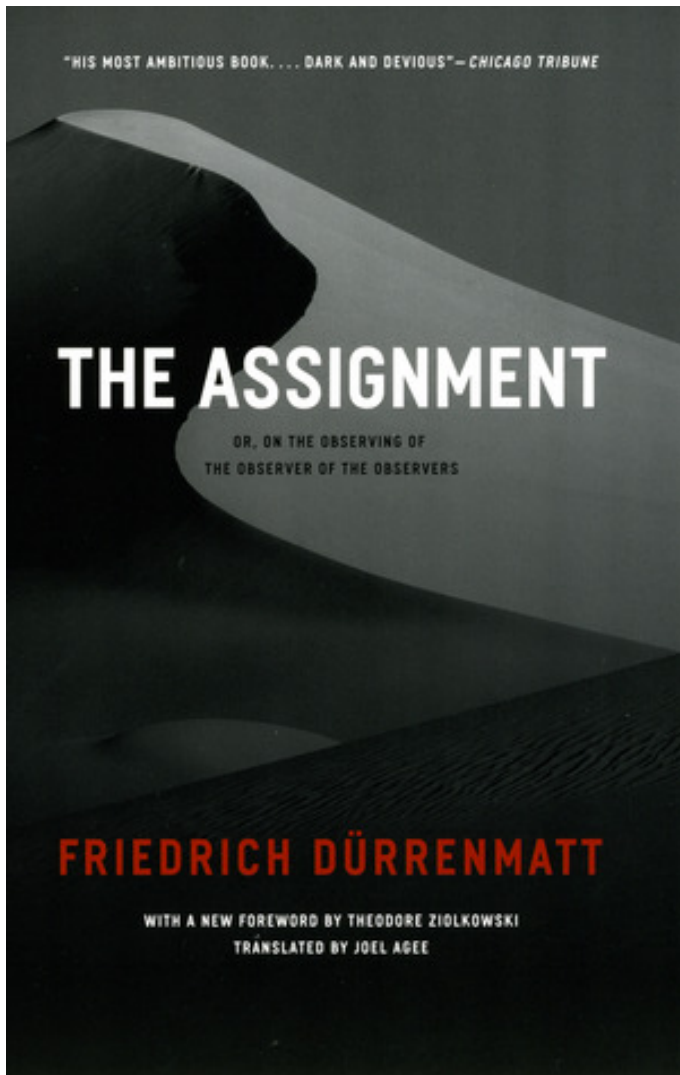

Friedrich Dürrenmatt

The Assignment: or, On the Observing of the Observer of the Observers



Title: The Assignment: or, On the Observing of the Observer of the Observers

Author: Friedrich Dürrenmatt

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Description

In Friedrich Dürrenmatt's experimental thriller *The Assignment*, the wife of a psychiatrist has been raped and killed near a desert ruin in North Africa. Her husband hires a woman named F. to reconstruct the unsolved crime in a documentary film. F. is soon unwittingly thrust into a paranoid world of international espionage where everyone is watched—including the watchers. After discovering a recent photograph of the supposed murder victim happily reunited with her husband, F. becomes trapped in an apocalyptic landscape riddled with political intrigue, crimes of mistaken identity, and terrorism.

F.'s labyrinthine quest for the truth is Dürrenmatt's fictionalized warning against the dangers of a technologically advanced society that turns everyday life into one of constant scrutiny. Joel Agee's elegant translation will introduce a fresh generation of English-speaking readers to one of European literature's masters of language, suspense, and dystopia.

Insightful reviews

Tim: A fascinating if surreal adventure, a quick read in experimental fiction. Each of the 24 chapters is only a single sentence, albeit in some cases one that goes on for 10 pages.

Also, a classic case of read the "Foreword" after you've read the book. Annoying when the very interesting analysis of something you supposedly have not yet read (questionable in the first place) actually gives away plot details in the process. Just make it an Afterword already!

Helen: Ok, so I haven't finished this yet - about half way through - but this was the only way I could post it !

