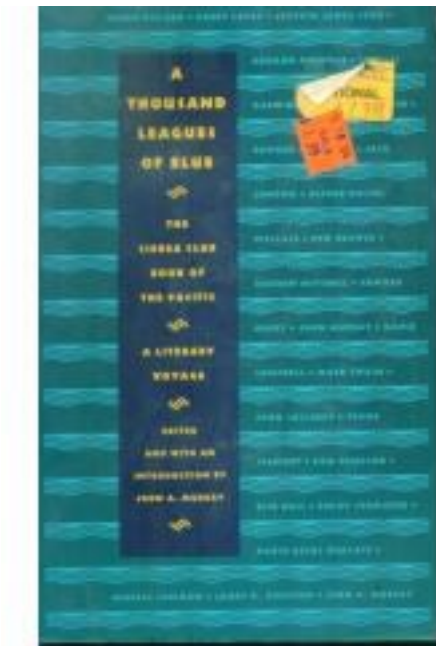


A Thousand Leagues of Blue: The Sierra Club Book of the Pacific



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When gliding by the Bashee isles we emerged at last upon the great South Sea... now the long supplication of my youth was answered,, that serene ocean rolled eastwards from me a thousand leagues of blue. There is, one knows not what sweet mystery about this sea, whose gently awful stirrings seem to speak of some h~dden

soul beneath; like those fabled undulations of the Ephesian sod over the buried Evangelist St. John. And meet it is, that over these sea-pastures, wide-rolling watery prairies and Potters Fields of all four continents, the waves should rise and fall, and ebb and flow unceasingly; for here, millions of mixed shades and shadows, drowned dreams, somnambulisms, reveries; all that we call lives and souls, lie dreaming, dreaming, still; tossing like slumberers in their beds; ~he ever-rolling waves but made so by their restlessness. To any meditative Magian rover, this serene Pacific, once beheld, must ever be the sea of his adoption. It rolls the midmost waters of the world, the Indian ocean and Atlantic being but its arms. The same waves wash the moles of the new-built California towns, but yesterday planted by the recentest race of men and lave the faded but still gorgeous skirts of Asiatic lands, older than Abraham; while all between float milky-ways of coral isles, and low-lying, endless, unknown Archipelagoes, and impenetrable Japans. Thus this mysterious, divine Pacific zones the world's whole bulk about,. makes all coasts one bay to it; seems the tide-beating heart of earth. Lifted by those eternal swells, you needs must own the seductive god, bowing your head to Pan.

Herman Melville, Moby Dick

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