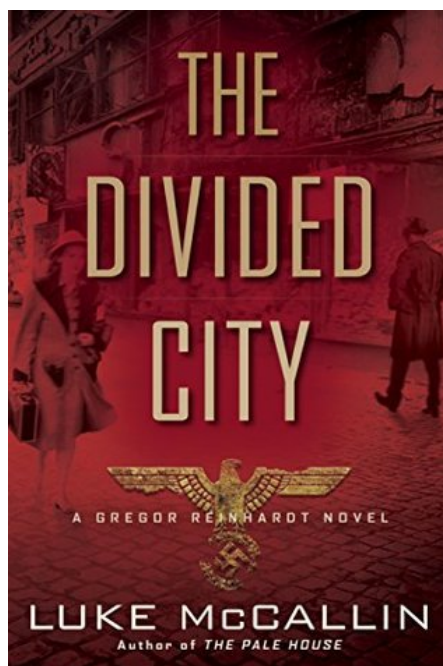




The Divided City

Luke McCallin

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The Divided City Luke McCallin

Luke McCallin, author of *The Pale House* and *The Man from Berlin*, delivers a dark, compelling thriller set in post-World War II Germany featuring ex-intelligence officer Captain Gregor Reinhardt.

A year after Germany's defeat, Reinhardt has been hired back onto Berlin's civilian police force. The city is divided among the victorious allied powers, but 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...

From the Trade Paperback edition.

The Divided City Details

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Download and Read Free Online The Divided City Luke McCallin

From Reader Review The Divided City for online ebook

Gram says

A magnificent historical thriller, set amid the ruins of 1947 Berlin.

This is the 3rd in the Gregor Reinhardt series and it finds Gregor working as a murder detective for the city's Kriminalpolizei. Someone is killing former Luftwaffe personnel and there follows Gregor's tireless investigation, which will bring him into conflict with the Allies - American, British, French and Russian - who control the 4 sectors of Germany's ruined capital as well as his work colleagues who view him with suspicion, although some admire him for his scrupulous fairness and ability to always make an arrest in the most convoluted of criminal cases.

Gradually, he uncovers a plot by a murderer seeking "justice - and revenge", along with details of horrific experiments carried out by the Luftwaffe during World War II in their bid to judge the effects of freezing water on pilots as well as the effects of flying at high altitudes. The Russians and Americans are particularly interested in the latter and a Soviet intelligence agent dangles the threat of retribution against Gregor's son Friedrich, recently returned from a Soviet POW camp, unless he cooperates with them. But Gregor is already in the employ of the Americans who gave him his job in the "new" Berlin police force.

The author, Luke McCallin, effortlessly captures the desperate atmosphere of post-war Germany as Berlin women almost prostitute themselves in return for cigarettes and chocolate and bands of orphaned children scour the streets and bombed-out buildings to find shelter and scraps of food.

As well as the wheeling and dealing of the various Allied powers, which now includes at least one enigmatic British intelligence agent, Gregor has to confront former servicemen who cling to their Nazi beliefs, hoping to use them to make Germany great again.

As a determined Gregor carries out his painstaking investigation, he realises he has sympathy for the man who is doing all the killing but, unlike him, this dogged police detective seeks only justice, not retribution.

Abby Slater- Fairbrother says

I am a huge nerd for fiction in the WW2 era. I have a whole fascination for the era and the impact it had on people's lives etc.

Former German intelligence Officer Gregor Reinhardt is working the night shift on a mundane Monday night in 1947. When a call comes in of a body found in a stairwell, in an apartment building in the American sector of Berlin. Inspector Reinhardt is now with the Schoneberg kripo division. The victim appears to have a fallen from the flight of stairs laying at the bottom with a broken neck. When other officers smell alcohol, they are hasty to mark this as a drunken accident. But Reinhardt has his suspicions.....

"sometimes death is better than defeat"

It appears prior to the fall the man had sustained a brutal beating. The police enquire with neighbours to learn of the man's identity. This leads them to an apartment in the complex and another dead body! This victim is easily identified as Mr Noell and shows clear sign of asphyxiation! But how are the two men linked? Why do they both lay dead? Reinhardt searches the flat and finds a document that states RITTERFELD ASSOCIATION is this a clue to what links the men?

