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Reading in Russia. A History of Reading in Modern Russia
From Latin love poetry's dominating and enslaving beloveds, to modern popular culture's infamous Cleopatras and Messalinas, representations of the Roman mistress (or the mistress of Romans) have brought into question both ancient and modern genders and political systems. The Roman Mistress explores representations of transgressive women in Latin love poetry and British television drama, in Roman historiography and nineteenth-century Italian anthropology, on classical coinage and college websites, as poetic metaphor and in the Hollywood star system. In a highly accessible style, the book makes an important and original contribution simultaneously to feminist scholarship on antiquity, the classical tradition, and cultural studies. The first volume in a series of volumes indebted to Oriental modes of storytelling, such as found in The Thousand and One Nights, Kyrya K yralina is a book of great charm and profound insight into the human condition.


Classical ballet was perhaps the most visible symbol of aristocratic culture and its isolation from the rest of Russian society under the tsars. In the wake of the October Revolution, ballet, like all of the arts, fell under the auspices of the Soviet authorities. In light of these events, many feared that the imperial ballet troupes would be disbanded. Instead, the Soviets attempted to mold the former imperial ballet to suit their revolutionary cultural agenda and employ it to reeducate the masses. As Christina Ezrahi’s groundbreaking study reveals, they were far from successful in this ambitious effort to gain complete control over art. Swans of the Kremlin offers a fascinating glimpse at the collision of art and politics during the volatile first fifty years of the Soviet period. Ezrahi shows how the producers and performers of Russia’s two major troupes, the Mariinsky (later Kirov) and the Bolshoi, quietly but effectively resisted Soviet cultural hegemony during this period. Despite all controls put on them, they managed to maintain the classical forms and traditions of their rich artistic past and to further develop their art form. These aesthetic and professional standards proved to be the power. 
behind the ballet’s worldwide appeal. The troupes soon became the showpiece of Soviet cultural achievement, as they captivated Western audiences during the Cold War period. Based on her extensive research into official archives, and personal interviews with many of the artists and staff, Ezrahi presents the first-ever account of the inner workings of these famed ballet troupes during the Soviet era. She follows their struggles in the postrevolutionary period, their peak during the golden age of the 1950s and 1960s, and concludes with their monumental productions staged to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of the revolution in 1968.

Shakespeare and Crisis: One hundred years of Italian narratives explores how Shakespeare intervened in the Italian socio-political and cultural scene between his third and fourth centenaries, at times which were manifestly perceived as ‘critical’. It asks which complex mythopoietic processes contributed to shaping regimes of reading Shakespeare in response to those times of crisis. Crises of national identity during the Great War and the Fascist regime, crises of history in the 1970s, and crises of representation in the second half of the twentieth century extending into the new millennium constitute the three main areas of a discussion that ultimately aims at probing into the role of literature at times of crisis. The volume situates itself at the juncture of European Shakespeare studies and studies of Shakespeare and Italy. It addresses essential questions about the position of literature in society, offering at different levels new insights for scholars, students, and the general reader.

Of all aspects of Roman culture, the gladiatorial contests for which the Romans built their amphitheatres are at once the most fascinating and the most difficult for us to come to terms with. They have been seen variously as sacrifices to the gods or, at funerals, to the souls of the deceased; as a mechanism for introducing young Romans to the horrors of fighting; and as a direct substitute for warfare after the imposition of peace. In this original and authoritative study, Thomas Wiedemann argues that gladiators were part of the mythical struggle of order and civilisation against the forces of nature, barbarism and law breaking, representing the possibility of a return to new life from the point of death; that Christian Romans rejected gladiatorial games not on humanitarian grounds, but because they were a rival representation of a possible resurrection.

