

FBF 2024
International Fiction & Non-fiction

Ahmet Altan

MADAME HAYAT

A magnificent coming-of-age story about freedom and desire. The exuberant Madame Hayat, passionate, carefree and with a vivacious lust for life, captivates Fazil, a young student. He attempts to free himself through her person, but around them, the dangers of their changed society surround them ever closer. Written from his prison cell, Ahmet Altan's novel offers an insightful view of modern Turkey and shows how, even in the darkest times, light can be found.

- Prix Femina Étranger 2021
- Published 2021, about 250 pp.
- Germany: S. Fischer, UK: Mountain Leopard Press, US: Other Press, France: Actes Sud, Romania: Ananasi, Sweden: Kaunitz-Olsson, NL: De Bezige Bij, Russia: Polyandriya, Slovenia: Inaque, Turkey: Everest, Italy: Edizioni e/o

THE DICE

Ziya, 16, kills his brother's killer in open court. Sent to a dismal prison, he is released after just one year, but his thirst for justice seems unquenched. Ahmet Altan brilliantly captures the atmosphere of Turkey's violent underworld. Despite the harshness of his words, there is a real concern to understand how people come to kill in order to survive. Sharp, lucid with a and romantic bend, The Dice is a great novel of a tormented soul.

- Published 2023, about 208 pp.
- France: Actes Sud, Italy: Edizioni e/o

BOLERO

A special ménage à trois and a book about the seductiveness and destructiveness of power.

- Publication date 2025, about 200 pp.
- France: Actes Sud



Ahmet Altan (1950) ranks among Turkey's most-read novelists as well as its most influential political columnists. As of March 2024, Altan has published eleven novels, several of them became bestsellers. After spending 4 years 7 months in Istanbul's Silivri

High Security Prison on bogus charges, Ahmet Altan was released on 14 April 2021. For his works he was awarded several awards and honours, among others the prestigious Yunus Nadi Novel Prize in Turkey, the Geschwister Scholl Prize in Germany, the André Malraux Prize and the prestigious Prix Femina Étranger for his novel “Madame Hayat” in 2021 in France. Altan’s novels have been translated into over a dozen languages.

Kirsty Bell **MOTHER’S MOTHER**

“All silences are the same, and each silence contains anything you can imagine.”
Anne Enright

Mother’s Mother is about the seepage of matriarchal ancestry. Set in the Lowlands of Scotland, it follows three generations of working women backwards through a century and a half, into the mid 1800s. Each woman – Kirsty Bell’s grandmother, great-grandmother and great-great-grandmother – appears entangled in the attitudes, prejudices and limitations of their time, as a cross-generational trajectory is plotted out, leading up and out of working-class illiteracy, poverty and precarity and into the stable property-owning merchant classes. A trajectory which stalls in the 1950s with Kirsty’s grandmother as the limits placed on post-war social emancipation become apparent.

As the lives of these three ordinary women are delineated, assumptions about progress and freedom are dislodged. In their place arise questions about indebtedness, revealing secrets twisted into the DNA of successive generations, a matriarchal lineage that ends with the author, the final female offspring.

Piece by piece, an episodic narrative of female lineage is unearthed and surveyed in relation to the entrancing Lowland landscape, in thrall to daily weather patterns. The assembled facts are embellished with the aid of contemporaneous literature as well as social histories, urban analysis, local mythology and speculative imaginings, drawing correspondences between inner states and the outer world.

- About 210 pp.
- World English: Fitzcarraldo Editions
- Manuscript: March 2025



Kirsty Bell is a British-American writer and art critic living in Berlin. She has published widely in magazines and journals including *Tate Etc.* and *Art in America*, and was a contributing editor of *frieze* from 2011-2021. She was awarded a Warhol Foundation Grant for her book *The Artist’s House*, and her essays have appeared in over seventy exhibition catalogues for major international museums and institutions.

Her recent publication *The Undercurrents. A Story of Berlin*, a hybrid narrative of memoir, cultural history and literary biography, was published in 2022 by Fitzcarraldo Editions (UK), The Other Press (US), Errata Naturae (Spain), EDT, (Italy) and Kanon Verlag (Germany).

