

The Merchant Of Prato Francesco Di Marco Datini Peregrine Books

An extraordinary memoir by Iris Origo, who chronicled political life in *A Chill in the Air* and *War in Val d'Orcia*, and now turns inward to describe her own family, the work of writing, and the transience of memory. *Images and Shadows*, Iris Origo's autobiographical account of her early life, is as perceptive and humane and beautifully written as her celebrated memoir *War in Val d'Orcia*. Origo's father came from an old and moneyed American family, her mother was the daughter of an Irish peer, and Iris grew up in the most privileged of circumstances. Her father died of tuberculosis when he was only thirty, and her mother moved to Fiesole, Italy, where she and Iris developed a close friendship with the great connoisseur and art historian Bernard Berenson. Later, Origo and her Italian husband transformed a desolate and deforested Tuscan property into a flourishing estate, and it was there that she discovered her true calling as a writer. In *Images and Shadows*, Origo paints portraits of her shy, loving father and her headstrong mother, and describes beloved places, the books that formed her sensibility, and how she grew up and made her way in the world. She reflects on the pleasures and challenges of writing and evokes the persistence and fragility of memory. *Images and Shadows* is an autobiography that is as thoughtful as it is profoundly touching.

The World of Odysseus is a concise and penetrating account of the society that gave birth to the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*--a book that provides a vivid picture of the Greek Dark Ages, its men and women, works and days, morals and values. Long celebrated as a pathbreaking achievement in the social history of the ancient world, M.I. Finley's brilliant study remains, as classicist Bernard Knox notes in his introduction to this new edition, "as indispensable to the professional as it is accessible to the general reader"--a fundamental companion for students of Homer and Homeric Greece.

Francesco di Marco Datini, the 14th-century Tuscan merchant who forms the subject of the Marchesa Origo's study, has now probably become the most intimately accessible figure of the later-Middle Ages. In 1870 the whole astonishing cache, containing some 150,000 letters and great numbers of business documents, came to light. The Marchesa Origo has drawn on this material to paint, in detail, a picture of Italian domestic life on the eve of the Renaissance.

Great sensibilities are born in exile. - Shirley Hazzard

This extraordinary re-creation of the life of a medieval Italian merchant, Francesco di Marco Datini, is one of the greatest historical portraits written in the twentieth century. Drawing on an astonishing cache of letters unearthed centuries after Datini's death, it reveals to us a shrewd, enterprising, anxious man, as he makes deals, furnishes his sumptuous house, buys silks for his outspoken young wife and broods on his legacy. It is an unequalled source of knowledge about the texture of daily life in the small, earthy, violent, striving world of fourteenth-century Tuscany. 'Datini has now probably

become most intimately accessible figure of the later Middle Ages ... brilliant and intricate' The Times 'As a picture of Tuscany before the dawn of the Renaissance it is a complement to The Decameron' Sunday Times
Sumptuous novel centering on the life of sixteenth-century Italian Isabella D'Este.

The Merchant of Prato Francesco Di Marco Datini Penguin UK

A "marvelous history"* of medieval Europe, from the bubonic plague and the Papal Schism to the Hundred Years' War, by the Pulitzer Prize-winning author of *The Guns of August* *Lawrence Wright, author of *The End of October*, in *The Wall Street Journal* The fourteenth century reflects two contradictory images: on the one hand, a glittering age of crusades, cathedrals, and chivalry; on the other, a world plunged into chaos and spiritual agony. In this revelatory work, Barbara W. Tuchman examines not only the great rhythms of history but the grain and texture of domestic life: what childhood was like; what marriage meant; how money, taxes, and war dominated the lives of serf, noble, and clergy alike. Granting her subjects their loyalties, treacheries, and guilty passions, Tuchman re-creates the lives of proud cardinals, university scholars, grocers and clerks, saints and mystics, lawyers and mercenaries, and, dominating all, the knight—in all his valor and "furious follies," a "terrible worm in an iron cocoon." Praise for *A Distant Mirror* "Beautifully written, careful and thorough in its scholarship . . . What Ms. Tuchman does superbly is to tell how it was. . . . No one has ever done this better."—*The New York Review of Books* "A beautiful, extraordinary book . . . Tuchman at the top of her powers . . . She has done nothing finer."—*The Wall Street Journal* "Wise, witty, and wonderful . . . a great book, in a great historical tradition."—*Commentary* NOTE: This edition does not include color images.

