



The Tears of Eros

Georges Bataille , Peter Connor (Translator)

Download now

Read Online ➔

The Tears of Eros

Georges Bataille , Peter Connor (Translator)

The Tears of Eros Georges Bataille , Peter Connor (Translator)

Tears of Eros is the culmination of Georges Bataille's inquiries into the relationship between violence and the sacred. Taking up such figures as Giles de Rais, Erzebet Bathory, the Marquis de Sade, El Greco, Gustave Moreau, Andre Breton, Voodoo practitioners, and Chinese torture victims, Bataille reveals their common obsession: death.

This essay, illustrated with artwork from every era, was developed out of ideas explored in *Erotism: Death and Sexuality* and *Prehistoric Painting: Lascaux or the Birth of Art*. In it Bataille examines death—the "little death" that follows sexual climax, the proximate death in sadomasochistic practices, and death as part of religious ritual and sacrifice.

"Bataille is one of the most important writers of the century."— Michel Foucault

Georges Bataille was born in Billom, France, in 1897. He was a librarian by profession. Also a philosopher, novelist, and critic he was founder of the College of Sociology. In 1959, Bataille began *Tears of Eros*, and it was completed in 1961, his final work. City Lights published two of his other works: *Story of the Eye* and *The Impossible*. Bataille died in 1962.

The Tears of Eros Details

Date : Published January 1st 2001 by City Lights Publishers (first published 1961)

ISBN : 9780872862227

Author : Georges Bataille , Peter Connor (Translator)

Format : Paperback 213 pages

Genre : Philosophy, Art, Nonfiction, Theory, History, Cultural, France

 [Download The Tears of Eros ...pdf](#)

 [Read Online The Tears of Eros ...pdf](#)

Download and Read Free Online The Tears of Eros Georges Bataille , Peter Connor (Translator)

From Reader Review The Tears of Eros for online ebook

Leonardo Rodríguez says

Fulgurante y glacial. Lástima que la única ilustración de esta edición algo incómoda, sea la por lo demás fascinante "Mujer" de Hans Bellmer en la portada. No es libro sólo para leer sino para ver.

Cláudio says

"Num primeiro passo, o sentido deste livro é abrir a consciência à identidade que existe entre a «pequena morte» e uma morte definitiva. Desde a volúpia, o delírio, até ao horror sem limites."

Megan says

In love with the mysterious cave painting Bataille describes as the birth of art- a pivotal moment when early humans first link eroticism and death. Oddly appropriate to the work I am doing now.....hmmm. Highly recommend it. The visual aids add wonderful charm to the dry (or maybe just french?) text.

hanne says

I absolutely bought this book because the cover matches my favourite blue nail-polish *exactly*. really, I didn't understand a word he was saying but I looked impossibly chic while reading it.

Eddie Watkins says

The doors of my mind have only recently opened to (and been opened by) Bataille, so what I say about *The Tears of Eros* will necessarily be that of a novice. There's a thrill, tinged with anxiety, of being an intellectual novice at the age of 45.

We have hanging in our house a woodblock print done by a friend of ours of a gaunt and cigarette smoking Joan Didion. Worked into this portrait is a quote of hers - *I know what nothing means and keep on playing*. I have not read a single book of Didion's, but this quote means a lot to me. I read it as an inspirational message, as does my wife, but I know our individual interpretations of it are fundamentally different, though I have no interest in discussing this difference of interpretation with her. It is enough that the phrase has significant meaning, however different, for each of us.

It means so much to me because in recent years my spiritual path (or search for authenticity) has become centered on nothingness. Truth exists, but only as founded on nothingness, which for me means that no thought or construct of meaning can contain truth. It's not exactly a matter of faith, but very similar. Faith too often is nothing more than faith in a pat (and simple-minded) thought. My concern is to be, to go, beyond thought, and to play as if suspended in this profound void of non-thought (spewing forth thoughts, ironically). And this concern is at the root of Bataille's search also, though there are fundamental differences

between Bataille's and my involvement with this concern. These differences primarily involve Bataille's seeming isolationist nature, while for me these "higher reaches" of nothingness are suffused with interpersonal connectivity, but I won't go into this any further.

In *The Tears of Eros* this nothingness, this ineffable peak beyond all thought, is illustrated by an ancient cave painting. In this cave painting a gored buffalo (with entrails spilling out) is charging or has charged the man responsible for its mortal wound. This man is apparently dead or dying, a victim of his victim the charging buffalo, and is sporting a quite prominent erection. This painting serves as a kind of shorthand code for Bataille's concerns: a primal linking of eroticism and death, a linking of peak ineffable experience (spiked with despair) and vanishment. - (As an aside, for Bataille "eroticism" is not necessarily the sexual but is rather purposeless sensual enjoyment as opposed to work or utility. This bears some similarities to Aleister Crowley's adage *For pure will, unassuaged of purpose, delivered from the lust of result.*) - This painting is so significant for Bataille as a representation of his non-verbal concerns that he wisely does not kill its significance by discussing it; he merely hints at its profundity, teasing the reader to briefly grasp its meaning beyond the words provided. This painting serves as a kind of flashing window, a window flashing in and out of apprehension, into the charged nothingness that Bataille pursued to the ends of his thoughts, and beyond.

