

The Cyberiad

To glimpse America's future, one needs to look no further than its college campuses. Of those institutions, none holds more clout than Yale University, the hallowed "cradle of presidents." In *Sex and God at Yale*, recent graduate Nathan Harden undresses perversity among the Ivy and ideology gone wild as the upper echelon of academia is mired in nothing less than a full-fledged moral crisis. Three generations ago, William F. Buckley's classic *God and Man at Yale*, a critique of enforced liberalism at his alma mater, became a rallying cry of the conservative movement. Today Harden reveals how a loss of purpose, borne of extreme agendas and single-minded political correctness shielded under labels of "academic freedom," subverts the goals of higher education. Harden's provocative narrative highlights the implications of the controversial Sex Week on campus and the social elitism of the Yale "naked party" phenomenon. Going beyond mere sexual expose, *Sex and God at Yale* pulls the sheets off of institutional licentiousness and examines how his alma mater got to a point where:

- During "Sex Week" at Yale, porn producers were allowed onto campus property to give demonstrations on sexual technique—and give out samples of their products.
- An art student received departmental approval—before the ensuing media attention alerted the public and Yale alumni—for an art project in which she claimed to have used the blood and tissue from repeated self-induced miscarriages.
- The university became the subject of a federal investigation for allegedly creating a hostile environment for women.

Much more than this, Harden examines the inherent contradictions in the partisan politicizing of higher education. What does it say when Yale seeks to distance itself from its Divinity School roots while at the same time it hires a Muslim imam with no academic credentials to instruct students? When the same school that would not allow ROTC on its campus for decades invites a former Taliban spokesperson to study at the university? Or employs a professor who praised Hamas terrorists? As Harden asks: What sort of moral leadership can we expect from Yale's presidents and CEOs of tomorrow? Will the so-called "abortion artist" be leading the National Endowment for the Arts in twenty years? Will a future president be practicing moves he or she learned during Sex Week in the closet of the Oval Office? If tyrants tell little girls they aren't allowed to go to school, will an Ivy-educated Taliban emissary be the one to deliver the message? *Sex and God at Yale* is required reading for the parent of any college-bound student—and for anyone concerned about the direction of higher education in America and the implications it has for young students today and the leaders of tomorrow.

Trurl and Klaupacius are constructor robots who try to out-invent each other. They travel to the far corners of the cosmos to take on freelance problem-solving jobs, with dire consequences for their employers. "The most completely successful of his books... here Lem comes closest to inventing a real universe" (Boston Globe). Illustrations by Daniel Mr—z. Translated by Michael Kandel.

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A comprehensive book about Dyadic Developmental Psychotherapy - a gentle, holistic therapeutic approach designed to resolve trauma in children who have experienced abuse, neglect, loss or other extreme challenges to primary relationships.

A classic anthology of wildly inventive and comic tales that brilliantly satirize post-revolutionary Russia. "Amusing and excellent," this famous collection of Soviet satire from 1918 to 1963 devastatingly lampoons the social, economic, and cultural changes wrought by the Russian Revolution (Isaac Bashevis Singer). Among the seventeen bold and inventive writers

represented here are the brilliant Mikhail Bulgakov, Ilf and Petrov, Mikhail Zoshchenko, Yevgeny Zamyatin, Valentin Katayev, and Yuri Kazakov. Whether the stories and novellas collected here take the form of allegory, fantasy, or science fiction, the results are ingenious, critical, and hilariously timeless. “The stories in this collection tell the reader more about Soviet life than a dozen sociological or political tracts.” —Isaac Bashevis Singer “An altogether admirable collection . . . by the highly talented translator Mirra Ginsburg . . . Many of these stories and sketches are delicious, even-a miracle!-funny, and full of subtlety and intelligence.” —The New Leader “Hilarious entertainment. Beyond this it illuminates with the cruel light of satire the reality behind the pretentious façade of the Soviet state.” —The Sunday Sun @ Ijon Tichy, Lem's *Candide of the Cosmos*, encounters bizarre civilizations and creatures in space that serve to satirize science, the rational mind, theology, and other icons of human pride. Line drawings by the Author. Translated by Michael Kandel. A Helen and Kurt Wolff Book@@