The harshness of post-war Germany is fully explored. The poverty, defeat and presence of death seeps from the pages, with each character's story!

Upon further investigation Reinhardt learns that Mr Noell was a quiet, courteous and mystery man. He is a veteran of the air force, seemingly living out a lifeless existence. Reinhardt spots some homeless orphan kids and through talking to Leena learns of mysterious men coming and going. Reinhardt is clutching at theories to link the two men. The surrounding officers mock him, calling him Captain Crow. He continues to investigate whilst being plagued with flashback scenes that show what he has lived through in the war.

"Defeat is an orphan. An unloved only child".

We learn more of Reinhardt his background, personal history and essentially what shaped the man he is now. There are times with the novel where Reinhardt shows a humanity that is has inner depth and is not always displayed by his fellow police officers. This was an era of great shame for German citizens. The women who suffered the savagery of the Red Armies victory. The children now without fathers. The displaced persons, surviving the experience of a new found freedom in a country that reminds them of their great shame. The rubble women scraping by a meagre life, with a harsh job, in harsh times. The various areas are explained the Soviet zone and American/British sectors.

When more bodies begin to pile up, all with a distinct link in their veteran status. It is clear Reinhardt has a serial killer on his hands! Not just any serial killer a methodical and premeditated murderer, with vengeance fuelling his urge to kill! 4*

"All wrongs must be avenged"

James says

An entry in the surprisingly ever popular hard bitten German detective is morally conflicted in 1930s 1940s Berlin. Ashes of Berlin is a very good, if not one of the best books in this sub genre.

Rowena Hoseason says

This is not a book to wolf down in one sitting, nor one you can nibble away at in brief bites. It's too densely detailed and emotionally intense for that. It takes quite a while to get going – but once you're absorbed in the plot and characters its momentum is unstoppable. It's a long, slow examination of the human spirit, not in the extreme heat of combat but during the relentless grind of grim existence in an unthinkable situation.

There are, of course, obscure murders and a troubled investigation; a detective and his devious opponent; organisational conflict and familial strife. All the necessary requirements of an accomplished crime novel are present and correct; good old fashioned intrigue set against an extremely uncomfortable backdrop: the divided city of Berlin in 1947, shattered in substance and spirit.

In Ashes, there are patriots who were not Nazis: fascists who were not patriots. Idealists whose beliefs were betrayed and who correspondingly turned their coats... only to find their new religion to be equally hollow.

There are consequences for all actions and no obvious way for individuals to make amends. And then there's the unseemly scramble for technology and influence amid the bristling hostility which laid the foundations for the Cold War. 70 years later, we hear the echoes loud and clear.

This is the third book featuring Gregor Reinhardt and, while it works well enough as a stand-alone, to fully understand the nuance of the character you do need to read the earlier two. In particular, Reinhardt's relationship with his son is especially important. Friedrich was a Hitler Youth firebrand who despised his father's generation for the humiliation they suffered at Versailles. This storyline alone encapsulates the cataclysm which all but destroyed German society and brought Europe to the brink of oblivion. It's geopolitics at the intimate, human level.

Ashes may be the last story about Gregor Reinhardt – but McCallin has introduced several new characters whose future stories beg to be told, not least his trio of spymasters. Idealists, partisans, pragmatists and political animals: I'd love to read more of them.

9/10

There's a longer version of this review - and many other crime-thrillers - over at <http://www.murdermayhemandmore.net>

Christopher Williams says

I thought this was a really good book. I have read the others in the series and thought this was possibly the best. Gregor Reinhardt is now back in Berlin and in the police force and the time is 1947. The time and place are well described with a devastated Germany being administered by four allied forces and the population hungry and, in many cases, displaced. The police is also riddled with informers or plants from one or more of the allied powers so there is little trust between anyone.

The story is quite complex with a series of murders across Germany being discovered by Gregor which are clearly linked. It takes him some time to work out what is going on and the revelation of the perpetrator, at the end is excellent. Can recommend this and the others if you have not read them yet.

