

## A GLOBAL HISTORY OF LITERATURE AND THE ENVIRONMENT

In *A Global History of Literature and the Environment*, an international group of scholars illustrate the immense riches of environmental writing from the earliest literary periods down to the present. It addresses ancient writings about human/animal/plant relations from India, classical Greece, Chinese and Japanese literature, the Maya *Popol Vuh*, Islamic texts, medieval European works, eighteenth-century and Romantic ecologies, colonial/postcolonial environmental interrelations, responses to industrialization, and the emerging literatures of the world in the present Anthropocene moment. Essays range from Trinidad to New Zealand, Estonia to Brazil. Discussion of these texts indicates a variety of ways environmental criticism can fruitfully engage literary works and cultures from every continent and every historical period. This is a uniquely varied and rich international history of environmental writing from ancient Mesopotamian and Asian works to the present. It provides a compelling account of a topic that is crucial to twenty-first-century global literary studies.

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Edited by John Parham , Louise Westling

Frontmatter

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A GLOBAL HISTORY  
OF LITERATURE AND  
THE ENVIRONMENT

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## *Chronology of Major Works Discussed*

### I. Beginnings

(Dates for ancient literary texts are approximate, since most were oral for centuries before being written down. Even later written versions went through many forms as cultures developed.)

#### *Australasia*

25,000 BCE – the present Dreamtime stories/songlines of indigenous Australian and New Zealand peoples preserve memories of major geological transformations from volcanic eruptions to rising and falling sea levels.

#### *Mesopotamia*

<i>c.</i> 2600 BCE	Earliest Sumerian writings
<i>c.</i> 2100 BCE	Sumerian stories of Gilgamesh ( <i>c.</i> 1800 BCE Early versions of Babylonian <i>Epic of Gilgamesh</i> , <i>c.</i> 1200 BCE ‘Standard’ Babylonian version of <i>Epic of Gilgamesh</i> )
<i>c.</i> 2000 BCE	<i>Sumerian Lugalbanda in the Mountain Cave</i>
<i>c.</i> 1700 BCE	<i>Babylonian Epic of Atrahasis</i>
714 BCE	Letter of Sargon II King of Assyria

#### *Egypt*

2100–1700 BCE	Narrative literature created
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#### *China*

1045–221 BCE	<i>Shijing</i> (Classic of Poetry)
206 BCE–220 CE	Han Dynasty poetry of cities and royal palaces

### Chronology

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222–589 CE	Six Dynasties poetry of landscapes
618–907	Tang Dynasty poetry by writers such as Du Fu and Liu Zongyuan
772–1101	Tang and Sung Dynasties imperial poets
1368–1912	Poets of Ming and Qing Dynasties

### Japan

712 CE	<i>Kojiki</i> (Record of Ancient Matters)
759 CE	<i>Man'yōshū</i> (Collection of Ten Thousand Leaves)
1130–40	<i>Konjaku monogatari</i> (Tales from Times Now Past)
1212	Kamo no Chōmei, <i>Hōjōki</i> (Ten Foot Square Hut)
1332	Yoshida Kenkō, <i>Tsurezuregusa</i> (Essays in Idleness)
1694	Matsuo Bashō, <i>Oku no hosomichi</i> (Narrow Road to the Deep North)

### India

1500–1200 BCE	<i>Rig Veda</i> , <i>Sama Veda</i> , <i>Yajur-Veda</i> , <i>Atharva-Veda</i> (Sanskrit scriptures and hymns passed down orally until almost the Common Era). Include the <i>Araṇyaka</i> s (Wilderness Texts or Forest Treaties) composed by recluses meditating in forests
900–700 BCE	<i>Brahmanas</i> (originally transmitted orally for centuries, while written codification occurred around 600 BCE)
900–400 BCE	<i>Mahabharata</i> (oral transmission; authorship ascribed to Vyasa, with written versions from 400 BCE to 400 CE). Includes the earlier <i>Bhagavad Gita</i>
700 BCE	<i>Upanishads</i> (earliest originally passed down orally, while later ones composed from around the Common Era through the medieval period)
c. 550–450 BCE	<i>Ramayana</i> (oral transmission; authorship attributed to Valmiki, with surviving written versions from 6th–11th centuries CE)

