



The Psychological Fictions of J.G. Ballard (Continuum Literature Studies Series)

Samuel Francis

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J. G. Ballard self-professedly 'devoured' the work of Freud as a teenager, and entertained early thoughts of becoming a psychiatrist; he opened his novel-writing career with a manifesto declaring his wish to write a science fiction exploring not outer but 'inner space', and declaring the need for contemporary fiction to be viewed 'as a branch of neurology'. He also apparently welcomed a reader's report on Crash (1973) condemning him as 'beyond psychiatric help' as confirming his achievement of 'total artistic success'. Samuel Francis investigates Ballard's engagement with psychology and the psychological in his fiction, tracing the influence of key figures including Sigmund Freud, C.G. Jung and R.D. Laing and placing his work in the context of the wider fields of psychology and psychiatry. While the psychological preoccupations of his writing are very clear - including his use of concepts such as the unconscious, psychopathology, 'deviance', obsession, abnormal psychology and schizophrenia - this is the first book to offer a detailed analysis of this key conceptual and historical context for his fiction.

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