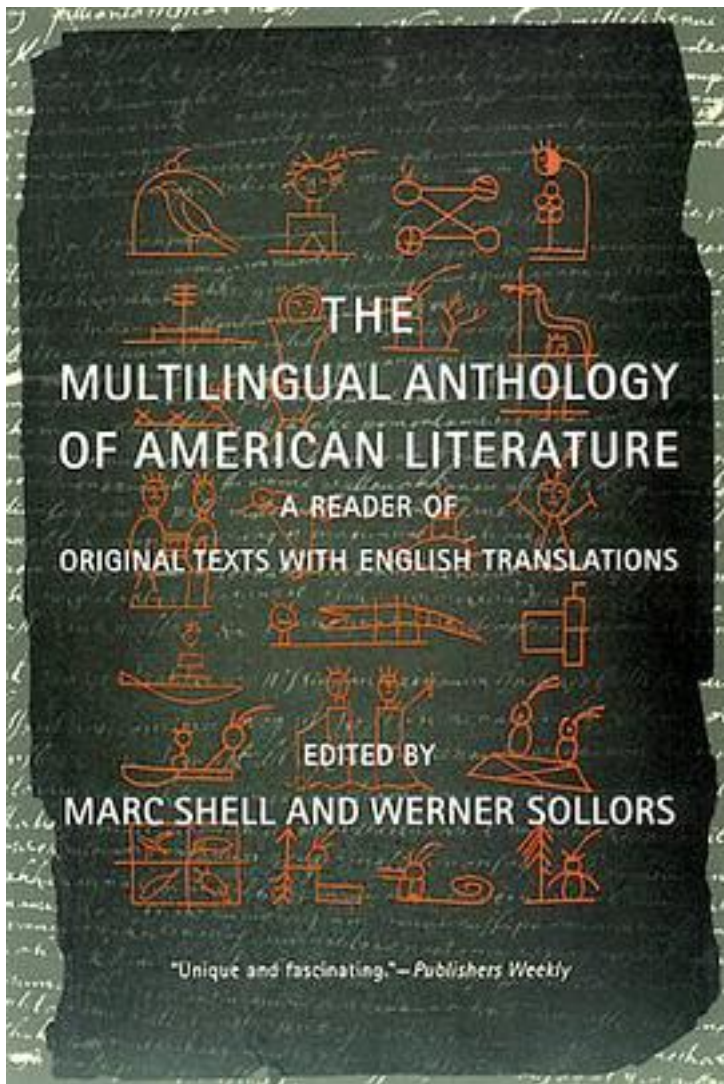


The Multilingual Anthology of American Literature



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著者:Sollors, Werner (EDT)

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An 1830s African-American slave narrative written in Arabic. Dafydd Morgan, the only American immigrant novel published in Welsh. The Native American epic, Walum Olum, in the Lenape language. Theodor Adorno's dream transcripts, in German. A short story about the politics of abortion in working-class Chinatown. "Lesbian Love," a surprisingly explicit chapter from an 1853 New Orleans novel. A haunting 1904 ballad, "The Revenge of the Forests," that is one of the first expressions of radical environmentalism in the United States. Largely ignored in the debates over canon and multiculturalism in America, indigenous American works written in languages other than English have over time disappeared from view. The first anthology of its kind, The Multilingual Anthology of American Literature brings together American writings in diverse languages from Arabic and Spanish to Swedish and Yiddish, among others. Presenting each work in its original language with facing page translation, the book provides an important complement to all other anthologies of American writing, and will serve to complicate our understanding of what exactly American literature is. American literature appears here as more than an offshoot of a single mother country, or of many mother countries, but rather as the interaction among diverse linguistic and cultural trajectories. Consider that Cotton Mather spoke half a dozen languages and wrote in both Spanish and Latin. Or that the first short story known to have been written by an African American (and reproduced here) was written in French. Not only a literature of immigration and assimilation, American multilingual literature participates in the larger literary tradition which too often marginalizes authors who complicate the fit of authorship, citizenship, and language.

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