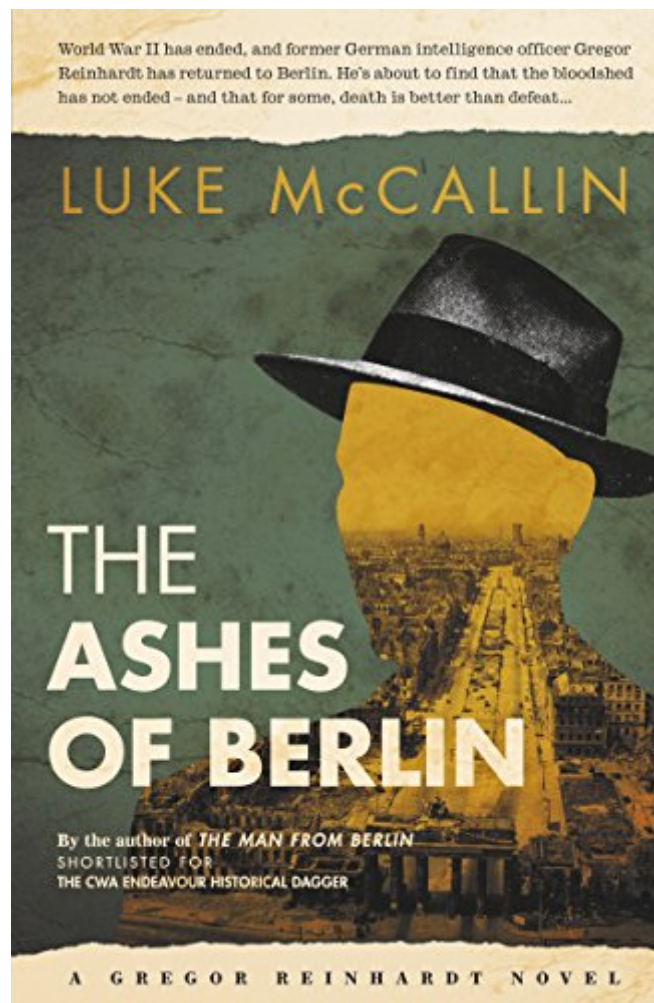




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The Ashes Of Berlin: The Divided City (A Gregor Reinhardt Novel)



Synopsis

Shortlisted for the CWA Endeavour Historical Dagger 2017'Let's not mince words: historical thrillers don't come any better than *The Ashes of Berlin*' *Financial Times*1947 and Gregor Reinhardt has been hired back onto Berlin's civilian police force. The city is divided among the victorious allied powers, tensions are growing, and the police are riven by internal rivalries as factions within it jockey for power and influence with Berlin's new masters. When a man is found slain in a broken-down tenement, Reinhardt embarks on a gruesome investigation. It seems a serial killer is on the loose, and matters only escalate when it's discovered that one of the victims was the brother of a Nazi scientist. Reinhardt's search for the truth takes him across the divided city and soon embroils him in a plot involving the Western Allies and the Soviets. And as he comes under the scrutiny of a group of Germans who want to continue the war and faces an unwanted reminder from his own past Reinhardt realizes that this investigation could cost him everything as he pursues a killer who believes that all wrongs must be avenged...'Tough, gritty and atmospheric a new Luke McCallin novel is a cause for celebration' William Ryan, author of *The Constant Soldier*'If you like Philip Kerr's Bernie Gunther books, you will love *The Ashes of Berlin*. Luke McCallin has skilfully crafted an atmospheric and gripping tale set amid the ruins of a war ravaged city that feels wholly authentic. Historical fiction at its best' Howard Linskey, author of *Behind Dead Eyes*'A compelling, addictive narrative that had me turning the pages into the small hours. Superlative' CJ Carver'Luke McCallin's best Reinhardt novel yet. It's dark, brooding and raw. Also, impeccably researched...' Jon Courtenay Grimwood'A gripping and atmospheric thriller... a thoroughly involving and worthwhile read' Crime TimeLook out for other books in the Gregor Reinhardt series: *The Man from Berlin* and *The Pale House**The Ashes of Berlin* is published in the US under the title *The Divided City*.

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Customer Reviews

I have read all books in this series. The author has an engaging pace and well developed characters. The first two books were a little tough but only from the perspective of their settings and the atrocities that occurred during the time period. This is the third of the Reinhardt novels and was great. It was more of a crime novel with many references to the Second World War and the intricacies of the Allied Forces. I enjoyed it very much. I hope there is another in the series released soon! I recommend these books.

Really enjoyed this book. It was an in depth look at postwar Germany and all the factions that divided it. This book is long and one needs to pay close attention to the multitude of characters and sub plots, but it's well worth it. A great detective story from another time.