Lust, religious zeal, and heartache come together in this provocative novel about two infatuations, one between a man and his young lover in the late 20th century and another between a 15th-century maiden and Jesus Christ. First published in 1994, Robert Glück's *Margery Kempe* is one of the most provocative, poignant, and inventive American novels of the last quarter century. The book tells two stories of romantic obsession. One, based on the first autobiography in English, the medieval *Book of Margery Kempe*, is about a fifteenth-century woman from East Anglia, a visionary, a troublemaker, a pilgrim to the Holy Land, and an aspiring saint, and her love affair with Jesus. It is complicated. The other is about the author's own love for an alluring and elusive young American, L. It is complicated. Between these two *Margery Kempe*, the novel, emerges as an unprecedented exploration of desire, devotion, abjection, and sexual obsession in the form of a novel like no other novel. Robert Glück's masterpiece bears comparison with the finest work of such writers as Kathy Acker and Chris Kraus. This edition includes an essay by Glück about the creation of the book titled "My Margery, Margery's Bob."

Nelly Hanna's work challenges the standard perceptions about Middle East society and economy of the seventeenth

century. Both novel in its approach and information, this book's central theme revolves around the rise of an indigenous form of capitalism existing as early as the 1600s. *Making Big Money in 1600* examines the reemergence of the economic sector and its complex influences on social conditions during this time. By examining the life and work of Isma'il Abu Taqiyya, Hanna traces the relationship between economic activities and culture. As we are introduced to Abu Taqiyya we learn how he negotiates partnership with other merchants, arranges for the handling of goods, and negotiates loans for colleagues. Hanna reveals his home life, his wives, children, and concubines, his relations with his family and friends, and how these relations evolved and were affected by the changing social and economic conditions—a perspective rarely discussed in works before the modern period.

In 1939 it was not a foregone conclusion that Mussolini would enter World War II on the side of Hitler. In this previously unpublished and only recently discovered diary, Iris Origo, author of the classic *War in Val d'Orcia*, provides a vivid account of how Mussolini decided on a course of action that would devastate his country and ultimately destroy his regime. Though the British-born Origo lived with her Italian husband on an estate in a remote part of Tuscany, she was supremely well-connected and regularly in touch with intellectual and diplomatic circles in Rome, where her godfather, William Phillips, was the American ambassador. Her diary describes the Fascist government's growing infatuation with Nazi Germany as Hitler's armies marched triumphantly across Europe and the campaign of propaganda and intimidation that was mounted in support of its new aims. The book ends with the birth of Origo's daughter and Origo's decision to go to Rome to work with prisoners of war at the Italian Red Cross. Together with *War in Val d'Orcia*, *A Chill in the Air* offers an indispensable record of Italy at war as well as a thrilling story of a formidable woman's transformation from observer to actor at a great historical turning point.

Betrifft die Handschrift Mss.h.h.I.1, p. 289 der Burgerbibliothek Bern (Abb. 60).

A biography.

An enthralling story of revolution, idealism, and a savage struggle for utopia by one of China's greatest living novelists. In 1898 reformist intellectuals in China persuaded the young emperor that it was time to transform his sclerotic empire into a prosperous modern state. The Hundred Days' Reform that followed was a moment of unprecedented change and extraordinary hope—brought to an abrupt end by a bloody military coup. Dashed expectations would contribute to the revolutionary turn that Chinese history would soon take, leading in time to the deaths of millions. *Peach Blossom Paradise*, set at the time of the reform, is the story of Xiumi, the daughter of a wealthy landowner and former government official who falls prey to insanity and disappears. Days later, a man with a gold cicada in his pocket turns up at his estate and is inexplicably welcomed as a relative. This mysterious man has a great vision of reforging China as an egalitarian

utopia, and he will stop at nothing to make it real. It is his own plans, however, which come to nothing, and his “little sister” Xiumi is left to take up arms against a Confucian world in which women are chattel. Her campaign for change and her struggle to seize control over her own body are continually threatened by the violent whims of men who claim to be building paradise.

