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“To understand the present one must first know the past”: this old historiography dictum applies not only to factual history but also to the history of ideas and science. Linguistics is no exception. The book outlines the development of the reflection on language from classical antiquity to the present day, although it devotes special attention to the 19th and 20th centuries, when linguistics managed to achieve its independence as a science. The author addresses general theoretical concepts set forth by various scholars, as well as the birth and development of concepts and problems, particularly those that continue to underpin the study of language.

Giorgio Graffi teaches Linguistics at the University of Verona.
Gian Mario Anselmi

**Literary Banquets**

Food, Meals and Recipes in Italian Literature from Dante to Camilleri

Banchetti letterari. Cibi, pietanze e ricette nella letteratura italiana da Dante a Camilleri

The book contains about fifty short essays devoted to food in Italian literature and which examine foods, dishes and recipes that have had a significant presence in national literature: bread in Dante and Manzoni, risotto in Gadda, sausages and cheeses from the district of Bengodi in Boccaccio’s “Decameron”, macaroni timbale in Tomasi di Lampedusa’s “The Leopard”. Some of the entries explore specific aspects, historical events and gastronomic moments: war foods, dietary dishes, migrant meals, crime novel victuals, kosher cuisine and futurist fare. The author seeks to link food to its specific culture and place it within its proper context in the evolution of customs. These literary banquets are overseen by Pellegrino Artusi, author of the renowned cookbook “The Science of Cooking and the Art of Fine Dining”.

Gian Mario Anselmi teaches Italian Literature at the University of Bologna, where he is the director of the Department of Classical Philology and Italian Studies.
Among the various themes that can be found throughout Ancient Greek and Latin culture, wine is among the most fascinating. Its mythical origin is linked to the god the Greeks called Dionysus and the Romans called Bacchus or Liber. By the Middle Ages, Christian rituals prevailed over pagan meanings. Wine has been celebrated by poets and studied by scholars, but first and foremost its presence is a constant fixture of public holidays, Greek symposia and Roman dinners. Its importance has affected both the distant age of myth and contemporary scientific research. It has played a central role in lyric poetry, epigrams and elegies, whereas its everyday quality has been highlighted in comedy and anecdotes about heavy drinkers.

Luca Della Bianca has published literature studies, essays and several novels.

Simone Beta teaches Classical Philology at the University of Siena.

Literature
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What do Galileo Galilei, the utmost symbol of modern science, and Harry Potter, the most famous wizard of our times, have in common? Find out during this journey to a place where science, magic and fantasy converge. You will meet Newton (an avid reader of alleged alchemist Nicolas Flamel), Leopardi (a meticulous student of science), Kant (who closely examined the existence of spirits) and Frankenstein (engaged in unveiling the secrets of alchemy and chemistry). The book also tells other tales and addresses other topics: hippogryphs, philosopher’s stones, visionaries, prophets, scientific research and historical studies.

Marco Ciardi teaches History of Science at the University of Bologna.
Thanks to its original approach, this book has contributed, in Italy and abroad, to a substantial renewal of the historiography of the Fascist regime. Its originality lies primarily in its analysis of the militia party as if it were an embryonic form of totalitarianism, its interpretation of Fascism as totalitarian Caesarism and its revision of the very concept of totalitarianism. The latter is interpreted according to its original historical meaning, as an experiment and a method for political dominion.

**Emilio Gentile** is an internationally renowned historian and professor emeritus at the Sapienza University in Rome.

*English, French and Spanish rights sold*
The book traces the history of fashion from late 19th-century French hegemony to the present day and explains its consolidation after the idea took root, thanks to Charles Frederick Worth, that a tailor was not merely a craftsman but a veritable creator of styles. Alongside profiles of important international designers – Chanel, Dior, Armani, Valentino, Gucci, Prada – the book also describes the basic stages of fashion development, from “haute couture” to “prêt-à-porter” and then from globalization to new “fast fashion” trends.

