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Vegetarianism: A History

Colin Spencer

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Vegetarianism: A History Colin Spencer
Though the word ‘vegetarianism’ was not coined until the mid-nineteenth century, the vegetarian diet has been around as long as man has. Vegetarians have included in their number: heretics, humanists, Hindus, Christian fundamentalists, radicals, agnostics, philosophers, founders of religion and even an Emperor. Not surprisingly vegetarians have often been discriminated against – sometimes tortured, even killed – for their beliefs. So the history of vegetarianism is also a history of dissidence and revolt. Colin Spencer’s comprehensive book, reissued in paperback for the first time in fifteen years explores the psychology of abstention from flesh and attempts to discover why omnivorous humans at times voluntarily abstain from an available food. The result is a thorough work of scholarship, entertaining in places, horrifying in others. The breadth of Spencer’s research is quite outstanding and makes for a truly erudite read. He begins in pre-history and ends in the present day.

REVIEWS

‘A history of religion and diet...totally absorbing and fascinating.’ The Telegraph

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