idea of truthfulness may have meant to Lorck's original audiences by carefully unpicking the layers of texts, languages, and images that the artist and others (after Lorck's death) constructed.

Part 3 ("The Embodied Turk") explores performativity and the figure of the Turk in relation to ceremonies, operas, and plays. Dirk Van Waelderen undertakes a comparative analysis of how Ottoman figures were portrayed within Netherlandish triumphs and pageants across the fifteenth to seventeenth centuries. He draws out the continuities and changes of these representations and how they were variously statements of religiosity, classical reception, and military power. Suna Suner's interesting essay draws upon unpublished archives to consider what Ottoman diplomats made of Viennese theatrical performances during the eighteenth century. While it lacks a firm conclusion, this chapter (alongside Günsel Renda's essay) provides one of the volume's rare yet tantalizing examinations of Ottoman responses toward Europe.

Unsurprisingly for such a vast volume, there are moments of unevenness: chapters vary in quality and length, and some cover several centuries at speed while others offer deep dives into specialist topics. Many chapters are strong, and several are excellent, but how they work together is less successful. The editors chose to limit cross-references, but it would have helped readers and emphasized connections and divergences if the cross-referencing had been more comprehensive and systematic. The brief prologue and epilogue (no more than eight and a half pages in total) do not help in this regard either. The editors rightly eschew any attempt to impose a uniform conclusion on this diverse material since their aim is to underscore the multifaceted nature of the figure of the Turk in various contexts. However, it is a missed opportunity not to have unpacked the implications of this argument, particularly from methodological and theoretical standpoints. Nonetheless, this volume makes several serious contributions: its breadth and multidisciplinary nature is impressive, the handling of an array of primary sources in their original languages is a strength, and the considerable bibliography is a valuable resource. Readers may come for one particular essay, but they will find much that is unexpected and important in other chapters.

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On the Edge of Eternity: The Antiquity of the Earth in Medieval & Early Modern Europe. Ivano Dal Prete.
Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2022. xii + 352 pp. $34.95.

How old is the Earth? At first glance, this seems like a question that can be answered with a number. However, the question involves social, political, and historical layers: can we speak of the origin of the Earth (for example, a creation)? Which conceptions of time are involved in the question? *On the Edge of Eternity* masterfully explains what is

at stake when we inquire about the history of the Earth's history. Until recently, it was commonplace knowledge that the antiquity of Earth did not receive scientific consideration until the Enlightenment. This story claimed that before science was freed from religion, the account of Genesis remained the standard view and hindered any scientific considerations. However, Enlightenment secularization opened the path to geology, settling the foundations of a new scientific discipline. Science, uncontrolled by religion, throve.

Anyone interested in history finds this account at least suspicious, and scholars know it is simplistic and erroneous. Still, until now, we did not have a substitute for this story. Dal Prete's book offers a compelling argument establishing three significant things. First, that there were serious and sustained intellectual debates and traditions of thought on the antiquity of Earth well before the eighteenth century. Second, religion, particularly Christianity and Islam, were not an obstacle but an important intellectual space of moral, physical, and theological considerations on the history of the Earth. Paradoxically, it was the use of science in the Enlightenment that came to produce the conflict between science and religion, projecting it onto the past. Third, this idea of conflict was a point of coincidence in the political and intellectual agendas of eighteenth-century intellectuals, especially in France and Venice, gaining in this way a momentum capitalized on by biblical literalists against Darwinism and, more recently, by American creationism.

The book starts with an overview of medieval debates on the world's eternity, providing a background of the intellectual endeavors of Christian and Muslim scholars to reconcile the Mosaic creation with Natural Philosophy. Next, the book explores medieval ideas on the physical changes on Earth and how the Bible was a source among other Greek and Roman authorities. The argument here shows that attempts to explain changes in the landscape implied an ancient Earth compatible with these physical accounts and religions. These views were not restricted to scholarly elites; with impressive evidence, Dal Prete shows how these views were present in the wider social life of Renaissance Tuscany. Artisans and engineers portrayed the current landscape as the result of changes over time, revealed by studying what lay under the surface, including ancient ruins.

The colonial expansion of Europe and the emergence of Protestantism had significant consequences for debates on the antiquity of Earth and the boundaries between natural philosophy and theology. The new natural and ethnographical knowledge produced by colonization depended on medieval debates on physical mechanisms of change and the explanation of human history. At the same time, the radicalization of biblical literalism eroded the boundaries between natural philosophy and religion to the point of demanding a Christianized science of nature. Thus, some biblical episodes, such as Noah's Flood, became "the ideological pillar of European imperialism" (12) by guaranteeing the universality of Christian revelation.

These views were weaponized in the eighteenth century by influential French thinkers as a classic example of the presumed historical conflict between science and religion. Not only those against the ancien régime were sympathetic toward this tension: ruling elites, such as those in Venice, were afraid of revolutionary changes and considered

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Christian chronology as a long-established intellectual tenet only recently put into question. The book concludes by projecting these debates onto the twenty-first century, particularly in those aspects concerning the so-called conflict between science and religion in Western societies, including the challenges introduced by the emergence of Darwinism and biblical literalism in the nineteenth century and the most recent Young Earth creationism in the United States.

Dal Prete's is a well-researched book of history and, most importantly, proof of how and why good and nuanced history is necessary to revisit invisible tenets of our contemporary societies, such as secularism and the connections between science and social life.

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They Flew: A History of the Impossible. Carlos Eire.
New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2023. xviii + 492 pp. $35.

Carlos Eire sets this history of early modern levitations and bilocations against modern notions of the impossible. Like others before him, he notes that "the very era that gave birth to aggressive skepticism and empirical science" (1) also witnessed a florescence of claims about the marvelous, the miraculous, and the malevolently demonic. He also shows how those claims were fiercely contested in their own terms, irrespective of the modern frameworks to come. As he notes, the testimonies from which he will draw "themselves self-consciously accept the impossible event as impossible, as well as bafflingly and utterly real" (5).

In the first part of the book, which focuses on saintly levitation, Eire offers two case studies: the famous example of Teresa of Avila and that of the far less known Joseph of Cupertino, who nevertheless has the distinction of "levitating more frequently than any other saint in Christian history" (136). Although both Teresa and Joseph became saints, they also faced suspicion, skepticism, and, especially for Joseph, some nerve-wracking encounters with the Inquisition.

The theme of uncertainty continues in the second part of the book, on bilocation. Here Eire presents just one case study: that of the Spanish nun María of Agredá. Entering the Franciscan order in her youth, she had a brief career as a levitator but became far more famous for her bilocations, proselytizing to Native Americans in New Spain while remaining in her Iberian cloister. Bilocation was even more inscrutable than levitation in that there could be no individual eyewitnesses—that is, no one person could claim to have seen María in both Spain and the New World at the same time. Investigations were launched by both the Franciscan order and the Inquisition. They were long and involved but remained inconclusive.

Eire unpacks these details in a chapter titled "The Trouble with María" (which I dearly wish he had titled "How Do You Solve a Problem Like María"). Even the future