Kate says

Sometimes I like to break away from modern thrillers and read something a little less current. Cold War espionage tales and thrillers set around Germany after WWII have always fascinated me, and I have a huge fan of books written by the greats such as John le Carré and Len Deighton, and have followed Philip Kerr's "Bernie Gunther" series for years so when I saw the description of this book it instantly appealed to me.

Set in Berlin in 1947, Gregor Reinhardt has returned home after the war to his once loved profession of police detective.

The discovery of a body in the American Sector of Berlin quickly brings suspicion and Reinhardt is brought in to investigate. Unfortunately, Berlin has been carved into zones post war and Reinhardt's investigation requires him to work with all occupying forces to resolve the case.

I don't really want to say too much about the plot, it's very clever constructed so to give away any of the subtle nuances would spoil it for other readers.

What I really liked about this one was the way in which Luke McCallin took details of Berlin's history and wove them tightly with a thrilling plot where spy networks and undercover agents appeared. Being able to transport the reader to the rundown scenes in Berlin at that time is incredibly powerful, the war damaged buildings loom on every street, the distrust towards 'informers' and occupying nationals is evident through the writing and offers the reader a glimpse into a world they may not have experienced.

Reinhardt is a very well constructed character, a very richly detailed character that McCallin has taken great time and care over. The back story for Reinhardt is interesting and makes him easier to connect with, his guilt and fear are palpable. His constant struggle with trying to do the right thing makes for engrossing reading.

I was surprised to find out this was actually the third book to feature this character and will definitely be going back to read the previous two books. I felt there was a 'Bernie Gunther' sort of ethos to this, which personally was a good thing as I really like Philip Kerr's books. This can definitely be read as a stand alone, there is more than enough detail given about Reinhardt to form opinions of the character and his personality etc.

Overall an enjoyable read, a slow burner that has just the right amount of thriller, intrigue and menace.

Keith Currie says

The darker the night...

I worried about this one. A considerable part of the attraction of the first two Gregor Reinhart novels was the setting, German occupied Bosnia in the 1940s and especially the focus on Sarajevo with all its evocative aspects. Of course Reinhart is a fascinating creation himself and the plots of both novels were finely crafted and gripping, but how would Reinhart transfer to post-war Berlin, an apocalyptic wasteland apparently populated by huge numbers of detectives, policeman, spies and investigators from recent fiction by other novelists?

I need not have worried at all. The author has continued to write excellent, plot driven fiction which holds the reader's attention throughout. A former pilot in a Luftwaffe squadron is found murdered. Others from the same squadron have suffered a similar fate. How are they linked? And who is the murderer?

The Berlin setting in its ruinous state with its gangs of feral children, its competing factions of Germans and the murderous rivalries of the occupying forces is superbly drawn. Best of all is the characterisation of Reinhart, now an ex-soldier, a former military policeman, placed by the Americans in a communist dominated police force where he is mocked and despised, but continues doggedly to pursue justice as ever. He can trust almost no-one and his investigations are hindered by colleagues and facilitated by self-interested enemies against a background of destruction, prejudice, hatred and danger. He makes use of surviving Nazis, street children, Russian operatives, British spies, old friends and old foes, as well as those whose motivation is entirely unclear. The plot is twisting, labyrinthine, unravelling slowly through Reinhart's painstaking, determined investigative work. His quarry is as intelligent as he is, but far more ruthless. Justice of a sort is served in the end, but it is untidy, provokes much thought and poses many questions. As for Reinhart, he may have solved his final case – or perhaps not...

Susan Hampson says

Set in post war Berlin in 1947 Gregor Rainhardt, a former police officer, has returned to his home town to try carry on with normal life but this is now a new world. Berlin is still very much in ruins both the body and the soul of it. Divided into sectors Berlin is a place where it's residents are more the outsiders, children living like urchins and supporters and fraternisers of the SS shunned. Even the police force is now divided, being employed by either the Americans, French, British or Soviet Union factions. There is no trust even here, as the allies that fought against a common enemy have no trust with each other, informers and spies are in abundance. Rainhardt has been employed by the Americans but he is not a man that is particularly liked or respected by his fellow officers.