'Most cosmic civilizations long for things, in the depths of their souls, they would never openly admit to . . . ' In the strange, surreal world of *The Cyberiad*, outlandish events abound- two ingenious 'constructors' travel through a medieval universe offering their technical expertise; a machine capable of creating anything that starts with the letter 'N' meets an untimely end; kings oppress their people with parlour games; and PhD pirates demand ransom in knowledge rather than gold. It is a world where UFOs land silently on lawns at dawn, and where even the stars can be re-arranged for advertising purposes. In these fantastical short stories, Stanislaw Lem rewrites the laws of reality, space and language itself to take us on an anarchic and darkly comic journey through a newly imagined universe. With an introduction by Christopher Priest 'A Jorge Luis Borges for the Space Age.' *The New York Times*

Robot armies, an arms race in space, and a brain at war with itself add up to “a futuristic version of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde” (*The Boston Phoenix*). Anxious to avoid a war that would destroy the entire planet, the major powers of Earth have come to an ingenious compromise. Each country sends a force of adaptable, self-programming robots to the surface of the moon to play out the conflict there and, hopefully, reach a mutually agreeable stalemate. But when the robots stop responding, it is up to Ijon Tichy to travel to the lunar war zone and discover what went wrong. Tichy finds what he needs to know, but falls victim to an attack that severs the left and right sides of his brain: one of which knows nothing about the status of the moon, the other of which isn't telling. Now Tichy finds himself at the center of a new sort of war of attrition, with each world power clamoring for his knowledge and each half of his stubborn brain clamoring for control. Wry and action-packed in equal measure, Stanislaw Lem's absurd, insightful sendup of the Cold War is required reading for any fan of science fiction. Here, “humor and a breathless pace create a delightful and thought-provoking read” (*Publishers Weekly*).

An astronaut returns to Earth after a ten-year mission and finds a society that he barely recognizes. Stanislaw Lem's *Return from the Stars* recounts the experiences of Hal Bregg, an astronaut who returns from an exploratory mission that lasted ten years—although because of time dilation, 127 years have passed on Earth. Bregg finds a society that he hardly recognizes, in which danger has been eradicated. Children are “betriated” to remove all aggression and violence—a process that also removes all impulse to take risks and explore. The people of Earth view Bregg and his crew as “resuscitated Neanderthals,” and pressure them to undergo betriation. Bregg has serious difficulty in navigating the new social mores. While Lem's depiction of a risk-free society is bleak, he does not portray Bregg and his fellow astronauts as heroes. Indeed, faced with no opposition to his aggression, Bregg behaves abominably. He is faced with a choice: leave Earth again and hope to return to a different society in several hundred years, or stay on Earth and learn to be content. With *Return from the Stars*, Lem shows the shifting boundaries between utopia and dystopia.

In a perfect vacuum, Stanislaw Lem presents a collection of book reviews of nonexistent works of literature - works that, in many cases, could not possibly be written. Embracing postmodernism's "games for games' sake" ethos, Lem joins the contest with hilarious and grotesque results. Most of the "reviews" target the postmodern infatuation with antinarratives by lampooning their self-indulgence and exploiting their mannerisms. Lem exposes the limits of postmodern fiction, showing how its studious self-consciousness frequently conceals intellectual paucity. Beginning with a review of his own book, Lem moves on to tackle (or create pastiches of) the French new novel, James Joyce, pornography, authorless writing, and Dostoevsky, while at the same time ranging across scientific topics, from cosmology to the pervasiveness of computers.

'What use to a being that lives beneath a sun are jewels of gas and silver stars of ice?' From a giant of twentieth-century science fiction, these four miniature space epics feature crazy inventors, surreal worlds, robot kings and madcap machines. Penguin Modern: fifty new books celebrating the pioneering spirit of the iconic Penguin Modern Classics series, with each one offering a concentrated hit of its contemporary, international flavour. Here are authors ranging from Kathy Acker to James Baldwin, Truman Capote to Stanislaw Lem and George Orwell to Shirley Jackson; essays radical and inspiring; poems moving and disturbing; stories surreal and fabulous; taking us from the deep South to modern Japan, New York's underground scene to the farthest reaches of outer space.

This book explains how a computer, by replicating the processes of Darwinian evolution, taught itself to play checkers far better than its creators could have programmed it to play. Fogel (editor, IEEE Transactions on Evolutionary Computation) considers the implications for evolutionary computations and artificial intelligence. Diagrams illustrate the evolutionary and computational processes at work, and the course of various games of checkers. Annotation copyrighted by Book News, Inc., Portland, OR.