It is quite impossible to attach importance to material possessions now. All that one still clings to is a few vital affections' Iris Origo, October 1943. Marchesa Iris Origo and her husband had been settled at their rural estate of La Foce since 1924. When the Second World War broke out Origo, an Englishwoman married to an Italian landowner, had divided loyalties. But as the war dragged on and the hostilities escalated, the small community of Val d'Orcia found themselves helping evacuees, orphans, refugees, prisoners of war and soldiers from both sides, concerned less with who was fighting whom than caring for those who needed their aid. Origo kept her diary throughout this time, when the risk of betrayal was a fact of life and the penalty for helping the enemy would result in death. Even with German troops occupying her manor house, she wrote at night about her valiant attempts to shelter refugees, burying her diary in the garden each morning. The result is a book which has become a classic, an affirmation in itself of courage and resistance, and an unsentimental, compelling story of the trials and tragedies of wartime.

From the author of the acclaimed *Insectopedia*, a powerful exploration of loss, endurance, and the absences that permeate the present When Hugh Raffles's two sisters died suddenly within a few weeks of each other, he reached for rocks, stones, and other seemingly solid objects as anchors in a world unmoored, as ways to make sense of these events through stories far larger than his own. A moving, profound, and affirming meditation, *The Book of Unconformities* is grounded in stories of stones: Neolithic stone circles, Icelandic lava, mica from a Nazi concentration camp, petrified whale blubber in Svalbard, the marble prized by Manhattan's Lenape, and a huge Greenlandic meteorite that arrived with six Inuit adventurers in the exuberant but fractious New York City of 1897. As Raffles follows these fundamental objects, unearthing the events they've engendered, he finds them losing their solidity and becoming as capricious, indifferent, and willful as time itself.

"In his lucid and bracing history, [David] Bell helps us better understand how [a] charismatic grifter came to occupy the most powerful office in the world . . . Bell's description of our predicament makes for essential reading." —Robert Zaretsky, *Los Angeles Review of Books* An immersive examination of why the age of democratic revolutions was also a time of hero worship and strongmen In *Men on Horseback*, the Princeton University historian David A. Bell offers a dramatic new interpretation of modern politics, arguing that the history of democracy is inextricable from the history of charisma, its shadow self. Bell begins with Corsica's Pasquale Paoli, an icon of republican virtue whose exploits were

once renowned throughout the Atlantic World. Paoli would become a signal influence in both George Washington's America and Napoleon Bonaparte's France. In turn, Bonaparte would exalt Washington even as he fashioned an entirely different form of leadership. In the same period, Toussaint Louverture sought to make French Revolutionary ideals of freedom and equality a reality for the formerly enslaved people of what would become Haiti, only to be betrayed by Napoleon himself. Simon Bolivar witnessed the coronation of Napoleon and later sought refuge in newly independent Haiti as he fought to liberate Latin America from Spanish rule. Tracing these stories and their interconnections, Bell weaves a spellbinding tale of power and its ability to mesmerize. Ultimately, Bell tells the crucial and neglected story of how political leadership was reinvented for a revolutionary world that wanted to do without kings and queens. If leaders no longer rule by divine right, what underlies their authority? Military valor? The consent of the people? Their own Godlike qualities? Bell's subjects all struggled with this question, learning from each other's example as they did so. They were men on horseback who sought to be men of the people—as Bell shows, modern democracy, militarism, and the cult of the strongman all emerged together. Today, with democracy's appeal and durability under threat around the world, Bell's account of its dark twin is timely and revelatory. For all its dangers, charisma cannot be dispensed with; in the end, Bell offers a stirring injunction to reimagine it as an animating force for good in the politics of our time.

