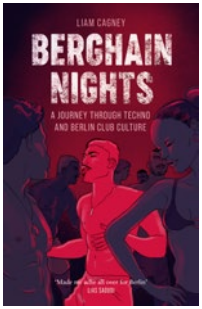

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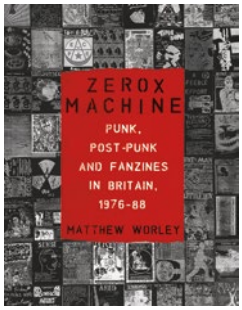

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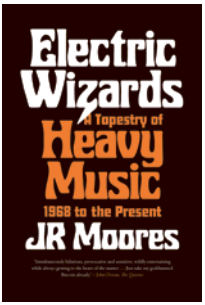

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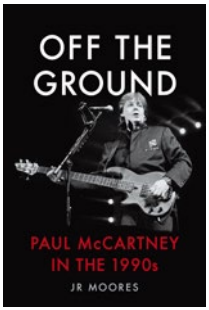

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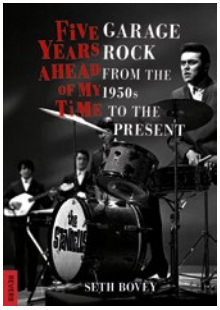

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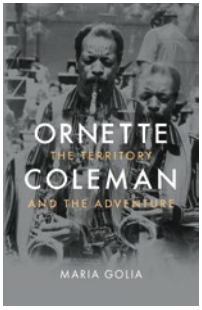

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