### Greece

c. 750 BCE	The <i>Iliad</i> and the <i>Odyssey</i> (transmitted orally at first; attributed to Homer)
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*Chronology*

c. 700 BCE

*Theogony* (attributed to Hesiod)

c. 522–443 BCE

Pindar, *Odes* (a Greek copy attributed to Polykleitos c. 440 BCE)

429 BCE

Sophocles, *Oedipus the King*

406 BCE

Euripides, *The Bacchae**Rome*

8 CE

Ovid, *Metamorphoses* (fragments of the manuscript survive from the 9th century, but the earliest full manuscript dates from the 11th century)*Land of Israel/Judea*

c. 9th century

BCE–post-70 CE

The Hebrew Bible (Torah: books of Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, final form c. 5th century BCE; books of the Prophets, c. 2nd century BCE; and Writings, 167 BCE)

*Mesoamerica*

c. 2nd century

BCE–1558 CE

*Popol Vuh* (K'iche'-Maya text composed in pre-Columbian times from probable earlier oral traditions, but texts destroyed by Spanish invaders until recreated by Maya nobles between 1554 and 1558)*Arabia*

c. 609–32 CE

The Qur'an or Koran (revelations to the Prophet Muhammad over a period of years until his death and compiled by companions who were scribes)

**II. The Development of Humanism and the Industrial Age***Iceland*

1122–33 CE

Ari Thorgilsson the Learned, *Íslendingabók* (or *Book of Icelanders*)

12th century

*Landnámabók* (or the *Book of Settlements*)

## Chronology

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- 13th century *Sagas of the Icelanders* (esp. *Njál's Saga*, *Laxdæla Saga*, *Sturlunga Saga*, *Egil's Saga*, *Saga of Henry Thorir*, and *Saga of Bishop Guðmundur Arason*)

*Medieval and Early Modern Britain*

- 1370–90 William Langland, *Piers Plowman*  
 Late 14th century *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*  
 Late 14th century *Pearl*  
 1516 Thomas More, *Utopia*

*Enlightenment and Eighteenth-Century Europe*

- 1664 John Evelyn, *Sylva, or, A discourse of forest trees and the propagation of timber in His Majesties dominions*  
 1669 Jean-Baptiste Colbert, *Grand Ordonnance sur le fait des eaux et forêts*  
 1684 Aphra Behn, “On a Juniper Tree, Cut down to make Busks”  
 1733–34 Alexander Pope, *An Essay on Man*  
 1749–1804 Louis Buffon, *Histoire naturelle*  
 1781 Immanuel Kant, *Kritik der reinen Vernunft* (*Critique of Pure Reason*)  
 1789 Gilbert White, *Natural History of Selborne*  
 1790 Erasmus Darwin, *The Botanic Garden*  
 1792 Thomas Taylor, *A Vindication of the Rights of Brutes*  
 1799 Thomas Campbell, “The Pleasures of Hope”  
 1801 Andre Michaux, *Histoire des chênes de l'Amérique septentrionale*  
 1803 *Flora Boreali-Americana* (2 vols.)

*Nineteenth-Century Europe*

- 1805–08 Achim von Arnim and Clemens Brentano, *Des Knaben Wunderhorn* (*The Youth's Magic Horn*)  
 1807 Alexander von Humboldt, *Essay on the Geography of Plants*  
 1808 Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, *Faust*  
 1813 Georges Cuvier, *Essay on the Theory of the Earth*

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1814	William Wordsworth, <i>The Excursion</i>
1830–33	Charles Lyell, <i>Principles of Geology</i>
1845	Friedrich Engels, <i>The Condition of the Working Class in England</i>
1845–47	Alexander von Humboldt, <i>Kosmos</i>
1853	Charles Dickens, <i>Bleak House</i>
1859	Charles Darwin, <i>On the Origin of Species</i>
1867	Karl Marx, <i>Das Kapital</i>
1871	Charles Darwin, <i>The Descent of Man, and Selection According to Sex</i>
1883–84	Wilhelm Raabe, <i>Pfister's Mühle</i>
1887	W.H. Hudson, <i>A Crystal Age</i>
1890	William Morris, <i>News from Nowhere</i>
1899	Ernst Haeckel, <i>Kunstformen der Natur (Art Forms of Nature)</i>

