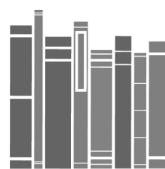


FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – 10 MARCH 2020

Slightly Foxed



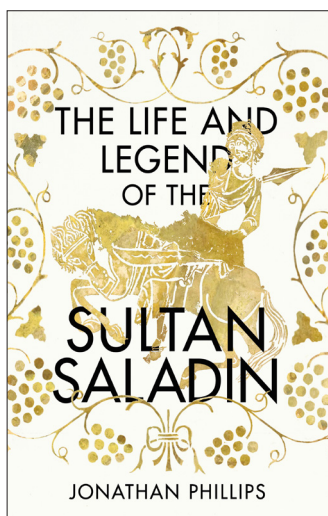
The Biographers' Club
Supporting, promoting and connecting
biographers at all levels

ANNOUNCING THE WINNER OF
THE SLIGHTLY FOXED BEST FIRST BIOGRAPHY PRIZE 2019

Jonathan Phillips

The Life and Legend of the Sultan Saladin

An epic story of empire-building and bloody conflict,
The Life and Legend of the Sultan Saladin is a ground-breaking biography
of one of history's most venerated military and religious heroes, and opens a
window on the Islamic and Christian worlds' complex relationship.



When Saladin recaptured Jerusalem from the Crusaders in 1187, returning the Holy City to Islamic rule for the first time in almost ninety years, he sent shockwaves throughout Christian Europe and the Muslim Near East. Drawing on a rich blend of Arabic and European sources, this is a comprehensive account of both the man and the legend, describing vividly the relentless action of his life and then tracing its aftermath through culture and politics all the way to the present day. Jonathan Phillips reveals the personal qualities that explain Saladin's enduring reputation as a man of faith, generosity, mercy and justice, even while showing him to be capable of mistakes, self-interest and cruelty. Phillips goes on to explain how, after his death, this Sunni Muslim became famed for his charm and chivalric virtue in the West, while across much of the Islamic world he stands as one of history's greatest heroes, an inspiration to be admired and emulated. *The Life and Legend of the Sultan Saladin* shows how this one man's life takes us beyond the crude stereotypes of the 'Clash of Civilisations' even while his legacy helps explain them: an intimate portrait of a towering figure of world history that is thrillingly relevant today. (£25 • Bodley Head)

'Jonathan Phillips's thoroughly absorbing biography takes on a period and an individual of daunting complexity and strangeness, weaving a tale worthy of a leader who proved inspirational to both East and West.' **Suzi Feay, 2019 Prize Judge**

THE PRIZE

This is the sixth year of the literary quarterly and independent publisher Slightly Foxed's sponsorship of the Biographers' Club **Slightly Foxed Best First Biography Prize**, with a winner's award of £2,500. Previous winners: Bart van Es, *The Cut Out Girl*; Edmund Gordon, *The Invention of Angela Carter*; Hisham Matar, *The Return*; Alan Cumming, *Not My Father's Son*; Claudia Renton, *Those Wild Wyndhams*; Charles Moore, *Margaret Thatcher: The Authorized Biography*; Thomas Penn, *Winter King: The Dawn of Tudor England*; and Matthew Hollis, *Now All Roads Lead to France*.

THE WINNER

Jonathan Phillips is Professor of Crusading History at Royal Holloway, University of London. He is the author of *Holy Warriors: A Modern History of the Crusades*; *The Second Crusade: Extending the Frontiers of Christianity*; *The Fourth Crusade and the Sack of Constantinople*; *The Crusades, 1095-1197*; *Defenders of the Holy Land, 1119-1187* and the co-editor of three academic essay collections on the Crusades. Phillips is the co-editor of the academic journal *Crusades*, writes for *BBC History* and *History Today* and has made numerous radio and television appearances.

THE JUDGES

Suzi Feay, Maggie Fergusson and Jonathan Keates

‘Four richly inventive memoirs and two meticulously researched biographies took the judges from the height of the Crusades to the artistic and mercantile quarters of Elizabethan London; from the ‘milking shed’ of a hospital unit for premature babies to life-drawing classes at the Slade at a period when the male gaze ruled; and into the lives of two poets, one a child in care in the late sixties and early seventies, the other attempting to piece together the post-Holocaust life of a troubled mother.’ **The Judges**

THE SHORTLIST

- Elizabeth Goldring, *Nicholas Hilliard* (Yale University Press)
- Celia Paul, *Self-Portrait* (Jonathan Cape)
- Jonathan Phillips, *The Life and Legend of the Sultan Saladin* (Bodley Head)
- Francesca Segal, *Mother Ship* (Chatto & Windus)
- Lemn Sissay, *My Name Is Why* (Canongate)
- George Szirtes, *The Photographer at Sixteen* (MacLehose Press)

SLIGHTLY FOXED

Slightly Foxed: The Real Reader's Quarterly and its acclaimed list of classic limited-edition memoirs have become something of an institution in the literary world. Contributors to the magazine include Diana Athill, Quentin Blake, Ronald Blythe, Margaret Drabble, Adam Foulds, Melissa Harrison, Michael Holroyd, Amy Liptrot, Penelope Lively, Richard Mabey, Robert Macfarlane, Dervla Murphy, Sarah Perry, Jane Ridley, Christopher Rush, Posy Simmonds, Adam Sisman, Ali Smith and Jacqueline Wilson. The Slightly Foxed series of memoirs includes works by: Edward Ardizzone, Adrian Bell, Roald Dahl, Jennie Erdal, Graham Greene, Diana Holman-Hunt, Michael Holroyd, Hilary Mantel, Gavin Maxwell, Jan Morris, Eric Newby, Ernest Shepard and Rosemary Sutcliff

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THE BIOGRAPHERS' CLUB

Founded in 1997, the Biographers' Club is committed to supporting, promoting and connecting biographers at all levels. It offers three prizes each year: the Slightly Foxed Best First Biography Prize; the Tony Lothian Prize and the Exceptional Contribution to Biography Award. For information on the club please contact Ariane Bankes or Nicholas Clee on thebiographersclub1@gmail.com • www.thebiographersclub.com

For a review copy of Jonathan Phillips, *The Life and Legend of the Sultan Saladin*
or for extract or interview requests contact: Joe Pickering, Bodley Head
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