"In an eclectic career spanning four decades, Italian director Riccardo Freda (1909-1999) produced films of remarkable technical skill and powerful visual style. This book covers his life and career for the first time in English, with detailed analyses of his films and exclusive interviews with his collaborators and family"--In 72 B.C., in the heart of Rome's Mediterranean empire, a slave named Spartacus ignited one of the most violent episodes of slave resistance in the history of the Roman Empire --indeed in the world annals of slavery. This volume organizes original translations of 80 Greek and Latin sources into topical chapters that look at the daily lives of
slaves trained as gladiators and those who labored on farms in Italy and Sicily, including accounts of revolts that preceded and anticipated that of Spartacus. In a carefully crafted introductory essay, Shaw places Spartacus in the broader context of first and second century B.C. Rome, Italy and Sicily and explains why his story continues to be a popular symbol of rebellion today. The volume also includes a glossary, chronology, selected bibliography, three maps, an annotated list of ancient writers, and questions for consideration. Gladiator, rebel slave leader, revolutionary: the figure of Spartacus frequently serves as an icon of resistance against oppression in modern political movements, while his legend has inspired numerous receptions over the centuries in many different media. With its visually excessive style of graphic sex and CGI-enhanced violence, the four seasons of the premium cable television series STARZ Spartacus tells the story of the historical Thracian gladiator who led a slave uprising against the Roman Republican army from 73 to 71 BC. STARZ Spartacus: Reimagining an Icon on Screen is the first scholarly volume to explore the entirety of this critically acclaimed and commercially successful drama series. This new volume brings together pioneering and provocative essays written by an international cast of leading classical scholars and experienced media critics. Turning a sharp eye on the series’ historical framework, visual and narrative style, thematic overtones, and interaction with contemporary popular culture, this volume also engages with the authenticity of the production and considers its place in the tradition of epic films and television series set in ancient Rome. At once both erudite and entertaining, STARZ Spartacus: Reimagining an Icon on Screen is an invaluable resource for both students and scholars eager to confront a new Spartacus, as the hero of the slave revolt is recast for a twenty-first century audience. The best-selling novel about a slave revolt in ancient Rome and the basis for the popular motion picture. The games comprised gladiatorial fights, staged animal hunts (venationes) and the executions of convicted criminals and prisoners of war. Besides entertaining the crowd, the games delivered a powerful message of Roman power: as a reminder of the wars in which Rome had acquired its empire, the distant regions of its far-flung empire (from where they had obtained wild beasts for the venatio), and the inevitability of Roman justice for criminals and those foreigners who had dared to challenge the empire’s authority. Though we might see these games as bloodthirsty, cruel and reprehensible condemning any alien culture out of hand for a sport that offends our sensibilities smacks of cultural chauvinism. Instead one should judge an ancient sport by the standards of its contemporary cultural context. This book offers a fascinating, and fair historical appraisal of gladiatorial combat, which will bring the games alive to the reader and help them see them through the eyes of the ancient Romans. It will answer questions about gladiatorial combat such
as: What were its origins? Why did it disappear? Who were gladiators? How did they become gladiators? What was there training like? How did the Romans view gladiators? How were gladiator shows produced and advertised? What were the different styles of gladiatorial fighting? Did gladiator matches have referees? Did every match end in the death of at least one gladiator? Were gladiator games mere entertainment or did they play a larger role in Roman society? What was their political significance? 'Life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness' is perhaps the most famous phrase of all in the American Declaration of Independence. Thomas Jefferson's momentous words are closely related to the French concept of 'liberte, egalite, fraternite'; and both ideas incarnate a notion of freedom as inalienable human right that in the modern world we expect to take for granted. In the ancient world, by contrast, the concepts of freedom and equality had little purchase. Athenians, Spartans and Romans all possessed slaves or helots (unfree bondsmen), and society was unequal at every stratum. Why, then, if modern society abominates slavery, does what antiquity thought about serfdom matter today? Page duBois shows that slavery, far from being extinct, is alive and well in the contemporary era. Slaves are associated not just with the Colosseum of ancient Rome but also with Californian labour factories and south Asian sweatshops, while young women and children appear increasingly vulnerable to sexual trafficking. Applying such modern experiences of bondage (economic or sexual) to slavery in antiquity, the author explores the writings on the subject of Aristotle, Plautus, Terence and Aristophanes. She also examines the case of Spartacus, famous leader of a Roman slave rebellion, and relates ancient notions of liberation to the all-too-common