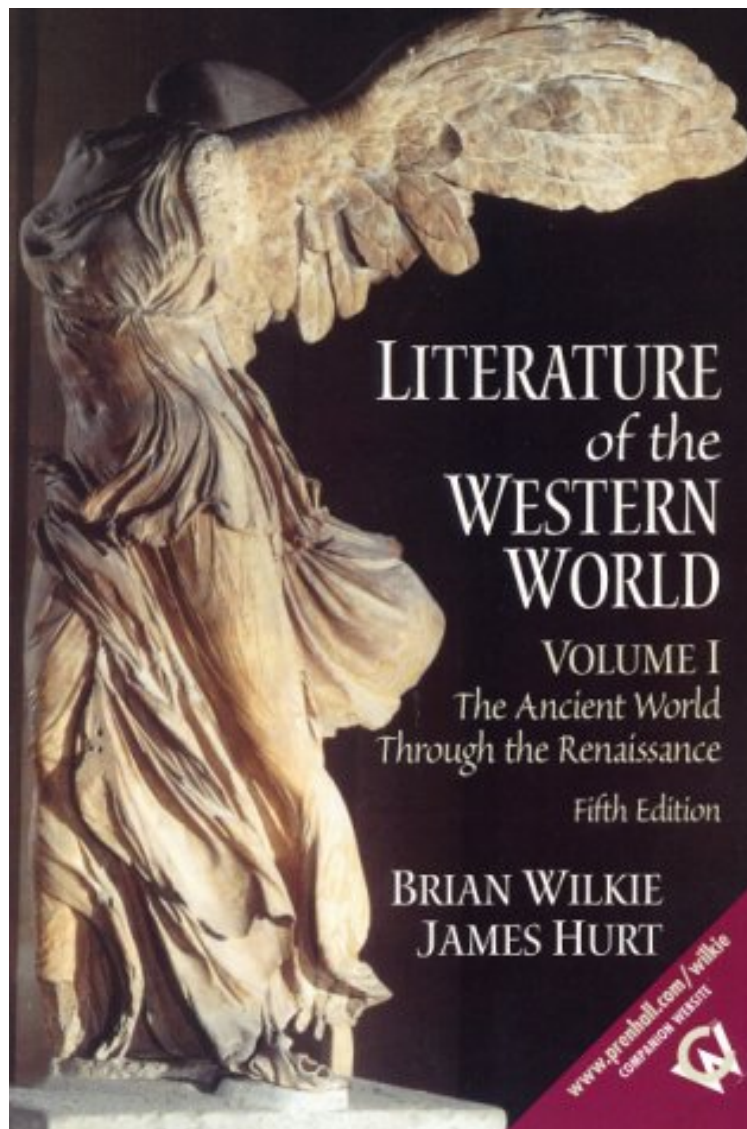


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Brian Wilkie, James Hurt

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The most comprehensive best-selling anthology of its kind, this two-volume survey enables readers to choose among the most important canonical and less-familiar texts of the Western literary tradition in Europe and the Americas. It offers complete texts whenever possible, uses the best translations of foreign-language material, and, when appropriate, presents more than one text by each author. It provides detailed historical and biographical notes and introductions to six literary periods: The Ancient World; the Middle Ages; the Renaissance; Neoclassicism and Romanticism; Realism and Naturalism; and Modern and Contemporary. Individuals interested in a comprehensive look at Western literature through the ages.

