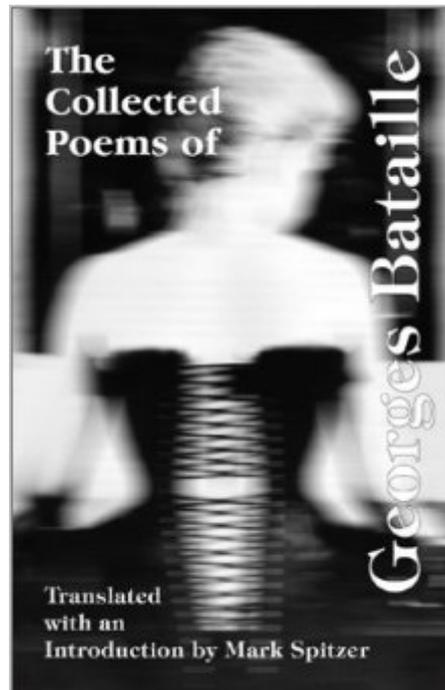


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# The Collected Poems Of Georges Bataille



## Synopsis

This is the first collected English translation of Bataille's poems. Bataille's poetry is definitely the poetry of a philosopher, but it is also a poetry with an obsessively erotic, often scatological edge, frequently pushing the boundary of what is or isn't obscene. Bataille believed that everything relates to the workings of desire and death in sexuality, but he also believed that poetry was the product of "hate" (and other extreme emotions), just as much as erotic pleasure accedes to self-annihilation. But Bataille was interested in actual action, not just disengaged hypothesis concerning the sexual act. Dufour Editions is pleased to bring Bataille's poetry to print in English. "This is the audacious, frightful side of surrealism."-Library Journal "Bataille produced some of the most transcendent, pointedly filthy literature of the century, and these poems, together in English for the first time, are no exception."-Publishers Weekly

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

I'm a fan of Bataille, but I'm afraid that in most translations into English this major thinker comes across as being merely silly about sex and excrement and the Absolute. From his own febrile, pathological alluvium located in a fertile triangle between Eros and Thanatos, anus and genitals, Bataille (said in the helpful introduction by the translator to be using poetry to reach the Eternal) comes up with cuties like these:  
The Wall  
A hatchet  
give me a hatchet  
so I can frighten myself  
with my shadow on the wall  
ennu  
feeling of emptiness  
fatigue.  
I have to admit feeling like that myself recently.  
And:  
Laughing  
To laugh and laugh  
at the sun  
at the nettles  
at the pebbles  
at the ducks  
at the rain  
at the pope's p\*\*at mommy  
and a coffin full of sh\*\*.  
It doesn't get any better than that folks, although

Bataille makes lots of references to the void, Zarathustra, Heraclitus, and other touchstones of modern Western culture. I do admire his mixture of profundity and scatology and wish that more post-modern writers would follow Bataille's example. Why let the makers of popular movies and television sit-coms get a jump on the rest of us?

Bataille's poetry is often beautiful, using words and ideas to paint vague emotional pictures. You might get bored when he goes on and on about immensity or death, but it's worth it for the good parts.

Georges Bataille is not traditionally thought of as a poet. It's true that he wrote little "poetry" (that which one might consider a poem). Nevertheless, he must be considered a poet among his other titles. Unfortunately, this book fails to give Bataille's readers an appreciation of his poetry. The translator and editor, Mark Spitzer, haphazardly compiles Bataille's poems together, neglecting to contextualize them and provide them a useful order, while his translations fall short of capturing Bataille's words as it prefers lyrical consistency to poetic accuracy. Moreover, at least one poem (GLORIA IN EXCELSIS MIHI) is missing nearly half of the original. Spitzer also neglects to add a useful notes section to clarify the difficult choices a translator of Bataille must make. Readers beware!

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