

BOOKS

Beyond Greek: The Beginnings of Latin Literature

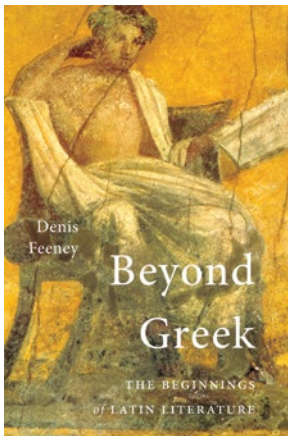
Author: **Denis Feeney**

Publisher: Harvard University Press, 2016 (available January)

Virgil, Ovid, Cicero, Horace and other authors of ancient Rome are so firmly established in the Western canon today that the birth of Latin literature seems inevitable. Yet, as Denis Feeney, the Giger Professor of Latin and professor of classics, boldly argues, the beginnings of Latin literature were anything but inevitable. The cultural flourishing that in time produced the *Aeneid*, the *Metamorphoses*, and other Latin classics was one of the strangest events in history.

Beyond Greek traces the emergence of Latin literature from 240 to 140 B.C., beginning with Roman stage productions of plays that represented the first translations of Greek literary texts into another language. From a modern perspective, translating foreign-language literature into the vernacular seems perfectly normal. But in an ancient Mediterranean world made up of many multilingual societies with no

equivalent to the text-based literature of the Greeks, literary translation was unusual if not unprecedented. Feeney shows how it allowed the Romans to systematically take over Greek forms of tragedy, comedy and epic, making them their own and giving birth to what has become known as Latin literature.



Sound Rising from the Paper: Nineteenth-Century Martial Arts Fiction and the Chinese Acoustic Imagination

Author: **Paize Keulemans**

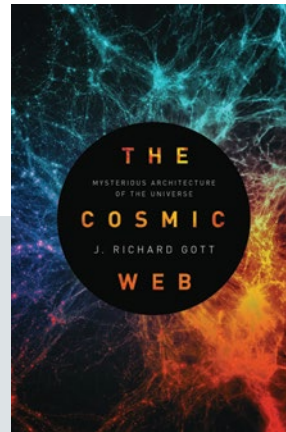
Publisher: Harvard University Press, 2014

Chinese martial arts novels from the late 19th century are filled with a host of suggestive sounds. Characters cuss and curse in colorful dialect accents, vendor calls ring out from bustling marketplaces, and martial arts action scenes come to life with the loud clash of swords and the sounds of bodies colliding. What is the purpose of these sounds, and what is their history?

In *Sound Rising from the Paper*, Assistant Professor of East Asian Studies Paize Keulemans answers these questions by critically reexamining the relationship between martial arts novels published in the final decades of the 19th century and earlier storyteller manuscripts. He



finds that by incorporating, imitating and sometimes inventing storyteller sounds, these novels turned the text from a silent object into a lively simulacrum of festival atmosphere, thereby transforming the solitary act of reading into the communal sharing of an oral performance. By focusing on the role sound played in late 19th-century martial arts fiction, Keulemans offers alternatives to the visual models that have dominated our approach to the study of print culture, the commercialization of textual production, and the construction of the modern reading subject.



The Cosmic Web: Mysterious Architecture of the Universe

Author: **J. Richard Gott**

Publisher: Princeton University Press, 2016 (available February)

Professor of Astrophysics J. Richard Gott was among the first cosmologists to propose that the structure of our universe is like a sponge made up of clusters of galaxies intricately connected by filaments of galaxies — a magnificent structure now called the “cosmic web” and mapped extensively by teams of astronomers. Here is his gripping insider’s account of how a generation of undaunted theorists and observers solved the mystery of the architecture of our cosmos.

Drawing on Gott’s own experiences working at the frontiers of science with many of today’s leading cosmologists, *The Cosmic Web* shows how ambitious telescope surveys such as the Sloan Digital Sky Survey are transforming our understanding of the cosmos, and how the cosmic web holds vital clues to the origins of the universe and the next trillion years that lie ahead.