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PUBLISHER: AKAL

With more than fifty years of outstanding publishing in the fields of history, humanities, social sciences and critical thought, Akal is one of Spain's most prestigious independent publishers, with a catalogue of exceptional intellectual quality and strong international potential.

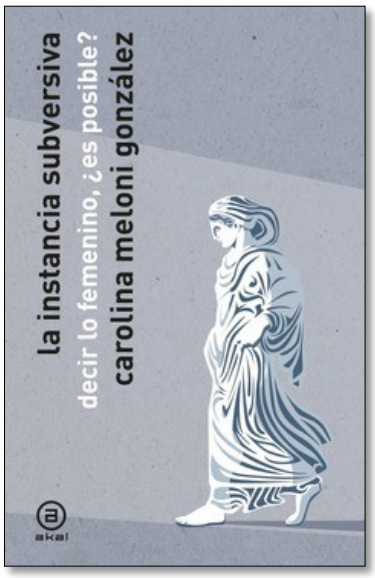
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COLLECTION Agora / Theory is devoted to contemporary thought, philosophy and critical theory. The collection brings together intellectually rigorous works that engage with the major cultural, social and political debates of our time, combining theoretical ambition with a commitment to reaching readers beyond strictly academic circles.

The guiding idea behind Agora / Theory is to recover the public dimension of theory: books that do not remain confined to specialist discussions, but intervene in the wider conversations shaping our understanding of society, subjectivity and power.

The Subversive Instance: Is It Possible to Speak the Feminine?

by Carolina Meloni



Spanish, 2026, 200 pp.

A powerful contribution to contemporary feminist philosophy, *La instancia subversiva* examines the place of the feminine within the history of Western thought.

Starting from the exclusion of women, slaves and children from the traditional philosophical canon, Carolina Meloni analyses how the feminine has been constructed as a subordinated position within systems of knowledge shaped by masculine authority.

Drawing on feminist theory, deconstruction and contemporary philosophy, the book proposes the feminine as a subversive instance capable of questioning the foundations of patriarchal thought and opening new possibilities for understanding subjectivity, language and power.

This title will be of particular interest to publishers with strong lists in feminist theory, philosophy, critical theory and contemporary thought — houses committed to intellectually ambitious works that engage with international debates and combine academic excellence with a broader cultural reach.

Carolina Meloni is a philosopher, anti-colonial feminist thinker and Professor of Philosophy at the University of Alcalá (Madrid). Her work focuses on contemporary political philosophy, feminist thought and deconstruction.

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Two Bodies of Labour: An Essay on Exploitation

by José Luis Moreno Pestaña



Spanish, 2026, 380 pp.

In this original essay, José Luis Moreno Pestaña develops a theory of exploitation that connects historical analysis with the economic and cultural realities of the present.

The book examines how the human body becomes a site of conflict, where the physical degradation associated with labour intersects with the imposition of arbitrary aesthetic norms.

Tracing the mechanisms of domination from ancient democracy and feudalism to neoliberalism, Moreno Pestaña explores how physical appearance can be transformed into a form of capital. Beyond economic exploitation, the book addresses the cultural pressures that compel individuals to manage their image in pursuit of social recognition, reproducing hierarchies that affect both physical health and moral integrity. It ultimately argues for a democratic political response capable of dismantling these symbolic demands and restoring individual autonomy over the body.

José Luis Moreno Pestaña is Professor of Moral Philosophy at the University of Granada. Holding doctorates in Philosophy and Sociology, his research focuses on the historical formation of philosophical norms, symbolic and workplace violence directed at the body, and the renewal of contemporary democracy through practices inspired by ancient democratic traditions. His publications include *La cara oscura del capital erótico* (Akal, 2016), *Retorno a Atenas* (2019) and *Los pocos y los mejores* (Akal, 2021). He is also the director of the Ágora / Theory collection.

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Cracks in Desire: Culture as Domination and Resistance

by Nuria Peist



Spanish, 2026, 314 pp.

In *Grietas en el deseo*, Nuria Peist explores the complex relationship between artistic culture, design and popular cultural expressions in contemporary society.

The book examines how cultural hierarchies have historically been constructed, separating legitimate art from everyday objects and mass media, and considers the mechanisms through which certain forms of cultural production acquire prestige and recognition.

