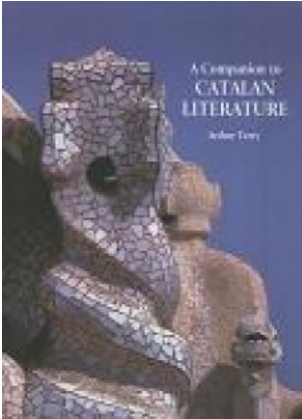


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Sinopsis

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This book is the only one of its kind in English. Part literary history, part literary criticism, it is above all a personal assessment of a rich and important body of work which is still not widely known outside Catalonia. Catalan literature, one of the three major Peninsular literatures, reached an impressive level of excellence in the middle ages, beginning with Ramon Llull and the chronicles, and culminating in the two great fifteenth-century writers, the poet Ausiàs March and Joanot Martorell, the author of *Tirant lo Blanc*, one of the landmarks in early prose fiction. After three centuries of relative eclipse, the nineteenth-century *Renaixença* produced a distinctive version of Romanticism with notable achievements in poetry, theatre and the novel. More recently, Catalan writers have successfully assimilated a number of international tendencies, from Symbolism to Surrealism, while remaining deeply aware of the possibilities of the Catalan language itself. After the cultural disruption caused by the Civil War of 1936-39 and its aftermath, Catalan literature has once again shown its capacity for self-renewal, and the present literary scene is one of great interest and originality. The book does not presuppose any knowledge of Catalan; all quotations and book titles are translated, and a list of works translated into English is included.