Since the time of pre-history, carpetmakers tie intricate knots to form carpets for the court of the Emperor. These carpets are made from the hairs of wives and daughters; they are so detailed and fragile that each carpetmaker finishes only one single carpet in his entire lifetime. This art descends from father to son, since the beginning of time itself. But one day the empire of the God Emperor vanishes, and strangers begin to arrive from the stars to follow the trace of the hair carpets. What these strangers discover is beyond all belief, more than anything they could have ever imagined... Brought to the attention of Tor Books by Orson Scott Card, this edition of *The Carpet Makers* contains a special introduction by Orson Scott Card. At the Publisher's request, this title is being sold without Digital Rights Management Software (DRM) applied.

The author of *Solaris* critiques science fiction in a collection of provocative essays. Celebrated science fiction master Stanislaw Lem turns his always sharp and insightful pen to criticism in this bold and controversial analysis of the genre for which he is most known. In this collection of ten essays—ranging from an introspective examination of his own biographical and literary history to biting scrutiny of fellow authors and their works—Lem takes a keen look at the influence, shortcomings, merit, and importance of science fiction, touching on topics from Philip K. Dick ("a genius among the charlatans") to time travel, cosmology, and Jorge Luis Borges. Whether deriding the genre's tendency to adhere to well-worn patterns of adventure or lauding its ability to, when executed correctly, discover ideas that have not been thought of or done before, Lem's quick wit, razor tongue, and impeccable insights make *Microworlds* a master class of scientific and literary analysis from one of the undisputed legends of science fiction. An early realist novel by Stanislaw Lem, taking place in a Polish psychiatric hospital during World War II. Taking place within the confines of a psychiatric hospital, Stanislaw Lem's *The Hospital of the Transfiguration* tells the story of a young doctor working in a Polish asylum during World War II. At first the asylum seems like a bucolic refuge, but a series of sinister

encounters and incidents reveal an underlying brutality. The doctor begins to seek relief in the strange conversation of the poet Sekulowski, who is posing as a patient in a bid for safety from the occupying German forces. Meanwhile, Resistance fighters stockpile weapons in the surrounding woods. A very early work by Lem, *The Hospital of the Transfiguration* is partly autobiographical, drawing on the author's experiences as a medical student. Written in 1948, it was suppressed by Polish censors and not published until 1955. The censorship of this realist novel is partly what led Lem to focus on science fiction and nonfiction for the rest of his career. An affectionate, nostalgic, and unflinchingly funny celebration of the horror fiction boom of the 1970s and '80s Take a tour through the horror paperback novels of two iconic decades . . . if you dare. Page through dozens and dozens of amazing book covers featuring well-dressed skeletons, evil dolls, and knife-wielding killer crabs! Read shocking plot summaries that invoke devil worship, satanic children, and haunted real estate! Horror author and vintage paperback book collector Grady Hendrix offers killer commentary and witty insight on these trashy thrillers that tried so hard to be the next *Exorcist* or *Rosemary's Baby*. Complete with story summaries and artist and author profiles, this unforgettable volume dishes on familiar authors like V. C. Andrews and R. L. Stine, plus many more who've faded into obscurity. Also included are recommendations for which of these forgotten treasures are well worth your reading time and which should stay buried.

It's the 25th century, but the Marines are still looking for a few good men . . . "Marines ain't supposed to sit. We're supposed to kill." After the resource-rich planet Diamunde is seized by the armed forces of industrialist Marston St. Cyr, the Confederation Marines face their most desperate battles yet against the mechanized forces of the bloody usurper. Promised a walkover by military planners, instead the Marines must run a gauntlet of steel, with weaponry three hundred years out of date. For the Confederation's invasion army to seize the planet, the Marine FISTs first have to secure a planethead against St. Cyr's much larger forces which are equipped with superior weapons. Together with their outgunned comrades, the Marines of 34th FIST must do the impossible—or die . . .

If you're interested in science fiction but crave something with a little more intellectual heft than your typical space opera, give David Lindsay's *A Voyage to Arcturus* a try. Widely praised by critics as one of the most philosophically advanced science fiction novels, the book follows two intrepid spiritual seekers through a series of remarkable interstellar adventures.