#### *Nineteenth-Century North America*

c. 1809	Jane Johnston Schoolcraft (Bamewawagezhikaquay), "To the Pine Tree"
1838	Anna Brownell Jameson, <i>Winter Studies and Summer Rambles in Canada</i>
1850	George Copway (Kahgegahbowh), <i>Recollections of a Forest Life</i>
1851	George Copway, <i>Traditional History and Characteristic Sketches of the Ojibway Nation</i>
1854	Henry David Thoreau, <i>Walden</i>
1861	Reverend Peter Jones (Kakewaquonaby, or Sacred Feathers), <i>History of the Ojibway Indians</i>
1864	George Perkins Marsh, <i>Man and Nature: or, Physical Geography as Modified by Human Action</i>

#### *Nineteenth-Century Australasia*

1819	William Wentworth, <i>A Statistical, Historical, and Political Description of the Colony of New South Wales, etc.</i>
1849	Edward Gibbon Wakefield, <i>A View of the Art of Colonisation</i>
1859	Louisa Atkinson, <i>Cowanda, the Veteran's Grant</i>

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- 1872 Samuel Butler, *Erewhon*  
 1883 W.A. Brodribb, *Recollections of an Australian Squatter*

**III. The Anthropocene**

*Australasia*

- 1922 Alec H. Chisholm, *Mateship with Birds*  
 1938 Hilda Bridges, *Men Must Live*  
 1942 Jock H. Pick, *Australia's Dying Heart: Soil Erosion in the Inland*  
 1959 Mary Durack, *Kings in Grass Castles*  
 1987 George Turner, *The Sea and Summer*  
 1990 Gabrielle Lord, *Salt*  
 2005 Steven Lang, *An Accidental Tourist*  
 2009 Jim Sampson, *The Apocalypse Rising*  
 2013 Alexis Wright, *The Swan Book*

*North America*

- 1947 John W. Campbell, *The Mightiest Machine*  
 1957 Loren Eiseley, *The Immense Journey*  
 1962 Rachel Carson, *Silent Spring*  
 1966 Isaac Asimov, *Foundation Series: Foundation, Foundation and Empire, and Second Foundation*  
 1972 A.R. Ammons, *Collected Poems 1951–1971*  
 1993 Kim Stanley Robinson, *Red Mars*  
 1995 Lawrence Buell, *The Environmental Imagination*  
 1996 Keith Basso, *Wisdom Sits in Places: Landscape and Language among the Western Apache*  
 1997 Gary Paul Nabhan, *Cultures of Habitat: On Nature, Culture, and Story*  
 2004 Michael Crichton, *State of Fear*  
 2007 Alan Weisman, *The World Without Us*  
 2009 Dipesh Chakrabarty, "The Climate of History"  
 2010 Brett Clark, Richard York, and John Bellamy Foster, *The Ecological Rift: Capitalism's War on the Earth*  
 2015 Jeffrey Sachs, *The Age of Sustainable Development*

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2015 Pope Francis, *Encyclical Letter Laudato Si' of the Holy Father Francis: On Care for Our Common Home*