This is a very dark, depressing book which I have put down repeatedly for a few days at a time, but it probably accurately describes well the dark days in Berlin after the end of WWII. I'm still just a little more than half-way through it & will probably finish it, but it's a chore. It's odd to say this, but I enjoyed the previous wartime novels more. There's very little hope here that Gregor & other Berliners will have better lives.

What makes the Gregor Reinhardt series such a great read is, well, everything! The storyline is elaborate though not to the point of confusion, and the historical context does not just provide a background for the main story, it's entirely part of it. There is quality in the style of writing, and in the

myriad of details of a certain time and place in European history, researched with great detail. You learn a lot when reading these novels, and the main character is not the usual alcoholic, manic-depressive, cynical police detective. He's also got a history, and you just wished you knew the whole story, but well, you won't, as this is the third and last instalment of the series, which is the only disappointment of this book.

It's set in 1947. The war is over and Gregor Reinhardt, in an elite military police unit late in the war, is now back on the Berlin police force. It's a different world. Berlin, still in ruins, its people hungry, cold and demoralized, is occupied by the victorious powers. The police department is controlled by the Communists. Reinhardt owes his job to American sponsorship. Rather than being taken prisoner by the Allies, his MP unit had been kept intact at the German surrender to help control other German POWs. He'd worked closely with the Americans. That doesn't help him with his fellow cops, where a younger and more pro-Soviet crowd rules. They don't care about his quarter century of police experience. They're contemptuous of his ties to the Americans. Reinhardt gets a strange murder case. A man is found dead in his apartment, and it appears to have been a homicide with ritualistic overtones. At the same time another man, whom they have trouble identifying, is murdered in the same building. Suddenly the overlords interfere; once the second man is revealed to have been a half-German Brit, the two cases are separated. Others are murdered and Reinhardt, whose own bosses seem to be obstructing him, finds out they share something in common: They were all pilots, veterans of the same Luftwaffe unit. So begins an unusual case as Reinhardt slowly starts peeling back layers leading to terrible wartime secrets. War crimes may be involved. So why are the occupiers obstructing the investigation? Reinhardt doesn't know who he can trust - not his police comrades, not his bosses, not the occupiers, not the veterans he encounters. It's hard to read a book like this without comparing it to Philip Kerr's Bernie Gunther series, which also revolves around a war-era Berlin cop. Gunther is a noir hero. Indomitable, with a Berliner's mordant sense of humor, he's always good company as he survives the Reich, the war, and various haunts abroad. Reinhardt, not so much. He's an Everyman, doggedly continuing his investigation against all the resistance. In dreary conquered Berlin, we could use some rays of light, but he doesn't provide any. He's locked in a perennial and introspective identity crisis. His wife died before the war. His son vanished on the Eastern Front. Reinhardt lives with an old comrade

and the widow of a longtime mentor, but there's no romance in his life. What there is, is an enormous amount of reflection of the war's toll - not just on the victims, or homefront civilians, but on the men who fought it. Veterans, particularly officers, are blamed by others for the catastrophe the Nazis wrought. They aren't allowed to band together, but only their former comrades understand them. Ones who return from POW captivity as Soviet stooges are despised as turncoats and informers. Those still Nazi true believers are fugitives. There's a blurry line between them and vanilla nationalists looking towards a better tomorrow and national unity. They all fight in the shadows with each other. Reinhardt, who quietly joined a Resistance unit while part of Germany's occupation of Yugoslavia, blames himself for not doing more sooner. Those who just went along, he thinks, are deeply to blame as well. As he investigates he must steer a perilous course between rival Allied commands who are all holding back information, different gangs of veterans, and police comrades he can't trust. The story gets ever more complex as Reinhardt tries to piece together the back stories of the victims and fish out who might be going after them. It takes an unlikely twist at the end. At times it was so convoluted I could hardly follow it. But the real star here is the story's setting, the crushed city of Berlin. McCallin depicts it vividly, if that's the right word to use for a city of gray rubble inhabited by hungry, gray, despairing people.

I like the book for historic reasons. Sometimes I get really tired of all the pensiveness of character...Wish he'd begin to get over it, even as I think that sometimes doesn't ever happen in real life. Wish for more maps in these "historic novels."

I really looked forward to the third Gregor Reinhardt novel by McCallin, as I really, really enjoyed the first two. His writing was just as good, but the story didn't grab me like the first two; I felt it moved a little slow in several places. That said, I sincerely hope there's a 4th in the series, which I shall surely read.

great book if you are a fan of the Gregor Reinhardt novels. Vivid description of post war Berlin with intimate knowledge before and after locations in Berlin destroyed by allied bombers. Reveals the competition between allies and Russians to gain German technical information that they developed during war. Reinhardt continues to struggle with conscience as an unwilling previous participant in Nazi war effort. The good cop wins out in his efforts to find a serial killer who is protected by the

British but in the last analysis justice does not win out. Hopefully there will be more novels featuring this German detective.

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