

Call for Chapters
Clio Reflects. XXI Historical Fiction by Women and about Women
(tentatively by Bloomsbury)

In many literary genres as well as other modes of expression, such as cinematography, performing arts, and games, explorations of past women's lives have become increasingly popular and evolved into a body of intellectual, psychological, and social experimentation. This movement is mirrored in the broad spectrum of genres making some claim for historicity or historical verisimilitude, such as historical novels; alternate histories; fictional biographies; historical fantasies, family sagas, mysteries, and romances; children's and YA historical fiction; historical comic and graphic novels; and historiographic metafiction.

In such broadly-defined historical fiction, we find authors experimenting with the characters of women larger than life or obsessed with power. Rebecca F. Kuang's female version of Mao Zedong, whose madness we experience in *The Poppy War* trilogy, and the women overachievers populating the oeuvre of Philippa Gregory, are prominent examples of this trend. Contemporary historical fiction also capitalises on retelling popular stories and legends. Interestingly, in it we might also find prospective solutions to the limitations placed on women by the patriarchal world – as in Madeline Miller's *Circe* – or alternatives to concepts coined by male intellectuals – as in the case of Hillary Mantel's take on hauntology. Female perspectives in the subgenres of historical fiction have also redefined the “paths” already explored mostly by men, such as Kate Moses's fictional biography *Wintering: A Novel of Sylvia Plath*, or generated new typological categories, such as medical historical novels, and historical sisters-in-arms works (for example, *The Help* and *The Hidden Figures*).

We invite authors and researchers working in various academic disciplines to submit chapter proposals that look at post-2000 historical fiction, whether literary, visual and performing art, e.g., film and television series, or in games, and explore questions such as: what do women look for and, more importantly, find in the past? For what purposes and with what effects do female authors intersect historical fiction and reality? How does female historical fiction situate itself with regard to history? What insights does female historical fiction contribute to our current state of knowledge?

Proposals of chapters could include, but are not limited to the following topics:

- social and literary influences on and of contemporary female historical fiction
- historical fiction's critical diagnoses of the present and engagement in current social problems
- female ways of reimagining the past in various media – from historical novels to strategic games and beyond
- reshaping, blurring, and transgressing the limits of the historical fiction subgenres
- changing representations of female historical figures (especially women in power)

- female wisdom – views and concepts non-existent within or alternative to male views and concepts
- female perspectives on the dominant discourse on history
- female historical truth and ways of knowing the past
- female participation in the construction of history
- entanglements of female historical knowledge with politics of memory, epistemic authorities, historical turns, and paradigm shifts
- female configurations of subjectivity and forms of community and individuality
- social, psychological, and intellectual mechanisms employed by women to protect themselves and fight against imposed patriarchal constraints
- female reshaping of the patriarchal language forms

The book editors – Michael Joseph (Rutgers University, USA, <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8117-5739>) and Alicja Bembien (University of Silesia, Poland, <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-7342-7748>) – will be happy to consider relevant proposals from both experienced scholars and young academics at the start of their careers, as well as doctoral and graduate students. We strongly encourage contributions focusing on works from Asia and nations usefully referred to as The Global South. Only previously unpublished texts will be considered.

Submit titles, abstracts (about 600 words), and biographical notes (about 50 words) by 20 May 2022 to mjoseph@emeritus.rutgers.edu and alicja.bembien@us.edu.pl. Please, make sure that the abstract explicitly states your proposed thesis, research methods and techniques, and the prospective structure of your chapter.

Timeline:

- * Abstract submission: 20 May 2022
- * Acceptance notice: 30 May 2022
- * Draft chapter submission: 20 October 2022
- * Final chapter submission: 20 December 2022 (5000-7000 words, all-inclusive)

No payment from the authors is required.



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