*Europe*

- 1916 Ernst Haeckel, *Die Natur als Künstlerin (Nature as Artist)*
- 1924 E.M. Forster, *A Passage to India*
- 1927 Virginia Woolf, *To the Lighthouse*
- 1932 Alma Toom, *Vilsandi Linnuriik (Vilsandi Bird Kingdom)*
- 1933 Franz Xaver Graf Zedtwitz, *Vogelkinder der Waikariffe (Birdlings of Vaikas)*
- 1934 August Mälk, *Lugusid lindudest (Bird Stories)*
- 1935 Johannes Piiper, *Pilte ja hääli kodumaa loodusest (Pictures and Sounds from the Nature of Homeland)*
- 1940 Jakob von Uexküll, *A Stroll Through the Worlds of Animals and Men* (Eng. trans. pub. in 1957)
- 1944 Theodor Adorno and Max Horkheimer, *The Dialectic of Enlightenment*
- 1964 Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Le Visible et l'invisible suivi de notes de travail* (published in English as *The Visible and the Invisible*, 1968)
- 1965 Brian Aldiss, *Earthworks*
- 1966 Fred Jüssi, *Kajakad kutsuvad (The Call of the Gulls)*
- 1971 Michael Moorcock, *The Warlord of the Air*
- 1972 Gregory Bateson, *Steps to an Ecology of Mind*
- 1979 Günter Grass, *Die Rättin (The Rat)*
- 1979 Max Frisch, *Der Mensch erscheint im Holozän (Man in the Holocene)*
- 1986 Ulrich Beck, *Risikogesellschaft* (published in English as *Risk Society: Towards a New Modernity*, 1992)
- 1987 Christa Wolf, *Störfall (Accident)*
- 1989 Arne Naess, *Ecology, Community, and Lifestyle*
- 1995 Gernot Böhme, *Atmosphäre: Essays zur neuen Ästhetik (Atmosphere: Essays on a New Aesthetic)*
- 2004 Frank Schätzing, *Der Schwarm (The Swarm)*
- 2004 W.S. Graham, *New Collected Poems*



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- 2005 Alice Oswald, *Woods, etc.*  
 2009 Thomas A. Clark, *The Hundred Thousand Places*  
 2011 Slavoj Žižek, *Living in the End Times*  
 2014 Peter Larkin, *Give Forest its Next Portent*

*China*

- 1932 Mao Dun, *chunchan (Spring Silkworms)*  
 1933 Ye Lingfeng, *meiyan* (“Coal Smoke”)  
 1935 Xiao Hong, *shengsichang (The Field of Life and Death)*  
 2015 Chai Jing, *qiongdīng zhi xia (Under the Dome)*

*Japan*

- 1969/72 Ishimure Michiko, *Kugai jōdo* (Paradise in the Sea of Suffering: Our Minamata Disease)  
 1975 Ariyoshi Sawako, *Fukugō osen* (Compound Pollution)  
 1981 Katō Yukiko, “Umibe gurashi” (Living by the Sea)  
 2001 Ogata Masato, *Rowing the Eternal Sea*  
 2013 Taguchi Randy, *Zōn nite* (In the Zone)  
 2014 Kimura Yūsuke, *Seichi Cs* (Sanctuary Cs)

*Caribbean*

- 1907 Stephen Cobham, *Rupert Gray*  
 1969 Eric Williams, *Inward Hunger*  
 1975 V.S. Naipaul, *Guerrillas*  
 1996 Earl Lovelace, *Salt*  
 2011 Earl Lovelace, *Is Just a Movie*  
 2013 Oonya Kempdoo, *All Decent Animals*

*West Africa*

- 1992 Ken Saro-Wiwa, *Genocide in Nigeria: The Ogoni Tragedy*  
 1995 Ken Saro-Wiwa, *A Month and a Day: A Detention Diary*  
 2005 Ogaga Ifowodo, *The Oil Lamp*

- xxvi *Chronology*
- 2006 Kaine Agary, *Yellow-Yellow*  
 2007 Tanure Ojaide, *The Tale of the Harmattan*  
 2010 Helon Habila, *Oil on Water*
- India*
- 1955 Satyajit Ray, *Pather Panchali* (Song of the Road)  
 1961–67 Satyajit Ray, *Stories in Sandesh*  
 1988 Baldev Singh (ed.), *Jawaharrel Nehru on Science and Society: A Collection of His Writings and Speech*  
 1998 Satyajit Ray, *Childhood Days*  
 2008 Satyajit Ray, *The Diary of a Space Traveller and Other Stories*
- Brazil*
- 1915 Gilka Machado, *Cristais partidos* (Broken Crystals)  
 1978 Gilka Machado, *Poesias completas* (Complete Poems)  
 1989 Helena Parente Cunha, *As doze cores do vermelho* (The Twelve Tinges of Red)  
 1995 Arriete Vilela, *O ócio dos anjos ignorados* (The Leisure of the Forgotten Angels)  
 2008 Conceição Evaristo *Poemas da recordação outros movimentos* (Poems of Memory and Other Movements)  
 2013 Helena Parente Cunha, *Impregnações na floresta – Poemas amazônicos* (Impregnations in the Forest – Amazonian Poems)