For readers of *Water for Elephants* or *The Night Circus*, a lush and thrilling romantic fable about two lovers set against the scandalous burlesques, midnight séances, and aerial ballets of the 1898 Omaha World's Fair. On the eve of the World's Fair, Ferret Skerritt, ventriloquist by trade, con man by birth, is unsure how the fair's events will change him or his city. Omaha still has the marks of a filthy Wild West town, even as it attempts to achieve the grandeur and respectability of nearby Chicago. But when he crosses paths with the beautiful and enigmatic Cecily, his purpose shifts, and the fair becomes the backdrop to their love affair. One of a traveling troupe of actors that has descended on the city, Cecily works in the Midway's Chamber of Horrors, where she loses her head hourly on a guillotine, playing Marie Antoinette. And after closing, she

rushes off, clinging protectively to a mysterious carpetbag, never giving Ferret a second glance. But a moonlit ride on the swan gondola, a boat on the lagoon of the New White City, transforms everything when the fair's magic begins to take its effect.

A disparate group of characters are brought together on a ravaged Earth and must contend with an underclass that's starting to ask too many questions. The first English translation of a nonfiction work by Stanisław Lem, which was "conceived under the spell of cybernetics" in 1957 and updated in 1971. In 1957, Stanisław Lem published *Dialogues*, a book "conceived under the spell of cybernetics," as he wrote in the preface to the second edition. Mimicking the form of Berkeley's *Three Dialogues between Hylas and Philonous*, Lem's original dialogue was an attempt to unravel the then-novel field of cybernetics. It was a testimony, Lem wrote later, to "the almost limitless cognitive optimism" he felt upon his discovery of cybernetics. This is the first English translation of Lem's *Dialogues*, including the text of the first edition and the later essays added to the second edition in 1971. For the second edition, Lem chose not to revise the original. Recognizing the naivete of his hopes for cybernetics, he constructed a supplement to the first dialogue, which consists of two critical essays, the first a summary of the evolution of cybernetics, the second a contribution to the cybernetic theory of the "sociopathology of governing," amending the first edition's discussion of the pathology of social regulation; and two previously published articles on related topics. From the vantage point of 1971, Lem observes that original book, begun as a search for methods "that would increase our understanding of both the human and nonhuman worlds," was in the end "an expression of the cognitive curiosity and anxiety of modern thought."

'A beautiful book' Ursula K. Le Guin This mordantly funny and provocative tale from Soviet Russia's leading science fiction writers is the story of astrophysicist Dmitri Malianov. As he reaches a major breakthrough, he finds himself plagued by interruptions, from a mysterious crate of vodka to a glamorous woman on his doorstep. Is the Universe trying to tell him something? 'On putting down one of their books, you feel a cold breeze still lifting the hairs on the back of your neck' The New York Times

Twelve stories by science fiction master Stanisław Lem, nine of them never before published in English. Of these twelve short stories by science fiction master Stanisław Lem, only three have previously appeared in English, making this the first "new" book of fiction by Lem since the late 1980s. The stories display the full range of Lem's intense curiosity about scientific ideas as well as his sardonic approach to human nature, presenting as multifarious a collection of mad scientists as any reader could wish for. Many of these stories feature artificial intelligences or artificial life forms, long a Lem preoccupation; some feature quite insane theories of cosmology or evolution. All are thought provoking and scathingly funny. Written from 1956 to 1993, the stories are arranged in chronological order. In the title story, "The Truth," a scientist in an insane asylum

theorizes that the sun is alive; "The Journal" appears to be an account by an omnipotent being describing the creation of infinite universes--until, in a classic Lem twist, it turns out to be no such thing; in "An Enigma," beings debate whether offspring can be created without advanced degrees and design templates. Other stories feature a computer that can predict the future by 137 seconds, matter-destroying spores, a hunt in which the prey is a robot, and an electronic brain eager to go on the lam. These stories are peak Lem, exploring ideas and themes that resonate throughout his writing.

A satirical approach to debunking the myths of white supremacy and racial purity, this 1931 novel recounts the consequences of a mysterious scientific process that transforms black people into whites.

Nobody knows if Trafalgar Medrano actually travels to the stars, but whenever he is in town he stretches his stories out over at least seven coffees and everyone knows he is the best storyteller in town.

An eerie and offbeat mystery by a Kafka Prize–winning author. The case confronting Lieutenant Gregory is not one that a man of Scotland Yard would expect. In fact, it is not one any sane man would care to entertain. Bodies are disappearing. The initial assumption is that a grave robber is roaming London and defiling local morgues. But upon further examination, it seems the deceased are, in fact, resurrecting. As Gregory stumbles his way through the tangled clues, seeking advice from scientific, philosophical, and theological experts alike, he finds himself tossed into a baffling metaphysical puzzle of incomprehensible truths and unbelievable realities. Hailed by Kirkus Reviews as “closer to Kafka than the police precinct house,” Lem’s intelligent and puzzling foray into the mystery genre offers an appealing combination of disturbance and delight.

