



J. M. Coetzee and the Life of Writing: Face-to-face with Time

David Attwell

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An insightful literary biography of the Nobel Laureate J. M. Coetzee's, illuminating the creation of his extraordinary novels

J. M. Coetzee is one of the most renowned yet elusive authors of our time. Now, in *J.M. Coetzee and the Life of Writing*, David Attwell explores the extraordinary creative process behind Coetzee's work, from *Dusklands* to *The Childhood of Jesus*. Drawing on Coetzee's manuscripts, notebooks and research papers housed at the Harry Ransom Center at the University of Texas at Austin, Attwell reveals the fascinating ways in which Coetzee's famous novels developed, sometimes through more than fifteen drafts. He convincingly shows that Coetzee's work is strongly autobiographical, and that his writing proceeds with never-ending self-reflection while it moves toward aesthetic detachment. Above all, Attwell argues, South Africa, with its history, language, landscape and conflicts, is much more present in his novels than we have realized.

Having worked closely with Coetzee on *Doubling the Point*, a collection of essays and interviews, Attwell is an engaging, authoritative source. *J.M. Coetzee and The Life of Writing* is the first book-length study to make use of Coetzee's extensive archive. A fresh, engaging and moving take on one of the world's foremost literary figures, it is bound to change the way Coetzee is read.

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