The Undercurrents:

It is easy to be carried along by these submerged currents, by the momentum of the prose, the motion through a resisting city. As in other classics of urban discovery, the personal becomes universal, and the past that demands to live in the present is revealed like a shining new reef. As we return, time and again, to the solitary figure at the window.'

— Iain Sinclair, author of *London Orbital*

'With *The Undercurrents*, Kirsty Bell does for Berlin what Lucy Sante has done for New York and Rebecca Solnit for San Francisco; she tells the stories recorded in the city's stone and water, and in the hearts of its inhabitants. Her profound and idiosyncratic chronicle of Berlin is an act of hydromancy, divining a history of love and loss from the water that flows beneath and between the city's bricks.'

— Dan Fox, author of *Limbo*

'I read this watery, engrossing book in the bath, following along as Kirsty Bell's reflective curiosity leads her onward along the Landwehr canal, in and out of the archives, novels, memoirs, and stories of her building and her neighbourhood. Evocative and fascinating, *The Undercurrents* is a liquid psychogeography of Berlin that had me mulling over the psychic charge of place not only where Bell lives, but where I live too.'

— Lauren Elkin, author of *Flâneuse: Women Walk the City in Paris, New York, Tokyo, Venice, and London*

'From the first moment I heard Kirsty Bell read from her writing, I have yearned for the book she was then working on. And now here it is, perfect and perfectly balanced, a clear-eyed and beautifully written account about place, about consciousness. I treasure *The Undercurrents*, and so will you.'

— Hilton Als, author of *White Girls*

Solmaz Khorsand **LEMMINGS – The Art of Submission**

A comprehensive exploration of opportunism in all its forms.

We are all opportunists to some degree. Whether motivated by convenience, fear, or strategic calculation, we tend to go along with the flow. In the end, we blame the group, the circumstances, or a larger system, claiming that we had no choice—that we were compelled to follow. In her provocative analysis, Solmaz Khorsand examines the wide spectrum of human behavior, particularly focusing on the "lemming" mentality. With unflinching honesty, she illustrates how this behavior can serve as the foundation for genocide on one hand, while also being interpreted as an act of rebellion on the other.

Drawing from science, literature, cultural history, and current political events, Khorsand presents a diverse range of perspectives. Her approach is clear: while unthinking adherence to orders is present in everyday life—especially in the workplace—it would be extreme to assume that every act of conformity is driven by a totalitarian ideology.

In this book, Khorsand addresses uncomfortable truths, holding up a mirror to society, and proposes a bold path for breaking free from the "lemming" mindset.

'A clever and entertaining lesson about opportunism and how to overcome it.' *Der Tagesspiegel*

'Khorsand combines historical anecdotes with scientific findings to explore why people become opportunists.' Lina Paulitsch, *Falter*

- Appr. 160 pp.
- Germany: Leykam 2024



Solmaz Khorsand (1985) is an internationally renowned journalist and political commentator with a focus on global affairs, migration, and societal dynamics. Born in Vienna, she has studied in Dublin, Bologna, and Vienna, earning degrees in political science and international relations. Her work spans multiple continents, where she brings a sharp, critical eye to the complexities of identity, power, and opportunism in the modern world. Khorsand has received several prestigious awards, including the Austrian Press Agency's Journalism Prize and the Civis Media Prize for her contributions to promoting integration and understanding. She regularly writes for leading publications and is a sought-after speaker at international forums.

Nikolas Jaspert

FISHERMEN, PEARL, WALRUS TOOTH - The Sea in the Middle Ages

Coral and pearls, herring, tuna and whales, amber, narwhal tusks and shells – in this first-ever marine history of the Middle Ages, the acclaimed historian Nikolas Jaspert writes about the close relationship between the sea and mankind across a period of 1,000 years.

His account brings together history with marine biology, geology and geography with archaeology, literary history and art history. It offers a double new perspective on the Middle Ages. The period is usually seen as a time that was predominantly marked by the land. Here, by contrast, the mediaeval millennium is seen from the point of view of the sea. But most of all this book is about the treasures of the sea, its marine creatures and substances, what people knew about the sea and what lived in it, and how they used what they found. This is not just about fishing and catching whales, trading elegant sea silk, fragrant ambergris and imperial purple, however, but also how, for example, religions incorporated the seas into their religious concepts of the world, and especially where and how these treasures of the sea lived.

