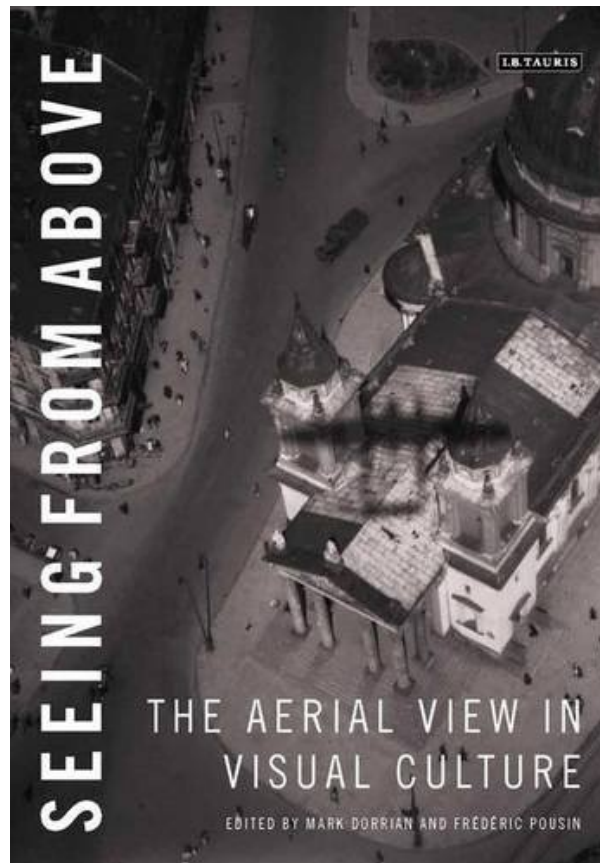
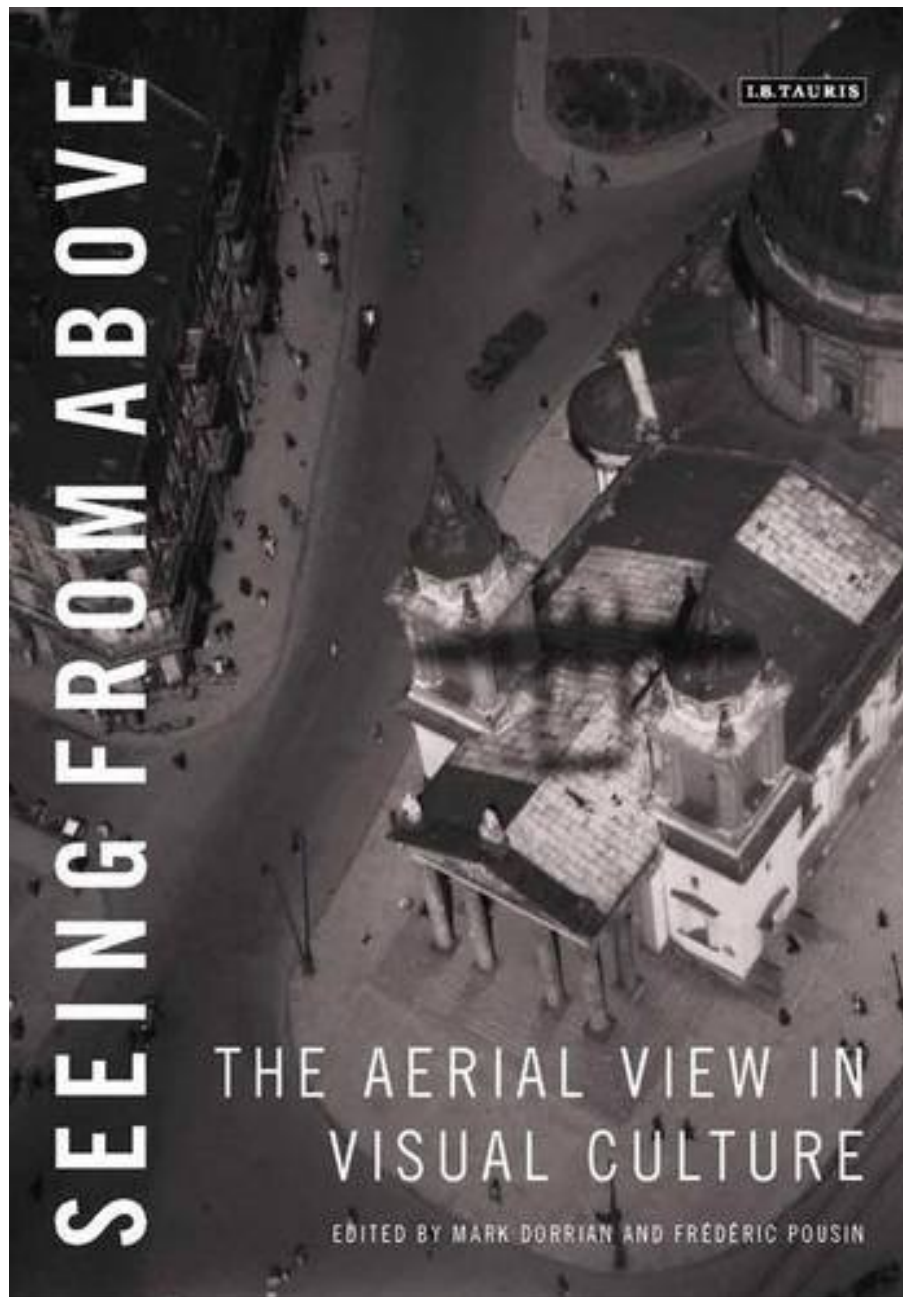