A hapless Earthling must find his way home through a universe of absurdities in this science fiction romp from a Hugo and Nebula Award–nominated master. New York civil servant Thomas Carmody has never been particularly lucky. Imagine his surprise when he discovers he’s won the grand prize in an Intergalactic Lottery he had no idea he’d entered. Whisked far away to Galactic Central to claim his award, he has two immediate, equally troubling revelations. Not only does his Prize—a talkative device that changes shape—serve no practical purpose whatsoever, but now he’s expected to find his own way back to Earth. Of course, Carmody has no idea where, when, or even which universe he’s been stranded in. Ignoring the worthless advice and opinions of his increasingly annoying Prize, he embarks on a bizarre odyssey that takes him from alternate Earth to alternate Earth, bringing him into close contact with all manner of strangeness—and even with a bored God Almighty Himself. But Carmody’s sweepstakes “windfall” comes with yet another unexpected drawback. Suddenly, an unrelenting predator is on his tail, determined to eliminate the “glitch” wandering lost through numerous dimensions where he does not belong. A full decade before Douglas Adams devised *The Hitchhiker’s Guide to the Galaxy*, Robert Sheckley created his *Dimension of Miracles*, launching one luckless protagonist on a hilarious journey across an alien universe of intelligent dinosaurs and mothering sentient towns. Fans of Kurt Vonnegut, Roger Zelazny, Terry Pratchett’s *Discworld*, and Harry Harrison’s *Bill the Galactic Hero* will delight in Sheckley’s biting and brilliant *Alice in Wonderland*–like outer space adventure.

N. Katherine Hayles here investigates parallels between contemporary literature and critical theory and the science of chaos. She finds in both scientific and literary discourse new interpretations of chaos, which is seen no longer as disorder but as a locus of maximum information and complexity. She examines structures and themes of disorder in *The Education of Henry Adams*, Doris Lessing’s *Golden Notebook*, and works by Stanislaw Lem. Hayles

shows how the writings of poststructuralist theorists including Barthes, Lyotard, Derrida, Serres, and de Man incorporate central features of chaos theory.

Essays by the author of *Solaris*: "Lem's delightful sense of humor accentuates his essential seriousness about humanity's possible fate" (Publishers Weekly). In *One Human Minute*, Stanislaw Lem takes a hard look at our world and technology—what it means now and what dire implications it could have for the future—in satirical, wise, and biting prose. With this collection of three essays, Lem targets some of the most pressing issues humanity faces, from our unsettling origins to the cybernetic future of our weaponry. "The Upside-Down Evolution" chronicles the Earth's military evolution from nuclear stockpiles to deadly, robotic microweapons. "The World as Cataclysm" examines how humankind's dominance on Earth is the result of the extermination of another species just as qualified to rule the world. And the title essay presents a disturbing and fascinating snapshot of every single thing happening on the planet in a sixty-second span. Effortlessly blurring the lines between fiction and nonfiction, scientific essay and fantastical short story, cynical reproach and wry humor, Lem's *One Human Minute* combines the best elements of the renowned science fiction author and Kafka Prize winner's writing into one irreverent and intellectually stimulating package.

"This claustrophobic, horror-leaning tour de force is highly recommended for fans of Jeff VanderMeer's *Annihilation* and Andy Weir's *The Martian*." -- Publishers Weekly (starred review) *** A thrilling, atmospheric debut with the intensive drive of *The Martian* and *Gravity* and the creeping dread of *Annihilation*, in which a caver on a foreign planet finds herself on a terrifying psychological and emotional journey for survival. When Gyre Price lied her way into this expedition, she thought she'd be mapping mineral deposits, and that her biggest problems would be cave collapses and gear malfunctions. She also thought that the fat paycheck—enough to get her off-planet and on the trail of her mother—meant she'd get a skilled surface team, monitoring her suit and environment, keeping her safe. Keeping her sane. Instead, she got Em. Em sees nothing wrong with controlling Gyre's body with drugs or withholding critical information to "ensure the smooth operation" of her expedition. Em knows all about Gyre's falsified credentials, and has no qualms using them as a leash—and a lash. And Em has secrets, too . . . As Gyre descends, little inconsistencies—missing supplies, unexpected changes in the route, and, worst of all, shifts in Em's motivations—drive her out of her depths. Lost and disoriented, Gyre finds her sense of control giving way to paranoia and anger. On her own in this mysterious, deadly place, surrounded by darkness and the unknown, Gyre must overcome more than just the dangerous terrain and the Tunneler which calls underground its home if she wants to make it out alive—she must confront the ghosts in her own head. But how come she can't shake the feeling she's being followed?