When a call is received about, what is thought at first glance, the dead body of a drunk at the bottom of the stairs in an American sector apartment block, Rainhardt is one of the officers to respond. He follows a blood trail up the stairs that very much puts doubt on that being the case and he discovers yet further body in one of the upper apartments. While the other police officers seem to concentrate their investigation on the death of Carlsen, a British Agent, which seems much more high profile, Rainhardt homes in on the death of Noell, a former German Air Force veteran. Rainhardt could really be labelled, 'does not play well with others', but he works on instinct as well as facts and this case pulls him like a magnet.

Rainhardt wants a normal life but the past doesn't want to let go, not yet, for some people the war hasn't come to an end and it forces Rainhardt to revisit his past that he had worked hard on leaving behind him.

This is no ordinary killing and as he begins to piece together murders that don't work within 'sectors', it becomes clear that this is the work of one man. It seems that with each piece of this puzzle Rainhardt's life expectancy is getting shorter.

This really is a stunning novel that describes a Berlin that feels as much displaced in the world as its residents. There really isn't anything light and wonderful about this book, it is dark, grave and utterly compelling. This is the third book in the series, the former two set in the war years and Rainhardt's participation and family. Do read on after you finish the story for a short piece by the author about post war Berlin, truly fascinating. Just Brilliant!

Tim says

To times and men that might have been.

This is one hell of a well-researched piece of historical fiction. Luke McCallin manages to thrust the reader right into the post-war turmoil of 1947's Berlin, conjuring up a dark stage for a gripping crime investigation, by one of the city's true inspectors on the force, Gregor Reinhardt. 440 pages later, I find myself wanting to read on, to delve ever deeper into the political mess and international intrigues that haunted Berlin just after yet another European apocalypse.

McCallin has managed to put an excellent variety down to paper; smoothly switching between the ongoing investigation (which is pretty thrilling as it is) and the surrounding historical background. Reinhardt embarks on a journey into the gruesome past of the now competing Allied forces, who are struggling to denazify a population which is sometimes more innocent than at first glance.

À la le Carré, McCallin excels. 5/5 stars and a definite recommendation from my side.

In the middle of the park, the colossal bulk of the Friedrichshain flak tower squatted like a wounded titan. The fortress had been split in two, the halves leaning away from each other, and millions of tons of rubble from ruins elsewhere in the city were being piled around its massive walls. The tower now seemed to be drowning in the debris that now fringed it, the whole becoming a new landmark to the city's postwar facade. Grass would grow there eventually, Reinhardt knew, trees as well, and a future generation of Berliners

would have little to no idea what lay beneath the green hill they lay or walked on.

Paromjit says

This is an impeccably researched and atmospheric novel featuring Gregor Reinhardt now working as a police detective in a much reduced and fractured police 'kripa', unenviably trying to serve four masters in post war Berlin in 1947. The bombed out ruins of the city is a hotbed of theft, assaults, rape, extortion, black marketeering and corruption. All malice is foisted on the desperate whilst the desperate try to get away with as much as possible. There are gangs of feral orphans and people are struggling to stay alive amidst the poverty, starvation and bleakness. Berliners try to ally themselves with the occupiers in an effort to gain access to food, cigarettes, alcohol and other goods and favours. German women who go with the allies are treated with contempt and savagery, in the time honoured tradition of a man taking out his failings on women and children.

Treated with suspicion and contempt within the police, Reinhardt is working the nightshift when he is called to Neukolln and the murder of two men. One turns out to be David Carlson, a military lawyer working with the British faction on war crimes and the other is Andreas Noell, a man who served in the German airforce. The allies interfere in the investigation and succeed in separating the two murders whilst Reinhardt focuses on Noell. This is a twisted trail of a case that draws in the powerful and knowledgeable Russian, Skokov, who seems to know everything about the case and insists that Reinhardt keeps him informed about all developments, as indeed do the Americans and British. The political intrigue and danger seeps into every corner of the case. We have die hard Nazi SS sympathisers who have no intention of going away and are a force to be reckoned with. More murders occur and it becomes clear that there is a connection with the victims and an airforce group in North Africa and the darkest of secret deeds that happened under the Nazi regime. There is a dangerous and highly skilled killer with the qualities of a chameleon in search of his own brand of justice.