immigrant experience of enslavement to a globalized world of rampant corporatism and exploitative capitalism. Everyone has heard of George Balanchine. Few outside Russia know of Leonid Yakobson, Balanchine's contemporary, who remained in Lenin's Russia and survived censorship during the darkest days of Stalin. Like Shostakovich, Yakobson suffered for his art and yet managed to create a singular body of revolutionary dances that spoke to the Soviet condition. His work was often considered so culturally explosive that it was described as like a bomb going off. Based on untapped archival collections of photographs, films, and writings about Yakobson's work in Moscow and St. Petersburg for the Bolshoi and Kirov ballets, as well as interviews with former dancers, family, and audience members, this illuminating and beautifully written biography brings to life a hidden history of artistic resistance in the USSR through this brave artist, who struggled against officially sanctioned anti-Semitism while offering a vista of hope. "Gritty, passionate and violent, this thrilling book is a real page-turner and a damn good read. It brings Spartacus— and ancient Rome— to vivid, colorful life." — Steven Pressfield, author of Gates of Fire Long the stuff of legends, Spartacus is known
to most modern readers through the classic Kubrick film version of Howard Fast's novel. Now bestselling historical novelist Ben Kane returns to the source material and presents a lively and compelling new vision of the man who was Spartacus—Roman army auxiliary, slave, gladiator and ultimately the leader of an army of slaves who nearly brought Rome to its knees. Ben Kane's brilliant novel begins in the Thracian village to which Spartacus has returned after escaping from life as an auxiliary in the Roman army. Jealous of his attachment to Ariadne, a Dionysian priestess, the Thracian king betrays Spartacus to the Romans who take him, along with Ariadne, into captivity and to the school of gladiators at Capua. Against the background of the unbelievable brutality of gladiatorial life, Spartacus and Crixus the Gaul plan the audacious overthrow of their Roman masters. They escape and flee to Vesuvius, where they recruit and train an army of escaped slaves that will have to face the conquerors of the known world, the most successful deadly army in all of history in a battle that will set in motion the legend that is Spartacus. In The Classics and Children's Literature between West and East a team of contributors from different continents offers a survey of the reception of Classical Antiquity in children's and young adults' literature by applying regional perspectives. In this "incredibly rich" (New York Times) definitive history of the Bolshoi Ballet, visionary performances onstage compete with political machinations backstage. A critical triumph, Simon Morrison's "sweeping and authoritative" (Guardian) work, Bolshoi Confidential, details the Bolshoi Ballet's magnificent history from its earliest tumults to recent scandals. On January 17, 2013, a hooded assailant hurled acid into the face of the artistic director, making international headlines. A lead soloist, enraged by institutional power struggles, later confessed to masterminding the crime. Morrison gives the shocking violence context, describing the ballet as a crucible of art and politics beginning with the disreputable inception of the theater in 1776, through the era of imperial rule, the chaos of revolution, the oppressive Soviet years, and the Bolshoi's recent $680 million renovation. With vibrant detail including "sex scandals, double-suicide pacts, bribery, arson, executions, prostitution rings, embezzlement, starving orphans, [and] dead cats in lieu of flowers" (New Republic), Morrison makes clear that the history of the Bolshoi Ballet mirrors that of Russia itself. In the informative, entertaining, and generously illustrated Spartak Moscow, a book that will be cheered by soccer fans worldwide, Robert Edelman finds in the stands and on the pitch keys to understanding everyday life under Stalin, Khrushchev, and their successors. Millions attended matches and obsessed about their favorite club, and their rowdiness on game day stood out as a moment of relative freedom in a society that championed conformity. This was particularly the case for the supporters of Spartak, which emerged from the rough proletarian
Presnia district of Moscow and spent much of its history in fierce rivalry with Dinamo, the team of the secret police. To cheer for Spartak, Edelman shows, was a small and safe way of saying "no" to the fears and absurdities of high Stalinism; to understand Spartak is to understand how soccer explains Soviet life. Champions of the Soviet Elite League twelve times and eleven-time winner of the USSR Cup, Spartak was founded and led for seven decades by the four Starostin brothers, the most visible of whom were Nikolai and Andrei. Brilliant players turned skilled entrepreneurs, they were flexible enough to constantly change their business model to accommodate the dramatic shifts in Soviet policy. Whether because of their own financial wheeling and dealing or Spartak's too frequent success against state-sponsored teams, they were arrested in 1942 and spent twelve years in the gulag. Instead of facing hard labor and likely death, they were spared the harshness of their places of exile when they were asked by local camp commandants to coach the prisoners' football teams. Returning from the camps after Stalin's death, they took back the reins of a club whose mystique as the "people's team" was only enhanced by its status as a victim of Stalinist tyranny.