An expert on ethical leadership analyzes the complicated history of business people who tried to marry the pursuit of profits with virtuous organizational practices—from British industrialist Robert Owen to American retailer John Cash Penney and jeans maker Levi Strauss to such modern-day entrepreneurs Anita Roddick and Tom Chappell. Today's business leaders are increasingly pressured by citizens, consumers, and government officials to address urgent social and environmental issues. Although some corporate executives remain deaf to such calls, over the last two centuries, a handful of business leaders in America and Britain have attempted to create business organizations that were both profitable and socially responsible. In *The Enlightened Capitalists*, James O'Toole tells the largely forgotten stories of men and women who adopted forward-thinking business practices designed to serve the needs of their employees, customers, communities, and the natural environment. They wanted to prove that executives didn't have to make trade-offs between profit and virtue. Combining a wealth of research and vivid storytelling, O'Toole brings life to historical figures like William Lever, the inventor of bar soap who created the most profitable company in Britain and used his money to greatly improve the lives of his workers and their families. Eventually, he lost control of the company to creditors who promptly terminated the enlightened practices he had initiated—the fate of many idealistic capitalists. As a new generation attempts to address social problems through enlightened organizational leadership, O'Toole explores a major question being posed today in Britain and America: Are virtuous corporate practices compatible with shareholder

capitalism?

Although the fourteenth-century Italian merchant Francesco Datini has received attention from business historians, there has previously been no full study of his wife, Margherita Datini. Drawing on a sizable trove of Margherita's correspondence held in the Archivio di Stato di Prato, including hundreds of letters she exchanged with Francesco, Ann Crabb investigates the social and economic importance of women's roles as wives and mothers, early modern European views on honor, and the practice of letter writing in Margherita's world. Margherita's often colorful comments demonstrate her attitudes toward her rather unhappy marriage and her inability to have children, along with other aspects of her life. Her letters reveal the pride she felt in carrying out her many responsibilities as a wife and, later, a widow: in scribal letter writing, in business, in household management, and in farming. Crabb emphasizes that the role of a wife was a recognized social position, beyond her individual relations with her husband, and provided opportunities beyond what restrictive laws or restrictive views of female honor would suggest. Further, Crabb considers Margherita's successful efforts, on her own initiative and in her late thirties, to learn to read and write at a literate level. This book will be of interest to both scholars and general readers of women's history. In addition, historians of early modern Italy and, more generally, of early modern Europe will find this book valuable.

Catalog of an exhibition held in Florence, Palazzo Strozzi, 17 September 2011-22 January 2012.

A brilliant, sinuous exploration of family and childhood memory by one of the most original British philosophers of the twentieth century. *Germs* is about first things, the seeds from which a life grows, as well as about the illnesses it incurs, the damage it sustains. Written at the end of his life by Richard Wollheim, one of the major philosophers of the late twentieth century, the book is not the usual story of growing up and getting on but a brilliant recovery and evocation of childhood consciousness and unconsciousness, an eerily precise rendering of that primitive, formative world we all come from in which we do not know either the world or ourselves for sure, and things—houses, clothes, meals, parents—loom large around us, as indispensable as they are out of our control. Richard Wollheim's remarkably original memoir is a disturbing, enthralling, dispassionate but also deeply personal depiction of a child standing, fascinated and fearful, on the threshold of individual life.

A warm, intimate, and engrossing biography of Francesco di Marco Datini, who built a powerful mercantile network in fourteenth-century Tuscany, and a peerless evocation of the sensations, personalities, and everyday struggles of Italian life more than half a millennium in the past. "For God and Profit" is how the medieval merchant Francesco di Marco Datini headed a notebook in which he kept track of his business dealings, and these were certainly his guiding lights. Born in the 1330s in the Tuscan town of Prato, the son of a poor taverner, Datini set out at the age of fifteen for Avignon, where, over the course of the next thirty-five years, he made a fortune trading in arms, armor, artworks, wool, saffron, leather, silk, and much more. Returning home, he expanded his operations, setting up offices all across the Mediterranean, which he oversaw through an unceasing flow of correspondence. When he died, Datini asked that all his papers be preserved in his house, and in 1870 they were found, a little worm-eaten and mouse-nibbled but largely intact, in a sack under the stairs. They are one of the great records not only of medieval life but of the

emergence of the modern commercial world. Drawing on this rich archive, Iris Origo offers a wonderfully vivid account of Datini's public and private worlds. *The Merchant of Prato* is a masterpiece of modern narrative history.

