



The New Art of Autobiography: An Essay on the Life of Giambattista Vico Written by Himself

Donald Phillip Verene

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In this, the first full-length study of Vico's highly original autobiography, Verene discusses its place in the history of autobiography generally, and shows it to be the first work of modern intellectual autobiography which uses a genetic method. The author views the autobiography as a work in which Vico applies the principles of human history discussed in *New Science*, making the telling of his own life an application and verification of his own philosophy. He places Vico's autobiography within the general development of the genre, considering it in relation to Augustine's *Confessions*, Descartes's *Discourse*, and Rousseau's *Confessions*. The author shows Vico to be not only the founder of the philosophy of history, but also the originator of a philosophical art of self-narrative which is the response by a modern thinker to the ancient problem of self-knowledge.

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