Edelman covers the team from its days on the wild fields of prerevolutionary Russia through the post-Soviet period. Given its history, it was hardly surprising that Spartak adjusted quickly to the new, capitalist world of postsocialist Russia, going on to win the championship of the Russian Premier League nine times, the Russian Cup three times, and the CIS Commonwealth of Independent States Cup six times. In addition to providing a fresh and authoritative history of Soviet society as seen through its obsession with the world's most popular sport, Edelman, a well-known sports commentator, also provides biographies of Spartak's leading players over the course of a century and riveting play-by-play accounts of Spartak's most important matches—including such highlights as the day in 1989 when Spartak last won the Soviet Elite League on a Valery Shmarov free kick at the ninety-second minute. Throughout, he palpably evokes what it was like to cheer for the "Red and White." Learn the body language that will boost your confidence when it comes to relationships: "Understanding the opposite sex" "The art of flirtation and courtship signals" "The importance of eye contact" Does body language mean the same thing for him and for her? From first impressions to long-term relationships, BODY LANGUAGE OF LOVE will help you to identify and correct the body language which could be letting you down. This volume focuses on the reception of antiquity in the performing and visual arts from the Renaissance to the twenty-first century. It explores the tensions and relations of gender, sexuality, eroticism and power in reception. Such universal themes dictated plots and characters of myth and drama, but also served to portray historical figures, events and places from Classical history. Their changing reception and reinterpretation across time has created
stereotypes, models of virtue or immoral conduct, that blend the original features from the ancient world with a diverse range of visual and performing arts of the modern era. The volume deconstructs these traditions and shows how arts of different periods interlink to form and transmit these images to modern audiences and viewers. Drawing on contributions from across Europe and the United States, a trademark of the book is the inclusive treatment of all the arts beyond the traditional limits of academic disciplines. The collected essays in this volume focus on the presentation, representation and interpretation of ancient violence – from war to slavery, rape and murder – in the modern visual and performing arts, with special attention to videogames and dance as well as the more usual media of film, literature and theatre. Violence, fury and the dread that they provoke are factors that appear frequently in the ancient sources. The dark side of antiquity, so distant from the ideal of purity and harmony that the classical heritage until recently usually called forth, has repeatedly struck the imagination of artists, writers and scholars across ages and cultures. A global assembly of contributors, from Europe to Brazil and from the US to New Zealand, consider historical and mythical violence in Stanley Kubrick’s Spartacus and the 2010 TV series of the same name, in Ridley Scott’s Gladiator, in the work of Lars von Trier, and in Soviet ballet and the choreography of Martha Graham and Anita Berber. Representations of Roman warfare appear in videogames such as Ryse: Son of Rome and Total War, as well as recent comics, and examples from both these media are analysed in the volume. Finally, interviews with two artists offer insight into the ways in which practitioners understand and engage with the complex reception of these themes. This publication of Abraham Polonsky’s unproduced screenplay for The Gladiators is a tribute to one of Hollywood’s premiere post-WW II directors and writers whose career was severely impacted by the blacklist. His script for The Gladiators survives to remind us that he could, and did, transform a difficult and complex novel of an ancient slave rebellion into a screenplay worthy of Arthur Koestler’s bold fictional vision. Through a combination of the ambivalence of its executive producer and star, plus bad timing, it never went before the cameras. This book is published in the hope that The Gladiators will be produced for cinema or television. This Osprey Campaign title brings to life the story of Rome’s most famous revolt, the Slave War (73-71 BC), and the ex-gladiator who led it. In the year 73 BC, the Thracian Spartacus broke out of the gladiatorial training school at Capua in Campania. A charismatic leader, Spartacus formed an army of runaway slaves and people with little to lose, and defeated the Roman troops under the praetor C. Claudius Glaber. With this minor victory, Spartacus’ army swelled to 70,000 and rampaged throughout Campania assaulting a number of cities and defeating two consular armies. Terrified lest the revolt spread across the republic, the
government assigned M. Licinius Crassus the task of crushing the revolt. Crassus' first attempt to capture Spartacus failed, and the Roman senate called upon Pompey to help him. Together, they cornered Spartacus and brought him to battle near the source of the river Silarus. During the battle, Spartacus was killed and his army defeated. Crassus crucified 6,000 prisoners as an example to others who might think of revolt.

