

Vincent van Gogh was a voracious reader. In his letters he mentions more than one hundred and fifty authors from some ten countries, at least two hundred works in four languages, and almost three thousand years of literary history. From Homer to Zola, Van Gogh read, copied, rejected, adored, quoted, distorted, re-read, condemned and recommended countless books and articles. This second volume of *Van Gogh Studies* examines Van Gogh's literary journey as it emerges through the 1100 references found in his correspondence. It is an exploration of the literary universe of a passionate reader, in constant search of texts that could be applied to his own reality. Having worked on the *Van Gogh Letters Project*, Wouter van der Veen has made a close study of the most important texts referred to in Van Gogh's correspondence, and has come to the surprising conclusion that Van Gogh was seldom influenced, in the sense that many art historians have argued, by what he read but rather regarded literature as a mirror that reflected and confirmed his own views.

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