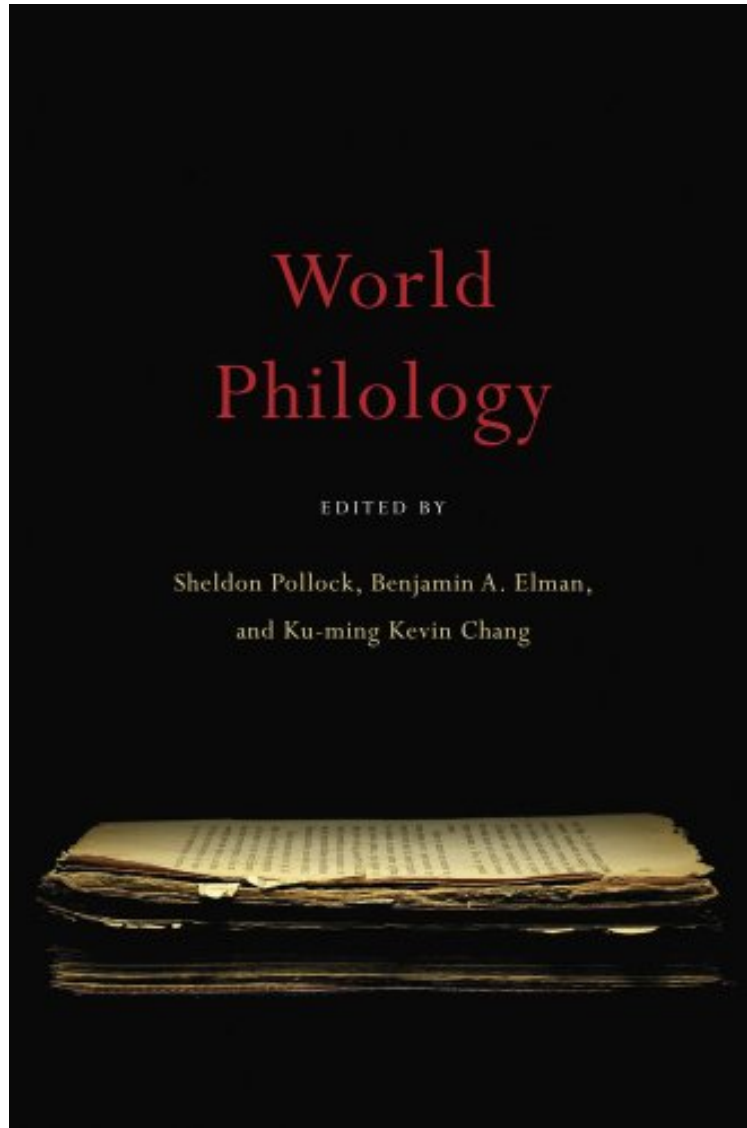


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World Philology

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Philologythe discipline of making sense of textsis enjoying a renaissance within academia after decades of neglect.

World Philology charts the evolution of philology across the many cultures and historical time periods in which it has been practiced, and demonstrates how this branch of knowledge, like philosophy and mathematics, is an essential component of human understanding. Every civilization has developed ways of interpreting the texts that it produces, and differences of philological practice are as instructive as the similarities. We owe our idea of a textual edition for example, to the third-century BCE scholars of the Alexandrian Library. Rabbinical philology created an innovation in hermeneutics by shifting focus from how the Bible commands to what it commands. Philologists in Song China and Tokugawa Japan produced startling insights into the nature of linguistic signs. In the early modern period, new kinds of philology arose in Europe but also among Indian, Chinese, and Japanese commentators, Persian editors, and Ottoman educationalists who began to interpret texts in ways that had little historical precedent. They made judgments about the integrity and consistency of texts, decided how to create critical editions, and determined what it actually means to read. Covering a wide range of cultures Greek, Roman, Hebrew, Arabic, Sanskrit, Chinese, Indo-Persian, Japanese, Ottoman, and modern European World Philology lays the groundwork for a new scholarly discipline.

World Philology demonstrates that the practice of philology is a worldwide phenomenon, found in literate cultures at many times and in many places, and sets the stage for a global comparative history of learned textual practices. The editors have assembled a broad range of eminent experts. (Christopher Minkowski, University of Oxford) This is a splendid book, conceived with courage and intelligence, and executed with grace and obstinacy. There is nothing at all like it, and people will not only use it constantly but will also wonder how they could have managed to get along earlier without ever having had anything like it. (Glenn W. Most, University of Chicago) About the Author Sheldon Pollock is Arvind Raghunathan Professor of South Asian Studies at Columbia University. Benjamin A. Elman is Gordon Wu 58 Professor of Chinese Studies at Princeton University. Ku-ming Kevin Chang is Associate Professor of History and Philology at Academia Sinica.