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The first dramatic adaptation of Gilgamesh

Reflections on a lost poem and its rediscovery by contemporary poets Gilgamesh is the most ancient long poem known to exist. It is also the newest classic in the canon of world literature. Lost for centuries to the sands of the Middle East but found again in the 1850s, it is a story of monsters, gods, and cataclysms, and of intimate friendship and love. Acclaimed literary historian Michael Schmidt provides a unique meditation on the rediscovery of Gilgamesh, showing how part of its special fascination is its

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captivating otherness. He reflects on the work of leading poets such as Charles Olson, Louis Zukofsky, and Yusef Komunyakaa, whose own encounters with the poem are revelatory, and he reads its many translations and editions to bring it vividly to life for today's readers.

Featuring leading scholars in their fields, this book examines receptions of ancient and early modern literary works from around the world (China, Japan, Ancient Maya, Ancient Mediterranean, Ancient India, Ancient Mesopotamia) that have circulated globally across time and space (from East to West, North to South, South to West). Beginning with the premise of an enduring and revered cultural past, the essays go on to show how the circulation of literature through

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translation and other forms of reception in fact long predates modern global society; the idea of national literary canons have existed just over a hundred years and emerged with the idea of national educational curricula. Highlighting the relationship of culture and politics in which canons are created, translated, promulgated, and preserved, this book argues that such nationally-defined curricula were challenged by critics and writers in the wake of the Second World War.

Malin Pereira's collection of eight interviews with leading contemporary African American poets offers an in-depth look at the cultural and aesthetic perspectives of the post-Black Arts Movement generation. This volume includes unpublished interviews Pereira conducted with Wanda Coleman, Yusef

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Komunyakaa, Thylas Moss, Harryette Mullen, Cornelius Eady, and Elizabeth Alexander, as well as conversations with Rita Dove and Cyrus Cassells previously in print. Largely published since 1980, each of these poets has at least four books. Their influence on new generations of poets has been wide-reaching. The work of this group, says Pereira, is a departure from the previous generation's proscriptive manifestos in favor of more inclusive voices, perspectives, and techniques. Although these poets reject a rigid adherence to a specific black aesthetic, their work just as effectively probes racism, stereotyping, and racial politics. Unlike Amiri Baraka's claim in "Home" that he becomes blacker and blacker, positioning race as a defining essence, these poets imagine a plurality of ideas about the relationship

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between blackness and black poetry. They question the idea of an established literary canon defining black literature. For these poets, Pereira says, the idea of "home" is found both in black poetry circles and in the wider transnational community of literature. A Sarah Mills Hodge Foundation Publication.

The world's oldest work of literature, the Epic of Gilgamesh recounts the adventures of the semimythical Sumerian king of Uruk and his ultimately futile quest for immortality after the death of his friend and companion, Enkidu, a wildman sent by the gods. Gilgamesh was deified by the Sumerians around 2500 BCE, and his tale as we know it today was codified in cuneiform tablets around 1750 BCE and continued to influence ancient cultures—whether in specific incidents like a

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world-consuming flood or in its quest structure—into Roman times. The epic was, however, largely forgotten, until the cuneiform tablets were rediscovered in 1872 in the British Museum's collection of recently unearthed Mesopotamian artifacts. In the decades that followed its translation into modern languages, the Epic of Gilgamesh has become a point of reference throughout Western culture. In *Gilgamesh among Us*, Theodore Ziolkowski explores the surprising legacy of the poem and its hero, as well as the epic's continuing influence in modern letters and arts. This influence extends from Carl Gustav Jung and Rainer Maria Rilke's early embrace of the epic's significance—"Gilgamesh is tremendous!" Rilke wrote to his publisher's wife after reading it—to its appropriation since World War II in contexts as

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disparate as operas and paintings, the poetry of Charles Olson and Louis Zukofsky, novels by John Gardner and Philip Roth, and episodes of Star Trek: The Next Generation and Xena: Warrior Princess. Ziolkowski sees fascination with Gilgamesh as a reflection of eternal spiritual values—love, friendship, courage, and the fear and acceptance of death. Noted writers, musicians, and artists from Sweden to Spain, from the United States to Australia, have adapted the story in ways that meet the social and artistic trends of the times. The spirit of this capacious hero has absorbed the losses felt in the immediate postwar period and been infused with the excitement and optimism of movements for gay rights, feminism, and environmental consciousness. Gilgamesh is at once a seismograph of shifts in Western history and culture

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and a testament to the verities and values of the ancient epic.

Delving into the complex, contradictory relationships between humans and the environment in Asian literatures

A groundbreaking essay collection that pursues the rise of geoculture as an essential framework for arts criticism, *The Planetary Turn* shows how the planet—as a territory, a sociopolitical arena, a natural space of interaction for all earthly life, and an artistic theme—is increasingly the conceptual and political dimension in which twenty-first-century writers and artists picture themselves and their work.

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In an introduction that comprehensively defines the planetary model of art, culture, and cultural-aesthetic interpretation, the editors explain how the living planet is emerging as distinct from older concepts of globalization, cosmopolitanism, and environmentalism and is becoming a new ground for exciting work in contemporary literature, visual and media arts, and social humanities. Written by internationally recognized scholars, the twelve essays that follow illustrate the unfolding of a new vision of potential planetary community that retools earlier models based on the nation-state or political “blocs” and reimagines cultural, political, aesthetic, and ethical relationships for the post–Cold War era.

Presents a collection of previously published works, early

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uncollected works, and eighteen new poems.

While American and European writers are still central to the high school curriculum, more and more students and teachers are discovering the great literary works outside the Western tradition. This book provides critical essays on 10 masterpieces of non-Western literature, including Gilgamesh, The Tale of Genji, and Quetzalcoatl. Each essay explains the work's historical and cultural contexts, plot, major characters, central themes, and lasting influence. Chapters cite works for further reading, and the book closes with a bibliography.

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