By turning our traditional, anthropocentric gaze towards the sea and its creatures, Jaspert shows that a consciousness of our fragile dependency on this unique ecosystem influenced the relationship between mankind and the sea back in the Middle Ages. Such a thorough study of the sea in the mediaeval era is surprisingly timely and to date unique.



- About 360 pp. with illustrations
- Germany: Propyläen/Ullstein, publ. spring 2025
- Manuscript: Nov. 2024



Nikolas Jaspert (1962 in Melbourne) is Professor of Mediaeval History at the University of Heidelberg. He studied History, Spanish, Art History and English in Berlin and Madrid. After academic posts at the FU Berlin and at the University of Erlangen–Nuremberg, in 2005 he obtained a chair as Professor of Mediaeval History at the Ruhr University Bochum. He has been a professor at the University of Heidelberg since 2013.

For many years Nikolas Jaspert was president of the ‘Société Internationale des Historiens de la Méditerranée’ and he is a co-editor of the *Zeitschrift für Historische Forschung*, *Mittelmeerstudien* and *Geschichte und Kultur der Iberischen Welt* as well as various other academic journals.

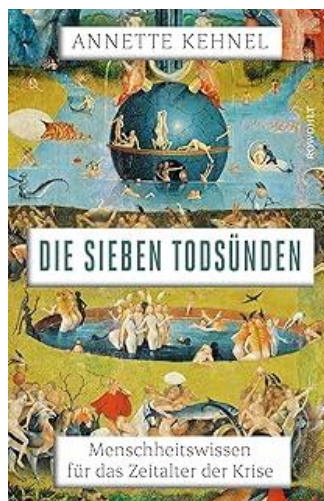
He is the author of numerous publications about the Reconquista, the history of the Crusades, chivalric orders and the history of the Mediterranean.

Annette Kehnel
THE SEVEN DEADLY SINS
Human Knowledge for the Age of Crisis

‘In our world of extremes, Annette Kehnel opens for us a treasure chest of past and forgotten ways of living balance and self-discipline. Wonderful to read, inspiring and highly topical.’
--Frank Trentmann

We live in an era of crisis, yet we have little idea how to escape the imperative of "more and more" or deeply change our way of life. Annette Kehnel reveals that we once understood this very clearly. She takes us on a journey to the Middle Ages, where she discovers millennia-old human wisdom still relevant today in the teachings of the seven deadly sins. Each of the sins represents a condition of our human existence: luxuria (lust) relates to moderate consumption, avaritia (greed) to the understanding that ownership and wealth must be limited; ira (anger) addresses aggression and violence, invidia (envy) the flip side of competition, and superbia (pride) our pursuit of status and power.

This presents a surprisingly modern view of humanity aiming for balance, resonance, and harmony, offering a new perspective on our times and their challenges. The traditional wisdom contained in the teachings of the deadly sins provides a path for dealing with our destructive side. Kehnel uncovers this knowledge for the present day, showing how it can help us change ourselves and the world.



- Germany: Rowohlt Verlag
- Approx. 320 pages with illustrations
- Translation rights: Gertje.Maass@rowohlt.de

Annette Kehnel THE GREEN AGES – Medieval Innovations in Sustainability

“Bold and exciting – a must-read!”
--Lyndal Roper, Regius Professor of History, Oriel College, Oxford

"Annette Kehnel is to be commended to a zippy fresh book that reminds us that history can be a treasure trove - if one looks in the right places and asks the right questions."
Peter Frankopan