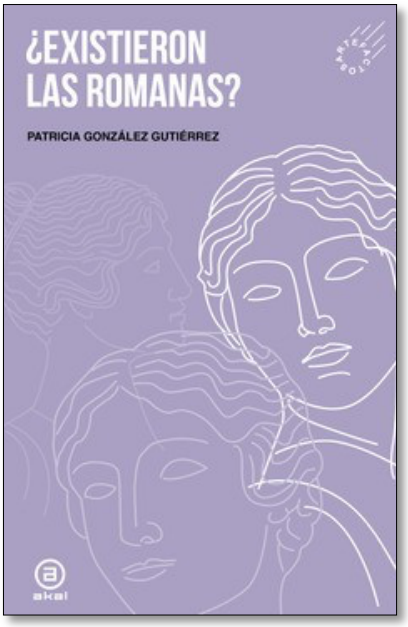
Drawing on the concept of *artification*, Peist analyses how ordinary activities and objects can be elevated to the status of high culture according to criteria such as originality, singularity and avant-garde innovation. At the same time, she explores the transformative potential of social design and cinema as tools for cultural change and democratisation, challenging traditional forms of elitism. The book argues that a productive encounter between artistic and popular culture requires the dismantling of the structures of subordination that have historically kept them apart.

Nuria Peist is a lecturer in the Department of Art History at the University of Barcelona. Her teaching and research focus on the theory and sociology of art and culture, particularly the processes through which modern artists achieve recognition and the relationship between artistic and popular culture. Her publications include *El éxito en el arte moderno. Trayectorias artísticas y procesos de reconocimiento* (2012) and *Artistas y reconocimiento. Un enfoque sociológico* (co-edited with Vicenç Furió, 2022). Since 2023, she has been a member and transfer coordinator of the Extraordinary Chair in the Social Philosophy of Bodily Discrimination.

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COLLECTION Artefactos (Artefacts) has consolidated its position in the contemporary non-fiction market through a fresh, deconstructing approach. The collection dismantles deeply rooted historical clichés by applying a critical, gender-sensitive perspective tailored to a broad audience. Sharing a catalogue in Artefactos means featuring alongside key essayists in the renewal of public historiography and rigorous cultural dissemination. The project enhances academic research by translating it into direct questions that challenge current collective memory.

Did Roman Women Exist?



by Patricia González

Spanish, 2025, 256 pages

The work analyses the historiographical and ideological mechanisms that rendered women invisible in Ancient Rome.

It examines everything from onomastic assignment to the construction of moral myths, dismantling the traditional androcentric vision. A work that transforms classical history into an accessible essay on cultural historiography, aligned with the rise of non-action feminist essays.

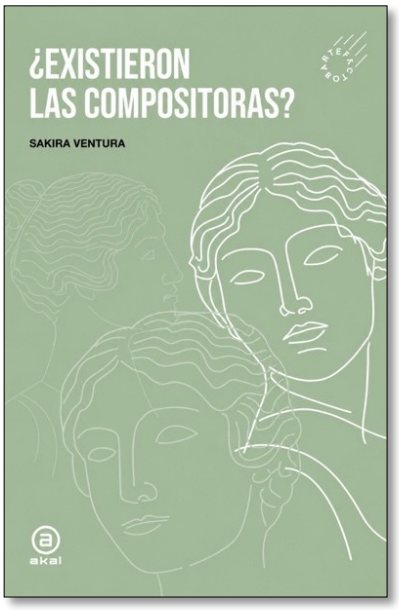
This title will be of particular interest to publishers focused on cultural essay, popular history, and broad-spectrum cultural studies.

Patricia González Gutiérrez, PhD in Ancient History and researcher specializing in gender historiography. Her outreach work features regularly in media and academic networks.

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Did Female Composers Exist?

by Sakira Ventura



Spanish, 2026, 224 pp.

A critical journey through the history of Western music recovering the memory of female creators silenced by the official canon.

The author examines the social and institutional structures that relegated their production to oblivion. Connects rigorous musicology with heritage recovery, backed by the previous international impact of her cartographic map.

Independent cultural essay publishers, history of the arts imprints, and narrative non-fiction catalogues.