Justice in Germany at this stage is a murky chequered affair, compromised, and subject to the demands of real politik. Amongst the allies, the fractures between them are transparent and each is in a race for 'what shines in the rubble', particularly German scientists and others perceived as of high value irrespective of what they may have done. This novel captures this period of Berlin's history in an impressive manner. It delineates the complications, past and family of characters like Reinhardt such as the return of his son, Friedrich, who is struggling to come to terms with all that he did in the war and after. This is a scarred city and people, much has happened, none of it is pretty but there is the huge task of building for the future. No easy task and and there is the inevitable moral ambiguity as to how this is achieved. The author is brilliant in painting this complexity and this tumultuous time in the book. This is a superb novel which I highly recommend. Thanks to Oldcastle Books for an ARC.

Thebooktrail says

BERLIN

Following *The Man From Berlin* and his follow-up *The Pale House*, this is the third in the series and it's a novel of such depth and grit that I really got immersed into it quickly.

The portrait of how life was in Berlin at the time, and the impression of a man newly returned from war was exceptionally done in my view. I felt emotional reading it and believed every word the characters said. This is the only way most of us will ever get to experience that time and place and it's such a fascinating period of history even if violent and destructive. It's a broken man in a broken world – but I still liked Reinhardt as he's never lost his moral compass – he stands out for me and I really hope this isn't the last in the series!!

I love it when books are packed with detail and atmosphere but you don't realise it as you're reading as you're so fully immersed in everything that's going on that it's when you sit back at the end that you realise what a ride it's been. Some gritty moments, horrible infighting, but a fascinating insight into Berlin, its people and politics.

One to read for sure.

Olivermagnus says

A Divided City is the third book featuring German policeman Gregor Reinhardt. The first two were set during the war, but this one begins in 1947 Berlin, where Reinhardt has returned to the police force. Everything has changed now, and even though he's back, his colleagues neither like nor trust him. Each person on the force has been sponsored by one of the four temporary governing powers – England, France, United States, and Soviet Union. Reinhardt has been sponsored by one of the Americans.

One night he is called to a rundown building, where he finds two dead bodies that appear to be unconnected. One of the dead men is identified as Carlsen, a British agent, who is thought to have been killed by a criminal as part of a bar fight. The other dead man is Noell, a former German Air Force veteran. Reinhardt volunteers to investigate the Noell case, while the rest of the police focus on Carlsen, who appears to be the more important of the dead men.

I love the way the author describes post-war Berlin, a city ravaged by war and the wreckage of the city. He also has given us one of the most haunted of characters in Gregor Reinhardt. The secondary characters are incredibly well done. The story can be difficult to get started due to the unfamiliar names of people and places, but once I had them settled in my own language, I had no difficulty following the story. A Divided City is more of a crime novel than the previous stories and can easily be read as a standalone book. It's impossible not to compare this to the Bernard Gunther series by Philip Kerr, but they are actually quite different. Most books that have WW2 settings stop at the end of the war, or give us a perspective from the victor's side. This one gives the reader a completely different side of the story – one from the view of a German.

Paromjit says

I am re-posting this review as yet again Goodreads has lost my review!

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access to food, cigarettes, alcohol and other goods and favours. German women who go with the allies are treated with contempt and savagery, in the time honoured tradition of a man taking out his failings on women and children.

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Justice in Germany at this stage is a murky chequered affair, compromised, and subject to the demands of real politik. Amongst the allies, the fractures between them are transparent and each is in a race for 'what shines in the rubble', particularly German scientists and others perceived as of high value irrespective of what they may have done. This novel captures this period of Berlin's history in an impressive manner. It delineates the complications, past and family of characters like Reinhardt such as the return of his son, Friedrich, who is struggling to come to terms with all that he did in the war and after. This is a scarred city and people, much has happened, none of it is pretty but there is the huge task of building for the future. No easy task and there is the inevitable moral ambiguity as to how this is achieved. The author is brilliant in painting this complexity and this tumultuous time in the book. This is a superb novel which I highly recommend. Thanks to Oldcastle Books for an ARC.

