



goods and trade, religious ideas and technological advances (stirrups, spoked-wheel vehicles, papermaking, gunpowder), all of which flowed along the Silk Road that ran through the nomads' homelands. Europe, says Harl, indeed had every reason to fear the tribes but also to trade and collaborate with them.

By Michael Prodger

Seeing Things: The Small Wonders of the World According to Writers, Artists and Others
edited by Julian Rothenstein

Redstone Press, 144pp, £19.95

For some, Instagram may be a hellsite of cynical influencers and toxic beauty standards. But for others – as this charming anthology shows – it is a living scrapbook that records the world in all its glorious oddity. The Redstone Press founder Julian Rothenstein has combed the accounts of writers and artists including Hari Kunzru, Cornelia Parker and Jarvis Cocker, and assembled a series of images that remind us – as Richard Wentworth says of his own photographs – “that humans read the world every time they look”.

Divided into five themed chapters, the book juxtaposes intriguing still lifes – a mannequin’s head peeking out from a rental apartment cupboard; a “male” fire hydrant and its “female shadow” – with found snippets – a page from an 1890s Hindustani phrasebook (“the cook is drunk again”); a snap of Dorothy Parker with poodle and cigarette – and eyebrow-raising signs. Full of wit and rich in possible meanings, these are images that deserve a life beyond social media.

By Tom Gatti