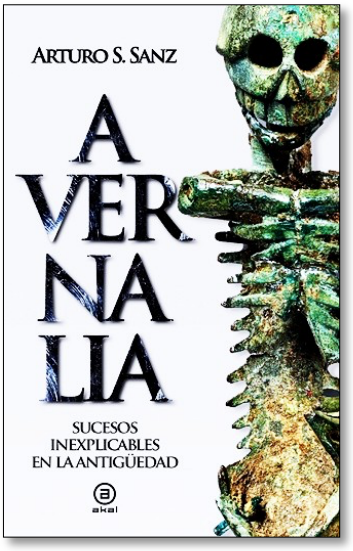
Sakira Ventura is a musicologist, teacher, and creator of the global interactive map "Female Creators in Music History". Her musical research work has been featured in international media such as *The Guardian* and the BBC. https://svmusicology.com/

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COLLECTION Anverso, a non-fiction series that brings together ambitious works of narrative nonfiction combining intellectual rigor with broad appeal. That collection includes major international historians and essayists such as **Jacques Le Goff** (*The Birth of Purgatory*), **Geoffrey Parker** (*A History of War*), **Natalie Zemon Davis** (*The Return of Martin Guerre*) and **Paul Veyne** (*The Roman Empire*). These titles represent the spirit of the series: **authoritative works that open new perspectives on history, culture and society while remaining accessible to a broad readership.**

Avernalia

by Arturo S. Sanz



Spanish, 2025, 528 pages

An engaging exploration of the supernatural imagination of the ancient world.

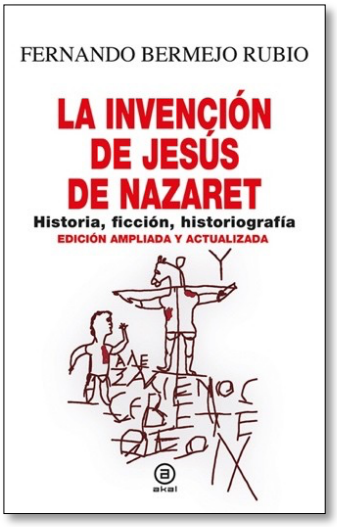
Drawing on Greek, Roman and Near Eastern sources, Arturo S. Sanz examines how beliefs surrounding ghosts, apparitions, monsters, transformations and encounters with the afterlife shaped the way ancient societies understood the boundaries between the human world and the unknown. Combining rigorous research with an accessible narrative style, *Avernalia* offers a fresh perspective on the imagination and beliefs of antiquity.

A work for publishers with distinguished nonfiction lists in history, ideas, religion and public affairs — houses that combine academic excellence with a strong trade readership.

Arturo S. Sanz is a historian and archaeologist specialising in the Ancient World. He holds a PhD in Ancient World Studies and has worked on international research and archaeological projects. He currently teaches at two Spanish universities and is the author of several books on antiquity.

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The Invention of Jesus of Nazareth: History, Fiction, Historiography



by Fernando Bermejo

Spanish, 2024, 800 pages

A major work of historical investigation that examines how the figure of Jesus of Nazareth was transformed through theological interpretation, literary traditions and historiographical debate.

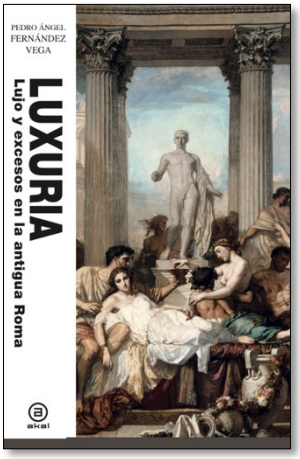
Drawing on decades of research, Fernando Bermejo offers a rigorous and comprehensive analysis of the historical Jesus, combining academic depth with an engaging approach for non-specialistreaders.

The book has received strong recognition from leading scholars. Nicholas de Lange, Professor Emeritus of Hebrew and Jewish Studies at the University of Cambridge**,** describes it as “an exceptional contribution to the considerable literature on Jesus of Nazareth”, highlighting the author’s balanced and critical approach to the sources and his rigorous methodology for situating Jesus within his historical context. In his words, the book will be of interest not only to New Testament scholars and historians, but also to a wider readership.

