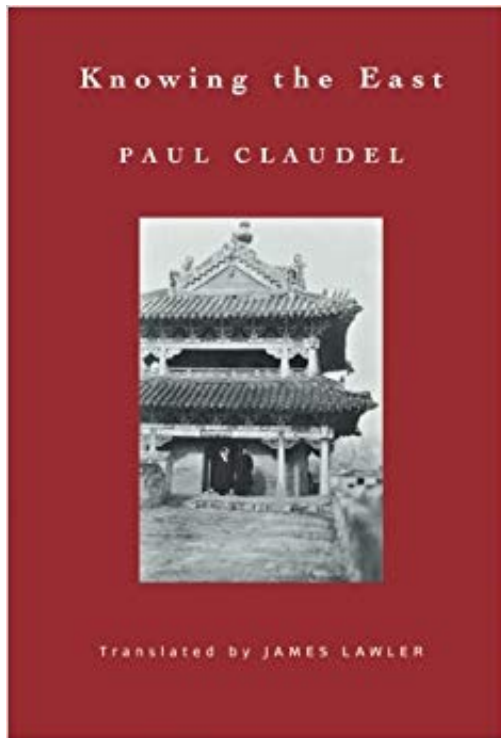


Knowing the East (Lockert Library of Poetry in Translation) by James R. Lawler, Paul Claudel



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Author: James R. Lawler, Paul Claudel

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From the time he was a young man, Paul Claudel was fascinated by Asian cultures. The poet, playwright, and literary critic entered the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs as a diplomat to China and Japan while in his mid-twenties. He spent 18 years between 1895 and 1927 as a tireless observer of both countries' nature, customs, and art. One result is this beautifully-written volume of 61 prose poems Claudel composed over the course of a decade. They have been artfully translated from the French by poet and scholar James Lawler.

Lawler provides the most crisp and accurate translation now available of Claudel's work, which was first collected in a single volume and published in France in 1907. Included are notes on the poems as well as a biographical note on the poet. Lawler presents the author as a gifted observer who discovered himself in his experience of the East. Claudel felt that, without realizing it, he had been destined to encounter this exotic new world. "There are countries we accept," he wrote, "that we marry and straightaway adopt as we do a woman, as if they had been made for us and we for them."

Informed in part by a religious epiphany that Claudel experienced in his youth, *Knowing the East* reflects the author's passion for the natural and spiritual worlds. He writes of topics as diverse as coconut palms, banyans, Japanese pines; the Yang-tse; Confucian, Buddhist, and Shinto temples and tombs; hermitages, festivals for the dead, rice-harvests and torrential rain. Filled with resonant images, *Knowing the East* is a feast for the senses--and a book to be savored again and again.



Reviews of the **Knowing the East (Lockert Library of Poetry in Translation)** by James R. Lawler, Paul Claudel

Arar

Mesmerizing.

HeonIc

Claudel writes poems of depth and celerity, yet his cantos are long intense revelations.....her we find a lighter discovering of his journey, in the end he writes a prose like Ron Hanson, deliberate but with an aura of gold

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