Saluting gestures in Roman art and literature -- Jacques-Louis David's Oath of the Horatii -- Raised-arm salutes in the United States before fascism: from the pledge of allegiance to Ben-Hur on stage -- Early cinema : A merican and European epics -- Cabiria : the intersection of cinema and politics -- Gabriele d'Annunzio and Cabiria -- Fiume : the Roman salute becomes a political symbol -- From D'Annunzio to Mussolini -- Nazi cinema and its impact on Hollywood's Roman epics: from Leni Riefenstahl to Quo vadis -- Visual legacies : antiquity on the screen from Quo vadis to Rome -- Cinema: from Salome to Alexander -- Television : from Star trek to Rome -- Conclusion.Brought vividly to life on screen, the myth of ancient Rome resonates through modern popular culture. Projecting the Past examines how the cinematic traditions of Hollywood and Italy have resurrected ancient Rome to address the concerns of the present. The book engages contemporary debates about the nature of the classical tradition, definitions of history, and the place of the past in historical film. "Caesar" is not so much about Caesar the man as all the many versions of him in poetry, literature, opera, and drama. . . . A lively and thought-provoking read which skips lightly across the centuries.--Adrian Goldsworthy, "Spectator"

The games comprised gladiatorial fights, staged animal hunts (venationes) and the executions of convicted criminals and prisoners of war. Besides entertaining the crowd, the games delivered a powerful message of Roman power: as a reminder of the wars in which Rome had acquired its empire, the distant regions of its far-flung empire (from where they had obtained wild beasts for the venatio), and the inevitability of Roman justice for criminals and those foreigners who had dared to challenge the empire's authority. Though we might see these games as bloodthirsty, cruel and reprehensible condemning any alien culture out of hand for a sport that offends our sensibilities smacks of cultural chauvinism. Instead one should judge an ancient sport by the standards of its contemporary cultural context. This book offers a fascinating, and fair historical appraisal of gladiatorial combat, which will bring the games alive to the reader and help them see them through the eyes of the ancient Romans. It will answer questions about gladiatorial combat such as: What were its origins? Why did it disappear? Who were gladiators? How did they become gladiators? What was their training like? How did the Romans view gladiators? How were gladiator shows produced and advertised? What were the different styles of gladiatorial fighting? Did gladiator matches have referees? Did every match end
in the death of at least one gladiator? Were gladiator games mere entertainment or did they play a larger role in Roman society? What was their political significance? The texts, images and events of the ancient world have been used both as sources of authority and exploitation in politics, culture and society and as icons of resistance and contest. How classical culture is transplanted into new contexts, how texts are translated and performed and how Greek and Roman values are perceived and used continues to be a force in current debates. The main concepts and explanatory frameworks used in the field are introduced through chapters on reception within antiquity and case studies of more recent receptions from Africa, the Caribbean, Europe and the USA. The book will be of use to all those interested in the relationship between the arts, culture and society as well as to students and teachers of classical subjects and of literature, drama, film and comparative cultural studies. Spartacus, the Thracian gladiator turned rebel leader, endures as a near-mythic hero who fought for the oppressed against a Roman oligarchy built on the backs of slave labor. The image of Spartacus as a noble if doomed avenger is familiar and his story has been retold through history as a cautionary tale about social injustice. The television series Spartacus takes a different view, with a violent depiction of the man and his times and a focus on the archetype of the gladiator—powerful, courageous and righteous. This collection of new essays studies the series as an exploration of masculinity. In the world of Spartacus, men jockey for social position, question the nature of their lives, examine