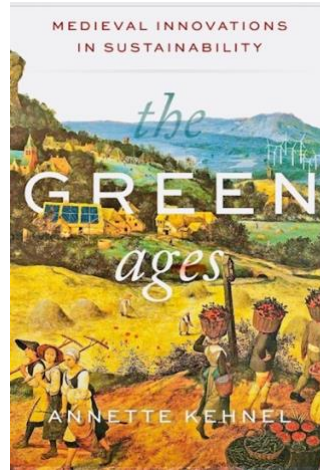
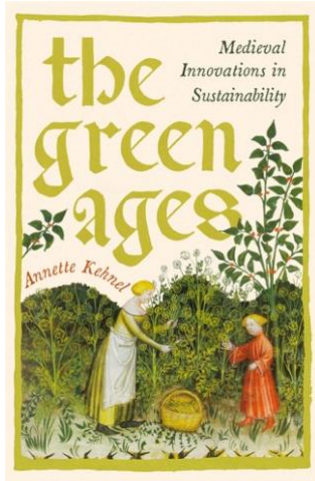
Communities that functioned on the basis of sharing on the Monte Subiaco in Italy, sustainable fishing at Lake Constance, common lands in the UK, the economy of transient grazing among Alpine sheperds in the south of France, banks providing microcredit in Bologna and other Italien cities (Monti di Pietà) and crowdfunding to finance bridges in Avignon; progressive thinkers who analysed capital five hundred years before Marx; systems to provide collectively for those in need like the Fuggerei (social housing) in Augsburg; second-hand markets in Paris and the Beguines who lived in female communities based on the idea that less is more and who planted exquisite self-sufficient gardens in the middle of medieval cities like Antwerp and Bruges ...

Pre-modern history is full of inspiring and amazing examples and concepts that are ripe for rediscovery. And we urgently need them as today’s challenges – finite resources, the twilight of consumerism, growing inequality – are pressing, but we are having difficulty finding new ways forward, because we still think and act according to nineteenth-century concepts that have become completely dysfunctional in the twenty-first century.

Historian Annette Kehnel shows us that we have to go further back in history to find inspiration for our future and provides surprising and vivid examples from medieval and early modern history. Her work is full of fundamental and inspiring alternatives to the status quo and its leading doctrine. Growth and returns were not always the measure of all things; we acted and lived differently and we could do so again.

This amazing book takes a stimulating and revelatory look at a past that has the power to change our future.





- Germany: Blessing Verlag (5th print run), World English: Profile Books, Arabic: Kalima, Korea: Korea National Open University, NL: Atlas Contact, US: Brandeis University Press
- Approx. 340 pages with illustrations



Annette Kehnel has held a chair in Medieval History at the University of Mannheim. She has published numerous works on her main focus of research: cultural and economic history and historical anthropology.

She received the prestigious NDR Non-Fiction Book Prize 2021 for her book "Wir konnten schon anders. Eine kurze Geschichte der Nachhaltigkeit".

Jan van Aken
HOW WARS END
A Hopeful History of Making Peace

In a world where wars and conflicts seem to overshadow hope, Jan van Aken stands out as a voice of reason and expertise. With a background in conflict research and firsthand experience as a UN weapons inspector, he approaches the question of peace with practicality and insight. What can we learn from previous wars and conflicts? And what dynamics and tools are necessary for hostile actors to talk to each other and for peaceful solutions to become possible?

Drawing from the latest research and real-life examples, Jan van Aken thoroughly examines conflict resolution strategies. From the potential of sanctions to the importance of crisis prevention, he explores diverse avenues for peace. Moreover, he considers the roles that the international community and the natural sciences can play in this endeavor.

Van Aken provides a grounded perspective on diplomatic processes, enriched by personal anecdotes and reflections. Ultimately, he reminds us that amidst the complexities of conflict, there is always a chance for peace. A much needed examination of the fundamental dynamics of war and peace.



- Germany: Ullstein Verlag, UK: Ithaka Press, France: Actes Sud
- Approx. 300 pp.
- Translation rights: Annemarie.Blumenhagen@ullstein.de

Jan van Aken has been a leading figure in foreign policy for over 20 years and is one of Germany's most prominent activists. Holding a doctorate in biology, he previously served as a genetic engineering expert for Greenpeace and worked as a UN biological weapons inspector from 2004 to 2006. From 2009 to 2017, van Aken was a member of the German parliament, where he played an active role on the Foreign Affairs Committee. Until 2024, he was based in Israel, working with the Rosa-Luxemburg Foundation on international conflict resolution. He also hosts the podcast *dis:arm*.

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