SEEING FROM ABOVE: THE AERIAL VIEW IN VISUAL CULTURE FROM I. B. TAURIS



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Flying became possible because it was imagined. This is what a history of seeing from above discloses: we visualised angelic mobility before we could design it. In this fascinating collection the open eye of Google Earth retains at its vanishing point a turbulent history of self-elevation... An extraordinarily timely survey of earth from the sky, full of virtuosic new insights, ethical as well as aesthetic implications, and not without its share of vertigo.' - Paul Carter, author and artist 'This book brings out aeriality's multiple dimensions with such force that by the end one feels that - despite our imprisonment to gravity - we really live not on the earth, but at the bottom-most layer of a vast exospherical mirror filled with everything that makes us human.' - Mark Jarzombek, Professor of the History and Theory of Architecture, School of Architecture and Planning, MIT 'This remarkable collection of richly illustrated essays... will become a landmark for any scholar interested in the field of visual culture.' - Vincent Piveteau, Director, Ecole Nationale Supérieure de Paysage de Versailles 'In its mapping of what has become our defining world picture, this is truly explication in excelsis.' - Steven Connor, Grace 2 Professor of English, University of Cambridge

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From sixteenth-century Roman maps, to the Luftwaffe's aerial survey of Warsaw, the London Eye to Google Earth, visual culture is saturated with aerial imagery. The aerial view - the image of everywhere- has become natural, desirable, omnipresent, yet its rise to pre-eminence as a 'way of seeing' raises pressing questions about its effects and meanings that have not yet been explored. More immediately than any other visual modality, aerial imagery gives us- and supports our idea of- a totalizing overview, a world-view, and thus in turn requires that its implications be explored as the 'symbolic form' of the global era. However this 'view of the world' keeps undergoing transformations as technologies continue to be invented and refined. Underpinned by a cross-disciplinary approach that draws together diverse and previously isolated material, this text examines the politics and poetics of the aerial view in relation to architecture, art, film, literature, photography and urbanism, and explores its role in areas such as aesthetics and epistemology. Using examples of specific cultural moments to elucidate the wider theory, this is the only book to provide a cultural history of the aerial imagination and its centrality to visual culture.

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