Fernando Bermejo Rubio is a professor of Ancient History at UNED and an internationally recognised expert on Herodian Judaism, early Christianity and Manichaeism. He has published extensively in academic journals and is the author of several books on ancient Judaism and Christianity.

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Luxuria. Luxury and Excess in Ancient Rome



by Pedro Ángel Fernández Vega

Spanish, 2026, 336 pages

A rigorous and fascinating historical anatomy of how the relentless pursuit of luxury and pleasure eroded the moral and political foundations of Ancient Rome.

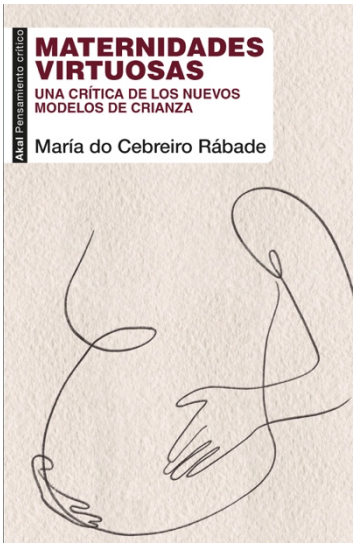
Through an in-depth analysis of domestic space, lavish gastronomy, and eroticism, renowned historian Pedro Ángel Fernández Vega traces the metamorphosis of an austere society that succumbed to refinement imported from the East. From the Numidian marble columns of the Domus Aurea to the extravagant banquets of Vitellius or Elagabalus, the book meticulously documents how *luxuria* ceased to be a mere private excess and transformed into an instrument for ostentatious displays of power. Drawing on the satires of Juvenal and Martial alongside first-rate archaeological evidence, the author reconstructs the intimate lives of a Roman elite willing to embrace *carpe diem* before the collapse of their republican institutions.

Pedro Ángel Fernández Vega holds a PhD in Ancient History, is a professor at UNED, and former director of the Museum of Prehistory and Archaeology of Cantabria; he is the author of reference works such as *CORRVPTA ROMA* and *Bacanales*.

COLLECTION Pensamiento crítico (Critical Thought) brings together essays addressing the key issues shaping our present: democracy, political power, capitalism, feminism, ecological crisis, culture and ideology. Combining intellectual rigour with a commitment to public debate, the collection reaches beyond academic circles to engage a wider readership. Its catalogue features established international thinkers and new voices, offering critical perspectives that challenge dominant narratives, examine structures of power and shed new light on today's political and cultural transformations.

Virtuous Motherhood. A critique of new parenting models

by María do Cebreiro Rábade Villar (Spanish, 2025, 160 pages)



An analysis of the conditions of parenting in the modern world that remains committed to the most creative and vital aspects of motherhood. Winner of the 2021 Ramón Piñeiro Essay Prize

Traditionally, literature on motherhood has been approached in a polarised manner: on the one hand, the apologetic approach, often confessional in tone, which seeks to defend the maternal experience or argue for its intrinsic merits; on the other hand, the critique of the link between femininity and motherhood, articulated from certain strands of contemporary feminism and employing a generally scientific discourse. Set against these two approaches, this essay is conceived as an analysis of the conditions of parenting in the contemporary world that does not renounce its commitment to the most creative and vital dimensions of motherhood.

Taking the social and cultural implications of parenting as her starting point, the author examines parenting models imported – often surreptitiously – from the world of work. These practices and mechanisms, endlessly promoted on social media, revolve around the ideas of control and self-control – fundamentally bodily control and emotional control, in both cases of the baby and/or the mother – and in all of them the connection between new forms of motherhood and neoliberalism is particularly evident.

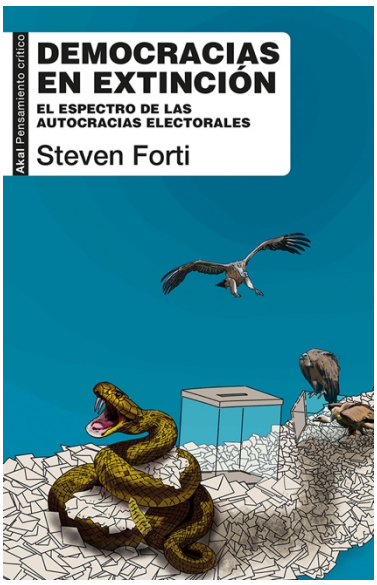
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II. The discursive shift in care
III. Professional models
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Post scriptum

María do Cebreiro Rábade Villar is a writer and lecturer in Literary Theory and Comparative Literature at the Faculty of Philology, University of Santiago de Compostela. She currently leads a project under the State Plan for Scientific, Technical and Innovation Research, entitled *The Inscription of Cultural Memory in Public Space: Strategies for the Institutional Consumption of the Literary Past (1837-1978).*

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Democracies in decline. The spectre of electoral autocracies



By Steven Forti (Spanish, 2025, 344 pp.)