In this compelling book Stanley G. Payne offers the first comprehensive narrative of Soviet and Communist intervention in the revolution and civil war in Spain. He documents in unprecedented detail Soviet strategies, Comintern activities, and the role of the Communist party in Spain from the early 1930s to the end of the civil war in 1939. Drawing on a very broad range of Soviet and Spanish primary sources, including many only recently available, Payne changes our understanding of Soviet and Communist intentions in Spain, of Stalin's decision to intervene in the Spanish war, of the widely accepted characterization of the conflict as the struggle of fascism against democracy, and of the claim that Spain's war constituted the opening round of World War II. The author arrives at a new view of the Spanish Civil War and concludes not only that the Democratic Republic had many undemocratic components but also that the position of the Communist party was by no means counterrevolutionary.

A manual for constructing talismans, mixing magical compounds, summoning planetary spirits, and determining astrological conditions, *Picatrix* is a cornerstone of Western esotericism. It offers important insights not only into occult practices and beliefs but also into the transmission of magical ideas from antiquity to the present. Dan Attrell and David Porreca's English translation opens the world of this vital medieval treatise to modern-day scholars and lay readers. The original text, *Gh?yat al-?ak?m*, was compiled in Arabic from over two hundred sources in the latter half of the tenth century. It was translated into Castilian Spanish in the mid-thirteenth century, and shortly thereafter into Latin. Based on David Pingree's edition of the Latin text, this translation captures the spirit of *Picatrix*'s role in the European tradition. In the world of *Picatrix*, we see a seamless integration of practical magic, earnest piety, and traditional philosophy. The detailed introduction considers the text's reception through multiple iterations and includes an enlightening statistical breakdown of the rituals described in the book. Framed by extensive research on the ancient and medieval context that gave rise to the Latin version of the text, this translation of *Picatrix* will be an indispensable volume for students and scholars of the history of science, magic, and religion and will fascinate anyone interested in the occult.

Presents a story of a rich merchant, Francesco Datini, and his household in northern Italy in the late fourteenth century, seen from the viewpoint of a slave, depicting the merchant's life in the town of Prato and his work in nearby Florence.

Even many Renaissance specialists believe that little secular painting survives before the late fifteenth century, and its appearance becomes a further argument for the secularizing of art. This book asks how history changes when a longer record of secular art is explored. It is the first study in any language of the decoration of Italian palaces and homes between 1300 and the mid-Quattrocento, and it argues that early secular painting was crucial to the development of modern ideas of art. Of the cycles discussed, some have been studied and published, but most are essentially unknown. A first aim is to enrich our understanding of the early Renaissance by introducing a whole corpus of secular painting that has been too long overlooked. Yet "Painted palaces" is not a study of iconography. In examining the prehistory of painted rooms like Mantegna's *Camera Picta*, the larger goal is to rethink the history of early Renaissance art.

Silent Dialogues, by art historian Alexander Nemerov, is a probing, intimate reflection about photographer Diane Arbus, the author's aunt, and her brother, Pulitzer Prize-winning poet Howard Nemerov, the author's father. "I have no memories of Diane Arbus," begins Alexander

Nemerov in the first of two meditative essays that comprise this book. "A Resemblance" examines Howard Nemerov's complicated responses to his sister's photography. "The School" focuses on a body of Arbus' work known as the Untitled series, photographs made at residences for the mentally disabled between 1969 and 1971, in the last years of her life. Through their work, the author explores the siblings' disparate and distinct sensibilities, and in doing so uncovers signs of an unexpected aesthetic kinship. Illustrations complementing the essays include numerous examples of Arbus' photographs; paintings by artists as diverse as Pieter Brueghel, Norman Rockwell, Paul Feeley and Johannes Vermeer; and a selection of poems by Howard Nemerov, chosen by his son.

Newly available in paperback, this is a wonderfully readable account of the role of merchants and money in the medieval world. Professor Spufford, who has made a lifelong study of the subject, brings together a vast amount of material from archives all over the world to build up this important economic history of the origins of capitalism essential reading for the scholar, but also engaging and entertaining to the layman.

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