Sofia Gnoli teaches History of Fashion at the Sapienza University in Rome and writes about contemporary fashion for “Vogue Italia”.

English rights sold
There was a time when eminent statesmen (such as Churchill and De Gasperi) and renowned intellectuals (such as Cross, Arendt, Bobbio, Thomas Mann, Kojève and Laski) expressed respect, fondness and even admiration for Stalin and the country he led. With the outbreak of the Cold War and the release of the Khrushchev Report, Stalin became a “monster”, comparable perhaps only to Hitler. The stark contrast offered by different images of Stalin should impel historians not to absolutize one of those images, but rather re-appraise each and every one of them. And that is what Domenico Losurdo does, as he examines the tragedies of the 20th century within a comparative perspective, contextualizing and deconstructing many accusations leveled against Stalin. This book – a historical, historiographical and philosophical essay – will undoubtedly arouse fierce controversy.

Domenico Losurdo is professor emeritus at the University of Urbino and has been awarded an honorary doctorate by the Fluminense Federal University in Niterói-Rio de Janeiro.

German, French, Spanish and Portuguese (Brazil) rights sold
Disability has always been part of human history, but its specific role has undergone many changes. Different eras have featured an array of social practices and prejudices. The “monsters” of ancient Greece and Rome differ from the subjects studied in 19th-century teratology. Well before the age of freak shows, showcasing differently-abled individuals was a common practice among the powerful. The Renaissance and the Enlightenment witnessed the development of special pedagogies. After the extermination of people with impairments in Nazi Germany, the steps forward taken by the welfare state are now in danger of deteriorating into welfare charity, oblivious to disabled individuals’ rights. Even though disability may be an inescapable by-product of our world, some people and associations have been able to rise above the past’s limited views.

Matteo Schianchi studies the social history of disabilities at the Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales in Paris.
Written on the occasion of the 500th anniversary of “The Prince”, these essays discuss the key elements of Machiavelli’s thought, starting with the relationship between politics and history and its manifestation in decadence and conflict. The model of Roman history is reflected in Machiavelli’s obsession with decadence and the constitution’s tendency not to diminish discord but to actually fuel it. Justifying his interpretations of Machiavellian thought, developed over fifty years of study, the author draws mostly on “The Prince” and “The Discourses” and argues for a stronger appreciation of “The Florentine Histories”. The essays also address the issues of eternity in the world, the presence of Lucretius and Dante in Machiavelli and the interpretations later submitted by Francesco De Sanctis and Benedetto Croce.

Gennaro Sasso is professor emeritus at the Sapienza University in Rome, a former director of the Italian Institute for History Studies in Naples and a member of the Accademia dei Lincei.
The word “biopolitics” is used increasingly often in reference to various phenomena that revolve around the terms “bios” (life) and “politics”, especially when they involve the bodies of those who exert power and those who endure it. Traditional legal and political tools, particularly the separation between public and private spheres, are unable to adequately deal with this novelty. Unlike bioethics, biopolitics focuses on policy implications and power mechanisms – operating in economic and cultural, as well as strictly institutional, contexts – brought to bear by government. Political institutions in part protect the citizenry, but also increasingly interfere in people’s lives. The book explores various forms of biopolitics: the revival introduced by Foucault, its connection with biological knowledge, the economic processes that govern biopolitics in neoliberal society.

Laura Bazzicalupo teaches Political Philosophy at the University of Salerno and is president of the Italian Society of Political Philosophy.

Spanish and Portuguese (Brazil) rights sold
In our experience the present separates what no longer exists from that which does not yet exist. And the present’s intrinsic flux reflects the irreversible passage of time. But according to Einstein and Gödel, the two theories of relativity reduce the present to a mere illusion; Boltzmann and many other physicists claim that natural laws cannot distinguish the direction of time that goes from the past to the future from its future-to-past opposite. This has led to a radical conflict between physical time and experiential time. Using straightforward, jargon-free language, the author explores this puzzle and explains contemporary theories of time.

