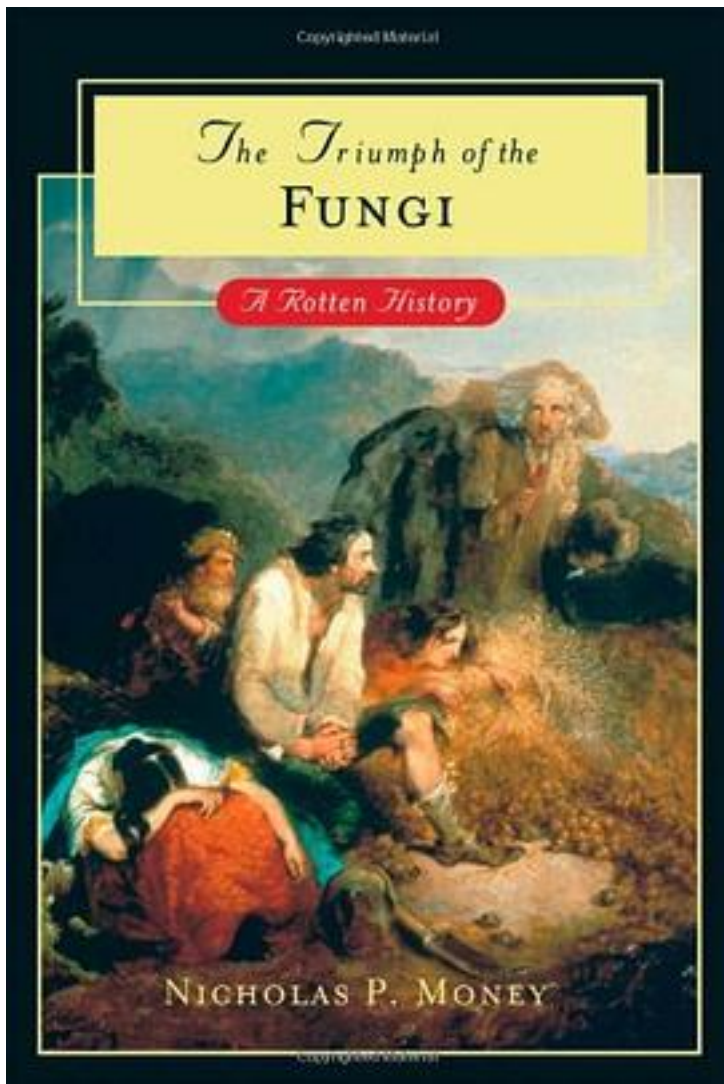


The Triumph of the Fungi



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This book is concerned with the most devastating fungal diseases in history. These are the plagues of trees and crop plants, caused by invisible spores that have reshaped entire landscapes and decimated human populations. The Triumph of the Fungi focuses on the fascinating biology of the well- and lesser-known diseases, and also tells the stories of the scientists involved in their study, and of the people directly impacted by the loss of forest trees like the chestnut, and cash crops such as coffee and cacao. In a surprisingly brief time, human knowledge of the fungi that infect plants has evolved from Biblical superstition, to the recognition of the true nature of plant disease, and, more recently, to a sense of awe for the sophistication of these microbes. The crucial issue of human culpability in these fungal epidemics is addressed in the books closing chapter.

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