

THE LONGMAN ANTHOLOGY

WORLD LITERATURE

COMPACT EDITION



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The Longman Anthology of World Literature



COMPACT EDITION



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The Longman Anthology of World Literature



David Damrosch

David L. Pike

General Editors

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PREFACE


Our world today is both expanding and growing smaller at the same time. Expanding, through a tremendous increase in the range of cultures that actively engage with each other; and yet growing smaller as well, as people and products surge across borders in the process known as globalization. This double movement creates remarkable opportunities for cross-cultural understanding, as well as new kinds of tensions, miscommunications, and uncertainties. Both the opportunities and the uncertainties are amply illustrated in the changing shape of world literature. A generation ago, when the term “world literature” was used in North America, it largely meant masterworks by European writers from Homer onward, together with a few favored North American writers, heirs to the Europeans. Today, however, it is generally recognized that Europe is only part of the story of the world’s literatures, and only part of the story of North America’s cultural heritage. An extraordinary range of exciting material is now in view, from the earliest Sumerian lyrics inscribed on clay tablets to the latest Kashmiri poetry circulated on the Internet. Many new worlds—and newly visible *older* worlds of classical traditions around the globe—await us today.

How can we best approach such varied materials from so many cultures? Can we deal with this embarrassment of riches without being overwhelmed by it, and without merely giving a glancing regard to less familiar traditions? This anthology has been designed to help readers successfully navigate “the sea of stories”—as Salman Rushdie has described the world’s literary heritage. This preface will outline the ways we’ve gone about this challenging, fascinating task.

CONNECTING DISTINCTIVE TRADITIONS

Works of world literature engage in a double conversation: with their culture of origin and with the varied contexts into which they travel away from home. To look broadly at world literature is therefore to see patterns of difference as well as points of contact and commonality. The world’s disparate traditions have developed very distinct kinds of literature, even very different ideas as to what should be called “literature” at all. This anthology uses a variety of means to showcase what is most distinctive and also what is commonly shared among the world’s literatures. Throughout the anthology, we employ two kinds of grouping:

 **PERSPECTIVES:** Groupings that provide cultural context for major works, illuminating issues of broad importance.

 **RESONANCES:** Sources for a specific text or responses to it, often from a different time and place.

Throughout the anthology, our many “Perspectives” sections provide cultural context for the major works around them, giving insight into such issues as the representation of death and immortality in the ancient Near East; the meeting of

Christians, Muslims, and Jews in medieval Iberia; the idea of Romantic nature in the nineteenth century; and postcolonial conditions in the twentieth. Perspectives sections give a range of voices and views, strategies and styles, in highly readable textual groupings. The Perspectives groupings serve a major pedagogical as well as intellectual purpose in making these selections accessible and useful within the time constraints of a survey course.

Our “Resonances” perform the crucial function of linking works across time as well as space. For Homer’s *Odyssey* we have Resonances giving modern responses to Homer by Franz Kafka, Derek Walcott, and the Greek poet George Seferis. Accompanying Dostoevsky’s *Notes from Underground* are texts showing influence on the German philosopher, Friedrich Nietzsche, and the Japanese diarist, Ishikawa Takuboku. Resonances for Conrad’s *Heart of Darkness* give selections from Conrad’s diary of his own journey upriver in the Congo and a speech by Henry Morton Stanley, the explorer-journalist who was serving as publicist for King Leopold’s exploitation of his colony in the years just before Conrad went there. Stanley’s surreal speech—in which he calculates how much money the Manchester weavers can make providing wedding dresses and burial clothes for the Congolese—gives a vivid instance of the outlook, and the rhetoric, that Conrad grimly parodies in Mr. Kurtz and his associates.

PRINCIPLES OF SELECTION

Beyond our immediate groupings, our overall selections have been made with an eye to fostering connections across time and space. We have worked to create an exceptionally coherent and well-integrated presentation of an extraordinary variety of works from around the globe, from the dawn of writing to the present. Recognizing that different sorts of works have counted as literature in differing times and places, we have taken an inclusive approach, centering on poems, plays, and fictional narratives but also including selections from rich historical, religious, and philosophical texts like Plato’s *Republic* and the Qur’an that have been important for much later literary work, even though they weren’t conceived as literature themselves. We present many complete masterworks, including *The Epic of Gilgamesh* (in a beautiful verse translation), Homer’s *Odyssey*, Dante’s *Inferno*, and Chinua Achebe’s *Things Fall Apart*, and we have extensive, teachable selections from such long works as *The Tale of Genji*, *Don Quixote*, and both parts of Goethe’s *Faust*. The Compact Edition retains a global focus while concentrating on the major works that are essential to a single-semester course.