their relationships with women and with each other, and explore their roles in society and the universe. The series also offers a compelling study of the composite nature of historical narrative in television and film, where key facts from original sources are interwoven with period embellishments, presenting audiences with a history and a fiction whose lines remain blurred by a distant yet all-too-familiar past. "An exploration of the continuing influence of the Vaganova Academy on dancing today"—On the 100th anniversary of the Russian Revolution, the epic story of an enormous apartment building where Communist true believers lived before their destruction The House of Government is unlike any other book about the Russian Revolution and the Soviet experiment. Written in the tradition of Tolstoy's War and Peace, Grossman's Life and Fate, and Solzhenitsyn’s The Gulag Archipelago, Yuri Slezkine’s gripping narrative tells the true story of the residents of an enormous Moscow apartment building where top Communist officials and their families lived before they were destroyed in Stalin’s purges. A vivid account of the personal and public lives of Bolshevik true believers, the book begins with their conversion to Communism and ends with their children’s loss of faith and the fall of the Soviet Union. Completed in 1931, the House of Government, later known as the House on the Embankment, was located across the Moscow River from the Kremlin. The largest residential
building in Europe, it combined 505 furnished apartments with public spaces that included everything from a movie theater and a library to a tennis court and a shooting range. Slezkine tells the chilling story of how the building’s residents lived in their apartments and ruled the Soviet state until some eight hundred of them were evicted from the House and led, one by one, to prison or their deaths. Drawing on letters, diaries, and interviews, and featuring hundreds of rare photographs, The House of Government weaves together biography, literary criticism, architectural history, and fascinating new theories of revolutions, millennial prophecies, and reigns of terror. The result is an unforgettable human saga of a building that, like the Soviet Union itself, became a haunted house, forever disturbed by the ghosts of the disappeared. Using previously unpublished correspondence and personal journal entries from screenwriter Abraham Polonsky, neglected notices in Variety and other Hollywood trade publications, and a variety of published sources, this narrative backstory of rival movie productions of The Gladiators vs Spartacus documents that intense competition with greater precision and clarity than any other existing account. The key role that this little-known chapter of Hollywood's blacklist history played, in connection with Dalton Trumbo’s successful effort to win screen credit for Spartacus, is now for the first time available to film historians and lay readers. A companion study, Volume 2, is devoted to Abraham Polonsky’s rediscovered screenplay. 95% of what people think, feel and do, is determined by habits. Habits are ingrained but not unchangeable—new, positive habits can be learned to replace worn-out, ineffective practices with optimal behaviors that can cause dramatic, immediate benefits to the bottom line. In Million Dollar Habits, Tracy teaches readers how to develop the habits of successful men and women so they too can think more effectively, make better decisions, and ultimately double or triple their income. Readers will learn how to organize their finances, increase health and vitality, sustain loving relationships, build financial independence, and take a leadership role to turn visions into reality. In the days before the rise of Rome, two mighty champions of mankind appeared among the ancient tribes of Latinum. Their names, Romulus and Remus and only half of their story remains. The true tale of the forgotten twin, Remus, is one of power, slavery, horror, and heroism. Remus shall battle warriors, horrors from the days of ancient myths, and a giant from the mysterious lands of the East. THE WARRIOR’S PILGRIMAGE tells the first story of Remus, the lost brother of King Romulus of Rome. All profits from this book shall St. Jude Children's Research Hospital for the treatment of pediatric cancer.

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