Mauro Dorato teaches Philosophy of Science at the Third University of Rome.
The book is a comprehensive portrait of one of the major figures of ancient Greece. Aristotle’s prodigious research – in fields stretching from metaphysics to biology and physics, from psychology to ethics, from politics to poetry, from rhetoric to logic – comprised a veritable “encyclopaedia of knowledge”, fated to exert lasting influence on Western thought.

Carlo Natali teaches History of Ancient Philosophy at the Ca’ Foscari University in Venice and is president of the Italian Society of History of Ancient Philosophy.

Swedish and Portuguese (Brazil) rights sold
Why did the message of Jesus spark the founding of so many different churches, peaceful sects, violent cults, social reform movements, revolutionary utopias, end-of-the-world visions, political strategies, groups capable of fighting social injustice and others more than willing to cooperate with power? Featuring a sociological approach to the history of Christianity, this book provides an answer by interpreting literally the Gospel of John’s opening passage: “in the beginning was the Word”. The word given by Jesus to his early followers was a source of disputes that eventually converged on the idea that authorities alone can guarantee the truth of Jesus’ message. Yet the appointment of hierarchical organizations as custodians of truth – the model of the church – has continued to fuel conflicts over the centuries. The other organized form, the sect, has insisted on questioning a single authority’s monopoly over the word of Jesus. The contentious relationship involving the church, sects and mystical movements highlights Christianity’s inherent ability to create movement in society.

Enzo Pace teaches Sociology of Religions at the University of Padua.
Contemporary international politics undergoes increasingly frequent crises due to the obsolescence of traditional political models – sovereignty, legitimacy, intervention – and the decline of the political principles that previously dominated the 20th century. Episodes of major discontinuity – such as the end of bipolarity and the 9/11 attack on the Twin Towers – offered an opportunity, unfortunately not seized by policy-makers, to reinterpret ongoing transformations that go beyond traditional diplomatic logic and involve the planet’s near future. The book argues that newly resurgent anarchy can be countered only by an increase in democracy.

Luigi Bonanate is professor emeritus of International Relations at the University of Turin and a member of the Academy of Science in the same city.
Mysterious radiation, extraterrestrials, revolutionary archaeological relics, implausible electronic devices, climate-controlling machines and technology allowing one to relive the past: these are just some of the discoveries and inventions that could radically change our lives – if only they were real! Adopting a rigorous historical approach, this book analyzes a set of fake scientific discoveries and envisages what would have happened if they had been true. The author accompanies the reader on a unique, unusual and intriguing journey within science and highlights the less familiar characteristics of research and researchers.

Silvano Fuso teaches Chemistry and is an expert in science teaching and popularisation. Asteroid 2006 TF7, in orbit between Mars and Jupiter, is named after him.
It is an increasingly widespread belief that mathematics is the main tool for analyzing and predicting reality. This view has become especially influential as concerns novel developments in physics and technology. But is the world really so mathematical? To answer this question, the author explains in a simple way how mathematics is used in recent approaches to model-building. He then describes the historical events leading from Galileo’s idea that the world is written in mathematical language to contemporary mathematical modelling. Finally, the author addresses current issues, including the “reasonable” or “unreasonable” effectiveness of mathematics and computers’ role in scientific research.

Giorgio Israel formerly taught History of Mathematics at the Sapienza University in Rome, was the director of its Science Methodology Research Centre and a member of the Académie Internationale d’Histoire des Sciences.
The book provides an account of the fundamental laws of physics – involving electromagnetism, relativity, thermodynamics, quantum mechanics, elementary particles – which have been developed by the scientific community from the times of Galileo, inventor of the scientific method, to the present day. These beautiful theories, thanks to their elegance and rigor, are monuments to human genius and milestones of our civilization.

Vittorio Silvestrini is a physicist and founded the City of Science museum in Naples. In 2007 the European Commission awarded him the Descartes Science Communication Prize.

Bruno Bartoli formerly taught Physics at the Federico II University in Naples and conducted research in the field of particle physics, energy physics and cosmic rays.

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