Along with these major selections we continue to present a great array of shorter works, some of which have been known only to specialists and only now are entering into world literature. It is our experience as readers and as teachers that the established classics themselves can best be understood when they’re set in a varied literary landscape. Nothing is included here, though, simply to make a point: whether world-renowned or recently rediscovered, these are compelling works to read. Throughout our work on this book, we’ve tried to be highly inclusive in principle and yet carefully selective in practice, avoiding tokenism and also its inverse, the piling up of an unmanageable array of heterogeneous material. If we’ve succeeded as we hope, the result will be coherent as well as capacious, substantive as well as stimulating.

LITERATURE, ART, AND MUSIC

One important way to understand literary works in context is to read them in conjunction with the broader social and artistic culture in which they were created. Literature has often had a particularly close relation to visual art and to music. Different as the arts are in their specific resources and techniques, a culture's artistic expressions often share certain family resemblances, common traits that can be seen across different media—and that may even come out more clearly in visual or musical form than in translations of literature itself. This anthology includes numerous black-and-white illustrations and a suite of color illustrations, chosen to work in close conjunction with our literary selections. Some of these images directly illustrate literary works, while others show important aspects of a culture's aesthetic sensibility. Often, writing actually appears on paintings and sculptures, with represented people and places sharing the space with beautifully rendered Mayan hieroglyphs, Arabic calligraphy, or Chinese brushstrokes.

Music too has been a close companion of literary creation and performance. Our very term “lyric” refers to the lyres or harps with which the Greeks accompanied poems as they were sung. In China, the first major literary work is the *Book of Songs*. In Europe too, until quite recent times poetry was often sung and even prose was usually read aloud. We have created two audio CDs to accompany the anthology. These CDs give a wealth of poetry and music from the cultures we feature in the anthology; they are both a valuable teaching resource and a pure pleasure to listen to.

AIDS TO UNDERSTANDING

A major emphasis of our work has been to introduce each culture and each work to best effect. Each major period and section of the anthology, each grouping of works, and each individual author has an introduction by a member of our editorial team. Our goal has been to write introductions informed by deep knowledge worn lightly. Neither talking down to our readers nor overwhelming them with masses of unassimilable information, our introductions don't seek to “cover” the material but instead try to uncover it, to provide ways in and connections outward. Similarly, our footnotes and glosses are concise and informative, rather than massive or interpretive. Time lines, maps, and pronunciation guides throughout the anthology all aim to foster an informed and pleasurable reading of the works.

GOING FURTHER

The Longman Anthology of World Literature, Compact Edition, makes connections beyond its covers as well as within them. Bibliographies at the end of the volume point the way to historical and critical readings for students wishing to go into greater depth for term papers. The Companion Web site we've developed for the course (www.ablongman.com/worldlit) gives a wealth of links to excellent Web resources on all our major texts and many related historical and cultural movements and events. The Web site includes an audio version of our printed pronunciation guides: you can simply click on a name to hear it pronounced. Finally, the Web site includes readings of works in the original and in translation, with accompanying texts, giving extensive exposure to the aural dimension of many of the languages represented in the anthology.

For instructors, we have also created an extensive, two-volume instructor's manual, *Teaching World Literature*—written directly by the editors themselves, drawing on our years of experience in teaching these materials.

TRANSLATION ACROSS CULTURES

The circulation of world literature is always an exercise in cultural translation, and one way to define works of world literature is that they are the works that gain in translation. Some great texts remain so intimately tied to their point of origin that they never read well abroad; they may have an abiding importance at home, but don't play a role in the wider world. Other works, though, gain in resonance as they move out into new contexts, new conjunctions. *The Thousand and One Nights*, long a marginal work in Arabic traditions oriented toward poetry rather than popular prose, gained new readers and new influence abroad, and Sheherazade's intricately nested tales now help us in turn to read the European tales of Boccaccio and also a contemporary Algerian version by Assia Djebar with new attention and appreciation.

