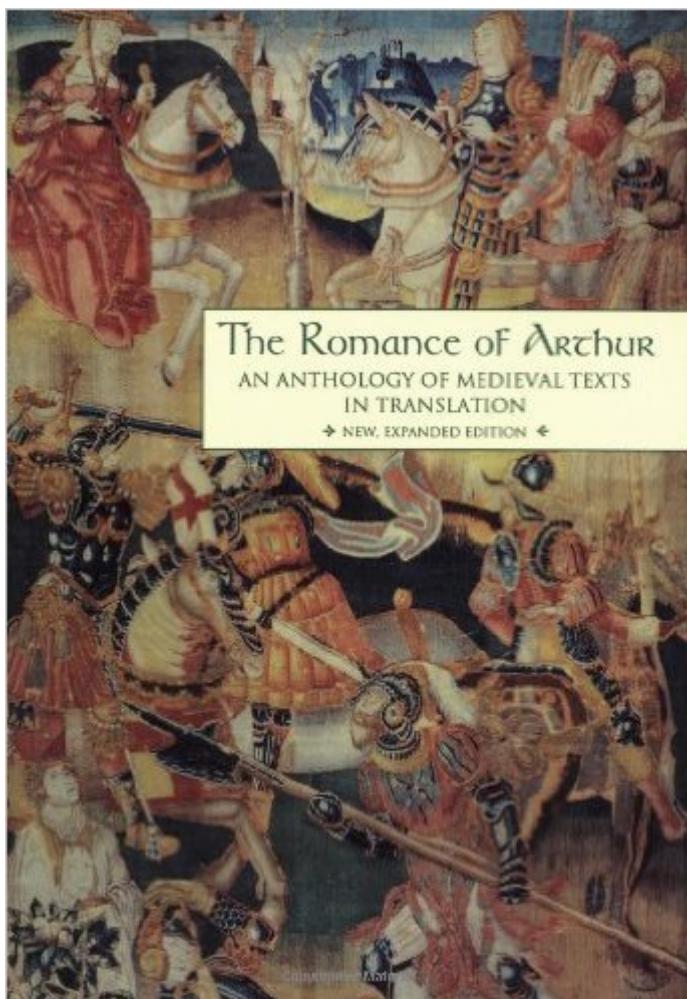


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The Romance Of Arthur: An Anthology Of Medieval Texts In Translation (Garland Reference Library Of The Humanities, Vol. 1267)



Synopsis

Covering almost a thousand years, this work features translated texts in a broad range of genres, from the early chronicles and Welsh verse through Sir Thomas Malory.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This is a useful anthology. If you want to learn some basics about the Arthurian legend, or if you want to teach a class on it, this is the best book to buy. It's fairly comprehensive, with the exception noted below, and the translations are readable, though seldom the best available. It's nice to see some of the unusual stories like "The Saga of the Mantle" and "The Rise of Gawain." The collection's major flaw is its omission of any Grail text. I have to supplement this book with Nigel Bryant's translation of Robert de Boron (Merlin and the Grail, from Boydell and Brewer). We could certainly do without all the Tristan and Isolde texts (which are only marginally Arthurian anyway). The other flaw, though less grave, is the paucity of the selection from Malory. He really deserves greater prominence than he gets in this anthology, and the selection without proper context isn't very compelling.

James Wilhelm's "The Romance of Arthur" is an outstanding one-book resource for any student of Arthurian lore. Wilhelm's introductory notes are concise but helpful, and the selection of material is both varied and quite entertaining. There are not only widely familiar and vital core works such as The Knight of the Cart, The Romance of Tristan, Malory's Le Morte Darthur and the Prose Merlin,

but more obscure masterpieces such as The Saga of the Mantle, the Rise of Gawain, and the Alliterative Morte Arthure--the last highlighted by some of the most powerful literary battles since Homer and a particularly moving scene of Arthur on his deathbed. An unqualified recommendation for any Arthurian library.

I originally got this book for a course, and it was my first taste of medieval lit. (beyond Beowulf and Canterbury tales, at least - but who didn't read those in twelfth grade?). I found it an intriguing, well chosen compilation which showed the major evolutions of the Arthurian saga from the blood-thirsty early chronicals to the flowery romances and chivalry more commonly associated with the legend. The selected excerpts were of just the right length for reading in one sitting, and the introductions helped greatly in understanding them. Despite the fate of most books assigned for a class - I truly enjoyed this one.

Technically I got this book for an Arthurian literature class that I took. Honestly though, I would have gotten it just for the great collection of literature. From Geoffrey to Malory to De Troyes and anyone in between. They're all here. the chronological order in which they are presented in the book is great too. I loved the Tristan and Isolde stories as well as the Merlin stories. If you have no other Arthurian anthology then you must have this one at the very least it's truly great.

This book gives somewhat of a Arthurian anthology as it begins in the early writings of Geoffrey of Monmouth and others, then works its way through some of the more well known stories, most notably Knight of the Cart and Gawain and the Green Knight. The translations of the individual stories aren't always the best, but this book is a good compilation for casual readers of Arthurian lit looking for a sampler.

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