



Doctor Criminale

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Francis Jay, a nineties person, embarks on a quest to find one of the greatest philosophers and thinkers of the modern age, the elusive Dr Bazlo Criminale. From European congress to congress, from woman to woman, from muse to muse he pursues the doctor, while the truth is slowly revealed.

Doctor Criminale Details

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Author : Malcolm Bradbury

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Dayna says

I cannot remember exact details about this book (even though I read it not too long ago) but I know that I enjoyed it. I chose it out of a lengthy list of books to write a term paper over because my professor kept talking about what a funny book it was. I am so glad that I chose it because a) it was very entertaining for a book that I had to write a term paper over and b) I think that writing on Doctor Criminale is what got me an "A" in that class! Apparently my professor had been friends with Bradbury. She (my professor) said that this book was semi-autobiographical, and that she was the inspiration for one of the female characters in the book. She didn't tell me any of this until after I had read it and written a brilliant paper over it ... so I am glad that I genuinely liked it and had written favorably about it ... otherwise she probably would have failed me.

It's about this young journalist named Francis Jay who is looking for (or just digging up dirt on) one Doctor Bazlo Criminale for a BBC special program. Criminale apparently played both sides during the Cold War and seemed to come out all right on top. Through Francis' adventure Bradbury writes (satirizing I guess) about post-Cold War politics and attitudes.

In case you are wondering what class I read this for was about: it was the history of Eastern Europe and what Westerner's mistakenly refer to as "the Balkans." My professor was (and is) a Bulgarian obsessed with her job and correcting history. That is, correcting the Western version of Cold War history not from the perspective of either Communist or Defector ... but simply as a witness. I'm not sure how she manages to stay objective but she was a great professor and so she made sense.

Read this book if you're interested in a fictional but still believable depiction of the post-Cold War world.

Cliff says

I see one review says this is 'a little dated'. Well, so is Shakespeare, Dickens, Goethe, etc etc. It was written from the perspective as it was then, and none the worse for that.

Very amusing, beautifully drawn characters. Lavinia, producer for the proposed TV programme which starts the narrator on his quest for the eponymous Dr, Criminale. Living the high life on the money advanced for the production. Professor Codicil of Vienna who seems to spend his life on the conference circuit, never teaches and has an exaggerated sense of his own importance. The Italian, Professor Monza who spends his time organising conferences at a luxurious villa on what (I think) is a thinly disguised Lake Como. Ilonka, the enigmatic Hungarian lady who, in the immediate aftermath of the collapse of communism is determined to spend, spend, spend on western goods. Then, the equally enigmatic character of Dr Baszlo Criminale himself. Does the author let the reader discover the truth about him?

The author must have known the literary conference circuit very well. At one such the narrator refers to 'an English writer of campus novels'. Surely Bradbury himself.

Stephen Coates says

In the introduction, the narrator recounts that a university lecturer had proved to me conclusively that all literature had been written by the wrong people, of the wrong class, race and gender, for entirely the wrong reasons. I'd read this quote in one of the papers as part of a class when I was at uni, so I bought and read the book with recounts the narrator's pursuit of and attempts to interview and thus profile Doctor Criminale, an academic with almost mystical stature in whatever field he was in. It was an enjoyable read, for one who reads little fiction, although the ending was a little drawn out.

Mikhail Yukhnovskiy says

Not the best, but quotable:

There are no travelers now, only tourists. A traveler comes to see a reality that is there already. A tourist only comes to see a reality invented for him, in which he conspires.

Rosejane says

not finish but i like here words:

playful both in style and language. His best known novel The History Man, published in 1975, is a dark satire of academic life in the "glass and steel" universities – the then-fashionable newer

Oksana73 says

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Kenneth says

I registered a book at BookCrossing.com!
<http://www.BookCrossing.com/journal/11940385>

Gwen says

Maybe a little dated (c. 1992). But an interesting view of the postmodern Europe from an early 1990's perspective.