Elaine Tomasso says

I would like to thank Netgalley and Oldcastle Books for a review copy of The Ashes Of Berlin, the third novel in the Gregor Reinhardt series of WW2 novels.

It is all change in this novel. It is 1947 and the war is over. Reinhardt, with nothing better to do, returns to Berlin at the prompting of the Americans and rejoins the police force. Again things have changed but not for the better from his point of view. The Berlin police force is populated with officers whose only merit is their communist sympathies and Reinhardt, championed by the Americans, is vilified, distrusted and ostracised until he catches a murder case and the situation goes from bad to worse. A former airforce pilot has been murdered along with another man no one can identify, until they can and he is a British lawyer working on war crimes. Reinhardt is the only one to believe the murders are linked and having upset the Brits he is given the case of the airman and others the lawyer. Reinhardt soon discovers the airman is not the only victim and he is pursuing a serial killer intent on killing a group of wartime pilots. The novel follows his investigation into the who and why.

I thoroughly enjoyed The Ashes Of Berlin as it is a proper, grown up book which covers a lot of ground. Firstly, there is the murder investigation which is clever, twisted and compelling. Secondly, there is the historical detail of how life was for Berliners, hunger, poverty, rubble and fear. Thirdly, there is the political situation of a Berlin divided into 4 occupied zones and the associated infighting between the allies. It is a long, complex novel but so worthwhile on all levels.

Reinhardt is a difficult character. He is dedicated to his job and committed to finding the killer but not so good at the politics and sometimes falls off the tightrope he is forced to walk because it seems that only the French have no interest in his investigation. The tension when the Russian intelligence officer, Skokov, pays him a visit is palpable because Reinhardt has no idea why he is interested in his investigation. Equally he comes under pressure from both the Americans and British to reveal what he knows. And yet, with so much interest from the occupying forces he gets no support and some active hindrance from the German police. He is prone to melancholy and can see no way out of his predicament but instead of disliking him for his lack of gumption in dealing with it I found myself agreeing with and rooting for him.

The hunt for the killer is riveting and brings Reinhardt into contact with many different groups which allows Mr McCallin to portray, in vignette, many disparate strands of Berlin society, the urchins living rough in the rubble, the disaffected veterans who are viewed with scorn by the rest of the populace, the forerunners of the Stasi and their sneaky, loutish ways, the aristocratic Junkers, stripped of their lands by the Soviets and, obviously, the Nazis who gave gone underground but still cling to their beliefs. They all play their part in a baffling case, although I must admit to guessing the perpetrator before the dénouement, not long before but enough to make it a little drawn out.

Post war politics play a big part in the novel but it is never polemicised, rather it all falls into place naturally as Reinhardt negotiates them, much as one would a minefield, in the course of his investigation. The manoeuvrings and jockeying for position are fascinating but very much background to Reinhardt's case.

Given the setting and Reinhardt's feelings this is a dark, gritty book but somehow it escapes being bleak and just feels realistic. I think it is a very complete novel with a broad canvas and yet Reinhardt's reactions make it seem intimate. The Ashes Of Berlin is an excellent read and I have no hesitation in recommending it to anyone who loves a good book.

Manchester Military History Society (MMHS) says

A great story for your “Berlin Noir” shelf

This is the third Gregor Reinhardt novel by Luke McCallin and is set in 1947 Berlin rather than the wartime former Yugoslavia which provided the back drop for the first two.

McCallin re-creates the war weary terrain of Berlin incredibly well. His research is impeccable and his writing entertains as well as educating the reader on Berlin's post war history and its politics.

Gregor Reinhardt, the main character who has returned to his pre-war job of police detective is a detailed character whose wartime experiences have moulded into a conscience ridden soul. A murder in the American sector brings him up against all 4 occupying authorities as he tries to solve the crime.

Even if you are not interested in the history, it's a great police procedural that will keep you guessing. If you are a fan of John le Carré or Len Deighton, and have read Philip Kerr's "Bernie Gunther" series then this will absolutely appeal to you.
