



Georges Bataille: An Intellectual Biography

Michel Surya

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Translated by Krzysztof Filjalkowski and Michael Richardson

Winner of the 1987 Prix Goncourt for Biography

Georges Bataille (1897–1962), philosopher, writer and founder of the influential literary review *Critique*, had an enormous impact on the thinking of Foucault, Derrida and Baudrillard, and his ideas have been the subjects of recent debates in a wide range of disciplines.

In this acclaimed intellectual biography Michel Surya enters into a complicity with Bataille's oeuvre to provide a detailed exposition of its themes as they developed against the backdrop of his life. The essence of Bataille's life and work were defined by transience and effacement, reflecting a will both to contest the impermanence of things and to confront death. His troubled childhood, his relationships with surrealism and his paradoxical position at the heart of twentieth-century French thought are enriched here with testimonies from Bataille's closest acquaintances, making this a vivid and detailed study. Revealing the contexts in which he worked, and the ways in which his work and ideas took shape, Surya sheds essential light on a figure Foucault described as "one of the most important writers of the century."

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