An even more extreme and illustrative example of his concerns is saved for a very brief discussion at the end of the book. It is a photograph of a Chinese man undergoing horrible torturous mutilation. In the picture both the man's arms have been lopped off; his pectorals have been sliced off; and a man is in the process of sawing through one of his legs. Bataille asserts that the face of this man, with eyes raised heaven-ward a la St. Joan of Arc, is expressing a kind of joy or transcendence (coupled with extreme pain and despair obviously), and so has served as profound inspiration for him (he owned a copy of the picture and spent much time contemplating it).

This example did not convince me, as other details of Bataille's arguments throughout the book did not convince me. At times his fervor to believe what he himself was writing led him to see in things only that which corresponded with his thought. As when he asserts that apes (and all animals by extension) have no concern for their dead, and when he says that apes have no sense of humor. I don't think either of these is totally true. These are only quibbles, but were enough to form chinks in the armor of his thoughts; but then again, Bataille is not concerned overmuch with logical argument, being more an aesthete or a poet, so in a way these chinks only make his thought even more authentic to me, as passion trumps logic any day.

Tosh says

Georges Bataille's great (illustrated) book on the connection between eroticism and death. The two doorways one can't avoid, yet we are drawn to its power. One of the great poetic essayists, Bataille is sort of like the moment one wakes up from a feverish dream. You have a memory of that dream, but then you are not fully awake.

Rodrigo says

An unorthodox study of erotism and its relationship to death and the chthonic throughout history with ample of examples in art, from the cave paintings to photography.

The best part to me it's the conclusion, where Bataille points out the ecstasy in voodoo ritual animal sacrifices and the agony of a tortured man in China, he sees in those two examples the inescapable link between Eros and Thanatos

Mr_wormwood says

My first excursion into the world of Bataille. As such, my first impression is that this is a writer who is trying to write a truly Nietzschean form of history. And I celebrate that. Although this particular attempt is, when read in pure isolation, something of a failure, i have a feeling the failure is somewhat mine, as it's obviously intimately connected with a previous work called 'Eroticism' which i haven't read. Still, as a impetus to explore and discover more by Batille, this text is an unquestionable success, as i'm compelled now to uncover more.

Brian says

--A collection of dirty and violent pictures that touches on eroticism and death: I read it and laugh. Only in the face of horror does the fragmentary totality of being become uncovered--

Michael says

I am not really all that interested in most of Bataille's philosophy, and this book is not particularly different. Violating taboos and the exploration of the relation between love and death becomes more and more romantic and less and less philosophically compelling as you continue to read his works.

Lisa says

This book disturbed even me.

Nicolas Baygert says

Portrait ciselé de l'érotisme dans l'histoire ; du paléolithique inférieur aux artificialités de Dali. Bataille propose ici d'illustrer un lien fondamental : « celui de l'extase religieuse et de l'érotisme – en particulier du sadisme » (P. 121). A l'origine, Bataille voit l'érotisme comme jeu volontaire destiné à sublimer la mort – l'usage des plaisirs délogeant le désir de sa trivialité animale, seconde étape après le culte des morts. Les bonnes questions sont ici posées, sans développement poussif.

Dans cette rétrospective holistique, Bataille souligne le retournement des valeurs effectué par le christianisme, qui après avoir diabolisé Éros, débouche sur ce ressentiment présent dans les fresques de Dürer ou les écrits de Dante, reléguant tous deux l'érotisme aux enfers. Il évoque Gilles de Rais et Erzsébet Bathory, qui avant Sade mirent également en pratique la morbidité d'un érotisme sans bornes.

Bataille oppose finalement l'érotisme à la jouissance matérielle – sublimation du Travail devenue l'allié d'une religion éroticide : « L'accroissement des richesses mène à la surproduction dont la guerre est la seule issue. Je ne dis pas que l'érotisme soit le seul remède à la menace de la misère, liée à l'accroissement

déraisonnable des richesses. Il s'en faut. Mais sans le calcul des diverses possibilités de consommation opposées à la guerre, et dont la jouissance érotique – la consommation de l'énergie de l'instant – est le type, nous ne saurions découvrir une issue que fonderait la raison » (P. 110). On opposera donc volontiers l'érotisme, « seule issue » à cette téléologie capitaliste menant à la guerre exposée par Bataille, à la perspective marxienne de l'abolition de la propriété privée – la notion du « privé » étant liée à celle d'intimité qui, elle-même, permet la sacralisation des rapports sexuels, i.e. l'érotisation du désir.

Matthieu says

Originally given three stars back in '08 (read in September of 2007), but after a second reading, I've decided to add an additional half-star (rounding up to four). Bataille's a strange cat. Despite some fascinating information here (e.g., the painting(s) in the Lascaux pit), the lack of *substance* behind Bataille's theories/assertions often reduces the text to a series of disjointed declarations.

Maddy says

I wonder if the makers of Martyrs had this in mind.

Sylphær says

I picked this up due to a search for a better understanding of sexual attitudes and life. I grew up with views from religions and schools about abstinence from sex while coping with my own libido instincts. This book liberates me as a human to understand why humans have sexual impulses; why death is not as scary even without any religion; and finally why I find myself comfortable in expressing my sexual thoughts while living amongst Asians who are mostly conservatives.