From the Inside Flap Preface This fifth edition of *Literature of the Western World* intended, as its predecessors were, to provide the best possible materials for courses in the literatures of Europe and America from the earliest times to the present. It is a textbook in the broad sense of "a book of texts," rather than in the narrow one of a book arranged along the lines of a single course. It is a small library of Western literature upon which a wide range of courses might be based and which students might preserve after a particular class is over as a useful part of their personal libraries. Through the successive incarnations of the book, the editors have clung to a quite personal conception of their roles as participants in a conversation with instructors and students who use the book, and they have made choices of texts and presentation accordingly. In such a conversation, the first question is, inevitably, "What shall we read?" This text is limited to the literatures of Europe and America and thus is designed either for courses in Western literature or for the Western portions of courses in global literature. The editors are acutely aware that the West is not the world and that a course in Western literature, even a two-semester one, should be part of a curriculum that includes non-Western literature as well, preferably with books that treat the literatures of East Asia, South Asia, the Middle East, Africa, and South America as thoroughly as this one does Western literature. Even within Western literature, two volumes, thick as they are, can include only a tiny fraction of the most highly regarded and most influential works. The editors have adopted principles of both balance and range in making their hard choices. The text goes from about 2000 B.C. to 2000 A.D., and the editors have tried to represent the earlier periods as fully and fairly as the later ones. The temporal range and balance are matched by a range and balance of literary modes. If the works included were divided into the modes of lyric, narrative, and drama, the result would be three substantial anthologies of poems, stories, and plays. The national literatures within the boundaries of the subject have been represented in a balanced way as well, as far as possible. Balance, too, has been the goal in the representation of "high" and "low" literature (both *Oedipus Rex* and *Aesop's Fables*) and literature by women and men (Marguerite de Navarre as well as Boccaccio, Anna Akhmatova as well as Rainer Maria Rilke). The way the texts are presented has been as important to the editors as their selection. The editors are aware that most students who use *Literature of the Western World* are encountering the works in it for the first time. Therefore, they try to make the initial encounter as rich and meaningful as possible. This means that translations of works in languages other than English must be carefully chosen, not only for accuracy but also for readability and, above all, for capturing the literary quality of the original as vividly as possible. Robert Fitzgerald's translations of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, the longest selection from a single author in the anthology, achieve these goals, as do Robert Fagles's and Phillip Vellacott's translations of Greek tragedy, H. R. Huse's translation of the *Divine Comedy*, Louise and Aylmer Maude's translations of Tolstoy, and Stephen Mitchell's translations of Rilke. In a number of cases, we have been able to include translations by distinguished writers in their own right. Thus the Irish poets Thomas Kinsella and Derek Mahon translate the *Irish Tain* and the poems of Gerard de Nerval; the American poets Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, William Cullen Bryant, W. S. Merwin, and Denise Levertov translate some of the Renaissance lyrics; Marianne Moore and Richard Wilbur translate *La Fontaine* and *Moliere* respectively; and Randall Jarrell translates *Faust*. The great English novelist Tobias Smollett translates Voltaire, his contemporary; and D. M. Thomas translates both Alexander Pushkin and Anna Akhmatova. Such pairings of congenial temperaments often result in happy blendings that read like original works. Introductions and annotations are also intended to help the student feel at home in the often remote and unfamiliar worlds of the writers. Extensive period introductions survey historical events and provide syntheses of the thematic and aesthetic preoccupations of each period. Detailed introductions to individual authors and works place each work in the context of its author's life and times and suggest what to look out for in a first reading without giving away the content or imposing a single interpretation. Annotations are economical and factual rather than interpretive but ample enough to minimize trips to the dictionary or

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From the Back Cover
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The Companion Website www.prenhall.com/wilkie Prentice Hall's exclusive Companion Website that accompanies both volumes of *Literature of the Western World* offers tools and support that make it easy for students and instructors to integrate this online study guide with the text. This site is a comprehensive resource that is organized according to the chapters within the text and features a variety of learning and teaching modules: Reference Modules contain Web Destinations and Net Search options that provide the opportunity to expand upon information presented in the text. Study Guide Modules contain a variety of exercises and features designed to help students with self-study. These modules include: essay questions multiple choices built-in e-mail routing option that gives students the ability to forward essay responses and graded quizzes to their instructors Communication Modules include tools such as Live Chat and Message Board to facilitate online collaboration and communication. Syllabus Manager tool provides an easy-to-follow process for creating, posting, and revising a syllabus online that is accessible from any point within the Companion Website. The Companion Website makes integrating the Internet into your course exciting and easy.

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