As important as cultural translation in general is the issue of actual translation from one language to another. We have sought out compelling translations for all our foreign-language works, and periodically we offer our readers the opportunity to think directly about the issue of translation. Sometimes we offer distinctively different translations of differing works from a single author or source: for the Bible, for example, we give Genesis 1–11 in Robert Alter's lively, oral-style translation, while we give selected psalms in the magnificent King James Version and the *Song of Songs* in the lyrical Jerusalem Bible translation. Our selections from Homer's *Iliad* appear in Richmond Lattimore's stately older translation, while Homer's *Odyssey* is given in Robert Fagles's eloquent new version.

At other times, we give alternative translations of a single work. So we have Chinese lyrics translated by the modernist poet Ezra Pound and by a contemporary scholar. These juxtapositions can show some of the varied ways in which translators over the centuries have sought to carry works over from one time and place to another—not so much by mirroring and reflecting an unchanged meaning, as by refracting it, in a prismatic process that can add new highlights and reveal new facets in a classic text. At times, when we haven't found a translation that really satisfies us, we've translated the work ourselves—an activity we recommend to all who wish to come to know a work from the inside.

We hope that the results of our years of work on this project will be as enjoyable to use as the book has been to create. We welcome you now inside our pages.

David Damrosch

David L. Pike

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

In the extended process of planning and preparing this anthology, the editors have been fortunate to have the support, advice, and assistance of many people. Our editor, Joe Terry, and our publisher, Roth Wilkofsky, have supported our project in every possible way and some seemingly impossible ones as well, helping us produce the best possible book despite all challenges to budgets and well-laid plans in a rapidly evolving field. Our development editor, Mikola De Roo, handled the process with characteristic wit and aplomb. Jenny Bevington cleared hundreds and hundreds of text permissions from publishers in many countries, and Jody Potter cleared our many photo permissions.

Once the manuscript was complete, Denise Phillip, the production manager, oversaw the production of one book from six on a tight and shifting schedule. Valerie Zaborski, managing editor in production, also helped and, along the way, developed a taste for the good-humored fatalism of Icelandic literature. Our copyeditor, Stephanie Magean, assured that the reduction would be quick and painless. Doug Bell and his colleagues at GGS Book Services, Susan Bogle and Andrea Shearer, worked as a team to ensure the accuracy and quality of the production process.

We are specifically grateful for the guidance of the many reviewers who advised us on the creation of this book: Kyoka Amano (University of Indianapolis); Ashley S. Bonds (Copiah-Lincoln Community College); Theodore Bouabre (Jackson State University); Debra Taylor Bourdeau (Kennesaw State University); Patsy J. Daniels (Jackson State University); Brian Doherty (University of Texas—Austin); Jennifer Duncan (Chattanooga State Technical Community College); Khalil Elayan (Kennesaw State University); Diana C. Gingo (University of Texas—Dallas); Kyle Glover (Lindenwood University); Michael Grimwood (North Carolina State University); Joel Henderson (Chattanooga State Technical Community College); Ernest N. Kaulbach (University of Texas—Austin); Hans Kellner (North Carolina State University); Barry Kitterman (Austin Peay State University); Jennifer Lawrence (Georgia State University); Heather Levy (University of Texas—Arlington); Patricia Lonchar (University of the Incarnate Word); David Lowery (Jones County Junior College); Judith Broome Mesa-Pelly (Austin Peay State University); J. Hunter Morgan (Glenville State College); James W. Parins (University of Arkansas—Little Rock); Melissa Rankin (University of Texas—Arlington); Elizabeth M. Richmond-Garza (University of Texas—Austin); David P. Schenck (University of South Florida); Daniel Schierenbeck (Central Missouri State University); Stephen Slimp (University of West Alabama); Gabriele Ulrike Stauf (Georgia Southwestern State University); Barbara Szubinska (Eastern Kentucky University); Nancy Wilson (Texas State University); R. Paul Yoder (University of Arkansas—Little Rock); Rachel Yeatts (University of North Texas); and Jianqing Zheng (Mississippi Valley State University).

It has been a great pleasure to work with all these colleagues both at Longman and at schools around the country. This book exists for its readers, whose reactions and suggestions we warmly welcome, as the Compact Edition of *The Longman Anthology of World Literature* moves out into the world.

ABOUT THE EDITORS

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Detail of stele inscribed with the Law Code of Hammurabi, c. 1750 B.C.E. The Babylonian King Hammurabi (reigned c. 1792–1750 B.C.E.) commissioned the major law code that bears his name, an ambitious effort to organize society under the rule of law. The seven-foot-tall stone column on which his laws are inscribed in cuneiform script is crowned with the scene showing Hammurabi conversing with the seated sun god, Shamash.

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