"A stunningly inventive fantasy about cosmic travel" from the Kafka Prize-winning author of *Solaris* (*The New York Times*). The *Hermes* explorer ship represents the epitome of Earth's excellence: a peaceful mission sent forth to make first contact with an alien civilization, and to use the expansive space technology developed by humanity to seek new worlds, friendships, and alliances. But what its crew discovers on the planet *Quinta* is nothing like they had hoped. Locked in a seemingly endless cold war among themselves, the *Quintans* are uncommunicative and violent, refusing any discourse—except for the firing of deadly weapons. The crew of the *Hermes* is determined to accomplish what they had set out to do. But the cost of learning the secrets hidden on the silent surface of *Quinta* may be grave. Stark, startling, and insightful, *Fiasco* has been praised by Publishers Weekly as "one of Lem's best novels." It is classic, thought-provoking hard science fiction, as prescient today as when it was first written.

While living in exile in Berlin, the formidable literary critic Viktor Shklovsky fell in love with Elsa Triolet. He fell into the habit of sending Elsa several letters a day, a situation she accepted under one condition: he was forbidden to write about love. *Zoo, or Letters Not about Love* is an

epistolary novel born of this constraint, and although the brilliant and playful letters contained here cover everything from observations about contemporary German and Russian life to theories of art and literature, nonetheless every one of them is indirectly dedicated to the one topic they are all required to avoid: their author's own unrequited love.

Depicts a future America where a Uranian virus threatens the destruction of all paper.

A space cruiser, in search of its sister ship, encounters beings descended from self-replicating machines. In the grand tradition of H. G. Wells and Jules Verne, Stanisław Lem's *The Invincible* tells the story of a space cruiser sent to an obscure planet to determine the fate of a sister spaceship whose communication with Earth has abruptly ceased. Landing on the planet Regis III, navigator Rohan and his crew discover a form of life that has apparently evolved from autonomous, self-replicating machines—perhaps the survivors of a “robot war.” Rohan and his men are forced to confront the classic quandary: what course of action can humanity take once it has reached the limits of its knowledge? In *The Invincible*, Lem has his characters confront the inexplicable and the bizarre: the problem that lies just beyond analytical reach.

Many historical processes are dynamic. Populations grow and decline. Empires expand and collapse. Religions spread and wither. Natural scientists have made great strides in understanding dynamical processes in the physical and biological worlds using a synthetic approach that combines mathematical modeling with statistical analyses. Taking up the problem of territorial dynamics--why some polities at certain times expand and at other times contract--this book shows that a similar research program can advance our understanding of dynamical processes in history. Peter Turchin develops hypotheses from a wide range of social, political, economic, and demographic factors: geopolitics, factors affecting collective solidarity, dynamics of ethnic assimilation/religious conversion, and the interaction between population dynamics and sociopolitical stability. He then translates these into a spectrum of mathematical models, investigates the dynamics predicted by the models, and contrasts model predictions with empirical patterns. Turchin's highly instructive empirical tests demonstrate that certain models predict empirical patterns with a very high degree of accuracy. For instance, one model accounts for the recurrent waves of state breakdown in medieval and early modern Europe. And historical data confirm that ethno-nationalist solidarity produces an aggressively expansive state under certain conditions (such as in locations where imperial frontiers coincide with religious divides). The strength of Turchin's results suggests that the synthetic approach he advocates can significantly improve our understanding of historical dynamics.

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There is a wealth of literature and books available to engineers starting to understand what machine learning is and how it can be used in their everyday work. This presents the problem of where the engineer should start. The answer is often "for a general, but slightly outdated introduction, read this book; for a detailed survey of methods based on probabilistic models, check this reference; to learn about statistical learning, this text is useful" and so on. This monograph provides the starting point to the literature that every engineer new to machine learning needs. It offers a basic and compact reference that describes key ideas and principles in simple terms and within a unified treatment, encompassing recent developments and pointers to the literature for further study. *A Brief Introduction to Machine Learning for Engineers* is the entry point to machine learning for students, practitioners, and researchers with an engineering background in probability and linear algebra.

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