An analysis of the erosion of democracy perpetrated by the far right.

«Forti's insight lies in identifying the subtlety of the process: democracies die out through voting. His Gramscian interpretation and his focus on digital communication explain how authoritarianism reinvents itself without abandoning democratic language» *(Journal CIDOB d'Afers Internacionals)*

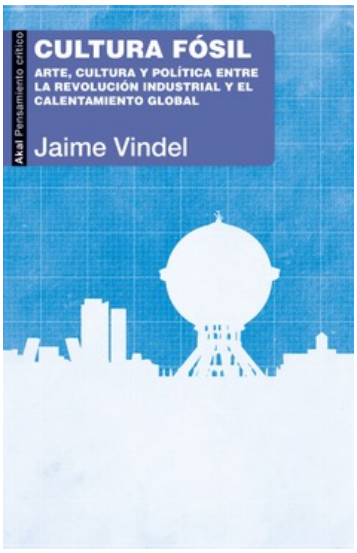
It's not time for digressions or complacency, but rather to confront the most pressing danger of our time. It is now beyond doubt that the far right is on the rise across the globe and, if we do nothing to prevent it, we may be the generation that loses the rights we have fought to secure. Our democracies are in danger of extinction, and their predators enjoy greater support, have a better image and are growing stronger by the day. In many parts of the world they have already come to power and, when they govern, nothing is as it was: they are crippling democracy from within until it is transformed into an autocracy, with little scope to reverse the situation.

Forti analyses – taking into account the historical evolution of the phenomenon – the latest political developments and movements – both national and international – of the far right, to show how they are dismantling the rule of law and the welfare state. In doing so, he denounces the threat that looms over us and warns us that it is in our hands to halt the spectre of autocracy before it destroys our democracies. The present hangs in the balance and the future remains to be written.

Steven Forti is a lecturer in Contemporary History at the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona. He specialises in the history of fascism, nationalism and the far right. He is a member of the Centre for the Study of Dictatorships and Democracies (CEDID) and sits on the editorial board of the journals *Ayer. Revista de Historia Contemporánea, Política & Prosa* and *CTXT*. He is currently also the local coordinator for the European research project 'Analysis of and Response to Extremist Narratives' (ARENAS) and is the author of several books.

Fossil Culture. Art, culture and politics between the Industrial Revolution and global warming

By Jaime Vindel (Spanish, 2023, 496 pp.)



A book that sets out to explore the blind spots of our historical unconscious, with the aim of helping us to imagine and bring to life a post-fossil fuel culture.

From the invention of the steam engine at the dawn of the nineteenth century to the global warming that now looms over us and shapes our lives, Jaime Vindel analyses—from a new critical paradigm—the relationship between the energy transformations driven by the Industrial Revolution, hegemonic social imaginaries and the acceleration of the eco-social crisis.

This essay sets out to weave together a political ecology of the history of art, visual culture and the cultural imaginaries of the Anthropocene, going beyond their explicitly environmentalist expressions. The narrative addresses the presence of fossil fuel sources (primarily coal and oil) in the forms and institutions of art and culture, and describes how these have become an underlying current that shapes the socio-political processes of the last two centuries.

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Jaime Vindel holds a European PhD in Art History and a Master's degree in Philosophy and Social Sciences, and is a researcher on the Ramón y Cajal Fellowship Programme at the Institute of History of the Spanish National Research Council (CSIC). He was coordinator of the 'Cultural Ecologies' section of the Independent Studies Programme at the Museu d'Art Contemporani de Barcelona (MACBA, 2017–2018/2019–2020) and is the author of books such as *Estética fósil. Imaginarios de la energía y crisis ecosocial* (2020).