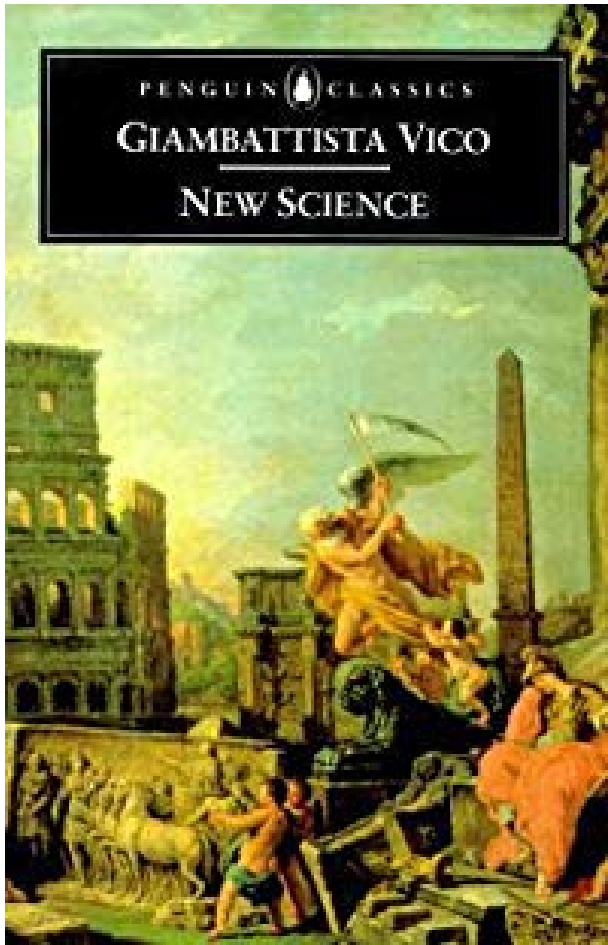


New Science



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Barely acknowledged in his lifetime, the *New Science* of Giambattista Vico (1668-1744) is an astonishingly perceptive and ambitious attempt to decipher the history, mythology and laws of the ancient world. Discarding the Renaissance notion of the classical as an idealised model for the modern, it argues that the key to true understanding of the past lies in accepting that the customs and emotional lives of ancient Greeks and Romans, Egyptians, Jews and Babylonians were radically different from our own. Along the way, Vico explores a huge variety of topics, ranging from physics to poetics, money to monsters, and family structures to the Flood. Marking a crucial turning-point in humanist thinking, *New Science* has remained deeply influential since the dawn of Romanticism, inspiring the work of Karl Marx and even influencing the framework for Joyce's *Finnegan's Wake*.