Angelo Ricci: Un Dürrenmatt veramente innovativo quello de *L'incarico*, che esce per i tipi di Adelphi. Sono sempre stato affascinato dalle tematiche dello scrittore svizzero, definito più volte, e a ragione, come innovatore/destrutturatore del romanzo giallo o poliziesco o noir o come dir si voglia. Sta di fatto che Dürrenmatt prende a pretesto le trame poliziesche e le trasforma in icone paradigmatiche dell'orrore della quotidianità, orrore che permea la tranquilla banalità della vita e che tende le sue trappole proprio tra le pieghe apparentemente più sicure delle istituzioni più insospettabili.

Grande cantore della insondabilità del mistero del nostro agire, perfetto conoscitore delle contraddizioni dell'animo umano, osservatore spietato di un occidente ipocrita e pericoloso, Dürrenmatt è stato spesso anche un innovatore e uno sperimentatore nel campo dello stile. E ne *L'incarico* l'Autore sviluppa una struttura stilistica che in ventiquattro fasi mostra un divenire affabulatorio che fonde storia e dialoghi, personaggi e avvenimenti, creando un flusso narrativo che contribuisce alla ossessione della descrizione e dell'osservazione.

Un Dürrenmatt quasi delilliano, che costruisce una storia che assomiglia a una delle installazioni pop o underground che popolano, come simulacri accusatori, le storie dello scrittore postmoderno americano.

E *L'incarico* assurge proprio a simulacro accusatorio, a installazione narrativa che va oltre la narrazione, a struttura che vive di vita propria, prescindendo dal suo stesso creatore che

diviene, come tutti i personaggi di questa storia, osservatore/osservato.

Questo romanzo è del 1986. Chissà se Michael-Lindsay Hogg si è ispirato alle sue vicende quando dieci anni dopo girò *Guy-Gli occhi addosso?*

<http://nottedinebbiainpianura.blogspot...>

Adam: really good paced and full of life for post-modern existentialism. And a superb mixture of intrigue, faux-philosophy, and cleverness--until the top when, of course, we are reminded that there has been by no means any probability that any of this may ever suggest anything.

Jim: The spouse of an aged German psychoanalyst is killed at a spiritual shrine in North Africa. without development being made via the reliable investigation, and not able to shuttle himself, the husband hires a feminine documentary manufacturer to commute there and investigate. Her journey becomes a surreal, nightmarish trip into "observing the observer of the observers," the book's subtitle. everyone seems to be being watched or by way of another person and maybe the wife's disappearance is said to her personal husband's severe mental statement of her. Her final magazine access used to be "I am being watched." The digital camera workforce is itself and filmed via neighborhood information crew. So our subject is sort of a photograph inside of an image inside of a picture; nested dolls of degrees of observation. The writer was once prescient to put in writing this again in 1986, a section prior to the ever-present machine cameras and surveillance video know-how we're surrounded by way of today. The book, translated from the German, contains 24 brief chapters every one of that is a unmarried run-on sentence. Different, however it works, and it's fast paced adequate to maintain your attention. a couple of literary gems: "...an eccentric and sharp-witted guy of whom nobody might inform no matter if he was once undeserving for all times or in simple terms pretended to be helpless..." and "...she skilled with walk in the park that freedom used to be the capture into which she used to be anticipated to flee..." and "...real schooling consisted of understanding the right way to get forward on the planet by utilizing the area one desires to get forward in..." The plot is resolved in a surreal army checking out flooring the place satellites watch planes staring at tanks watching... and we get an essay at the video-game nature of contemporary struggle the place the individual pushing the button at the bomb or the drone is disconnected from the influence of his actions. whereas the e-book in all fairness fast-paced, it is not inevitably a enjoyable read; a section extra like anything you should learn for a graduate direction in sociology.

Ryan Chapman: a good parable of clash and paranoia within the vein of expecting the Barbarians, with a touch of Baudrillard for sturdy measure. it really is tricky to summarize this work, for the reason that at the one hand it is natural plot--advancing so fast it nearly journeys over itself--and at the different it is a balanced experimental paintings of 24 chapters each one such as only one sentence. So...something for everyone? i'll say that the author's matters over the mechanization of conflict (shades of Gravity's Rainbow) are the entire extra appropriate within the present age of drone strikes.

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