

Bernhard Schlink
Guilt of the Past

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**Bernhard
Schlink**
***Vergangenheits-
schuld***
*Beiträge zu einem
deutschen Thema*

Diogenes

These essays examine the collective guilt of the war and post-war generation, its confrontation with National Socialism and its consequences, the role played by law in coming to terms with a guilt-ridden past and the possibility of forgiveness and reconciliation. They are the result of the author's confrontation during the last two decades with the experiences and entanglements of his own generation and from encounters with friends, colleagues and students from the newly-formed German states, where the author began teaching at the Humboldt University of Berlin in the year the Wall fell.

These essays represent a theoretical yet readily accessible exposé of the constant thematic thread of Bernhard Schlink's literary oeuvre.

Book factsheet

Contemporary Literature
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Translation rights currently sold:
Turkish (Zoe)

Movie adaptations

2011: Das Wochenende

Director: Nina Grosse
Cast: Katja Riemann, Sebastian Koch, Barbara
Auer

2009: The Reader

Director: Stephen Daldry
Screenplay: David Hare
Cast: Kate Winslet, Ralph Fiennes, David Kross,
Bruno Ganz, Karoline Herfurth, Volker Bruch,
Hannah Herzprung und Alexandra Maria Lara

2008: The Other Man

Director: Richard Eyre
Screenplay: Richard Eyre
Cast: Liam Neeson, Laura Linney und Antonio
Banderas

1991: Der Tod kam als Freund

Director: Nico Hoffmann
Cast: Martin Benrath, Hannelore Elsner, Heino
Ferch, Marianne Hoppe

Awards

- 2024 Spanische Übersetzung von *Die Enkelin* mit dem ›Premio de las Librerías de Navarra‹ ausgezeichnet
- 2014 ›Pak Kyong-ni Prize‹ der südkoreanischen Kulturstiftung Toji für sein schriftstellerisches Schaffen
- 2003 ›Bundesverdienstkreuz 1. Klasse‹ für *Der Vorleser*
- 2002 ›Preis des German-British Forum‹ für sein Gesamtwerk
- 2001 Finnischer Literaturpreis ›Eeva Joenpelto-Preis‹ der Gemeinde Lohja
- 2001 Ernennung zum ›Chevalier dans l'Ordre de la Légion d'Honneur‹
- 2000 ›Ehrengabe‹ der Heinrich-Heine-Gesellschaft in Düsseldorf
- 2000 ›Sonderkulturpreis‹ der japanischen Tageszeitung *Mainichi Shinbun*, der jedes Jahr an einen japanischen Buchbestseller vergeben wird, für *Der Vorleser*
- 2000 ›Evangelischer Buchpreis‹ des Deutschen Verbandes Evangelischer Büchereien für *Der Vorleser*
- 1999 Erstmals verliehener ›WELT-Literaturpreis‹ für sein literarisches Schaffen



Bernhard Schlink, born in 1944, was a Professor of Public Law and Legal Philosophy and a former judge at the Constitutional Court of North Rhine-Westphalia. His first novel, *Self's Justice*, was published in 1987; his 1995 novel *The Reader*, translated into more than fifty languages and adapted by Stephen Daldry into a film starring Kate Winslet, established his worldwide renown. He has been awarded with national and international prizes like the German ›Bundesverdienstkreuz (Order of Merit) 1st Class‹, the French ›Chevalier dans l'Ordre de la Legion d'Honneur‹ and the Italian ›Grinzane Cavour Prize‹. His latest novel is *The Late Life*.

Awards (cont'd)

- 1997 ›Grinzane-Cavour-Preis‹ (Italien) für *Der Vorleser*
- 1997 ›Prix Laure Bataillon‹ (Frankreich) für *Der Vorleser* (Auszeichnung für den Autor sowie für den Übersetzer Bernard Lortholary)
- 1997 ›Hans-Fallada-Preis‹ der Stadt Neumünster für *Der Vorleser*
- 1993 ›Deutscher Krimi-Preis‹ des Bochumer Krimi Archivs für *Selbs Betrug*
- 1989 Autorenpreis deutschsprachige Kriminalliteratur ›Der Glauser‹ für *Die gordische Schleife*

Praise

Bernhard Schlink

»Schlink has won his huge popular following by bringing to bear a penetrating intelligence about the psyche of his characters and an empathy for their dilemmas. Professor Schlink may be an expert on the letter of the law, but writer Schlink is an intrepid explorer of the much trickier terrain of the human heart.« – Andrew Nagorski / Newsweek, London

»[Schlink] writes instructive tales that adeptly raise difficult questions and propose appealing answers.« – New York Times Book Review

»The German novelist Bernhard Schlink is pretty much second to none when it comes to storytelling.« – Helmut Atteneder / Oberösterreichische Nachrichten, Linz

»Schlink knows the depths of the human soul all too well. The writer and judge proves with each of his books that he knows how to transform German history into literature.« – ZeitPunkt, Leipzig

»One of the most successful and versatile German writers of our time.« – Volker Hage / Der Spiegel, Hamburg

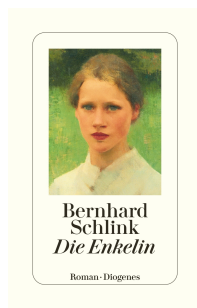
»The truly masterly aspect of Schlink's prose is its intelligence – an intelligence that is firmly rooted in common sense.« – Welt am Sonntag, Hamburg



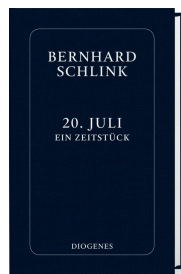
Justice
208 pages
2026



The Late Life
240 pages
2024
Bestseller



The Granddaughter
368 pages
2021
Award winner
Bestseller



The 20th of July
96 pages
2021



Colours of Farewell
240 pages
2020
Bestseller



Olga
320 pages
2018
Bestseller



Explorations
288 pages
2015



The Woman on the Stairs
256 pages
2014
Bestseller



Bernhard Schlink
Gedanken über das Schreiben

Diogenes

Thoughts on Writing
96 pages
2011



Bernhard Schlink
Sommerlügen

Diogenes

Summer Lies
288 pages
2010
🏆 Bestseller



Bernhard Schlink
Das Wochenende

Roman · Diogenes

The Weekend
240 pages
2008
🎬 Movie Adaptation
🏆 Bestseller



Bernhard Schlink
Die Heimkehr

Roman · Diogenes

The Homecoming
384 pages
2006
🏆 Bestseller



Bernhard Schlink
Vergewisserungen
Über Politik, Recht, Schreiben und Glauben

Diogenes

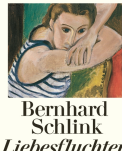
Verifications
368 pages
2005



Bernhard Schlink
Selbs Mord

Roman · Diogenes

Self's Murder
272 pages
2001



Bernhard Schlink
Liebesfluchten

Diogenes

Flights of Love
320 pages
2000
🎬 Movie Adaptation



Bernhard Schlink
Der Vorleser

Roman · Diogenes

The Reader
208 pages
1995
🏆 Award winner
🎬 Movie Adaptation
🏆 Bestseller



Bernhard Schlink
Selbs Betrug

Roman · Diogenes

Self's Deception
304 pages
1992
🏆 Award winner



Bernhard Schlink
Die gordische Schleife

Roman · Diogenes

The Gordian Knot
272 pages
1988
🏆 Award winner



Bernhard Schlink
Walter Popp
Selbs Justiz

Roman · Diogenes

Self's Punishment
352 pages
1987
🎬 Movie Adaptation