

~ DISCUSSION GUIDE ~
THE GERMAN CLIENT
BY BRUNO MORCHIO

Did you like *The German Client*? Why? Why not?

Bruno Morchio is one of the most popular Italian mystery authors. Have you read any books by other Italian mystery authors? *The German Client* is an example of Mediterranean Noir. How would you compare this book to other Italian mysteries?

~ SETTING ~

The story was set in two places in Italy, Genoa and nearby Sestri, during two different times, the present and the period of the Nazi occupation. How were the settings treated by the author? How did the settings contribute to the story? Why?

Did the settings seem realistic? Did you have the impression of finding yourself in the book's places and times?

In which ways would the book have been different if it had been set in a different time or place?

~ PLOT ~

What are your impressions of the plot? Did you find yourself trying to solve the case along with Bacci Pagano? Did you empathize with the Italian partisans? What surprised you? At what point did you figure out the answer to Pagano's investigation?

~ MAIN CHARACTERS ~

Present time:

Bacci Pagano, Private Investigator
Deputy Police Superintendent Pertusiello
Jasmine Kilamba
Kurt Hessen

1944:

Captain Helmut Hessen
Sergeant Walden
Maestri, aka Tearnails
Iolanda
Dolores

The Partisans:

Olindo Grandi
Enrico Parodi, aka Balletta
Luigi Bavastro, aka Gino
Lanza
Tilde
Biscia
Dria
Calcagno

Were the characters realistic? Did you feel that you would have liked to meet them? Did you like them? Did you hate them? Why?

Can the settings themselves be considered characters?

Did you find the characters' actions plausible? Why? Or why not?

Do you find Bacci Pagano's method of conducting his investigations effective?

How do his methods differ from those of typical American or British detectives?

Were you able to imagine yourself in the same situations in which the characters of the book found themselves?

Do the characters change and evolve as the story progresses? How? Why?

~ THEMES ~

What are the themes addressed in the book? How important are they?

What message do you think Morchio is trying to convey to his readers?

What did Tilde represent? What did Jasmine represent? Did you find any parallels between the two characters?

Do you think that war justifies actions that might be considered unethical during peace?

What did you think of Tilde's relationship with Biscia? With Hessen? Did you empathize with Tilde's situation? How would you have reacted? What choices would you have made? Why?

Through his characters, Morchio communicates particular views on morality, ethics and justice. What philosophical and ethical questions do the characters struggle with in the book, both in the present and in the past? Do you find these questions to be relevant to you? If so, how?

~ IMAGES ~

How symbolically important are the book's images?

Do those images contribute to the plot's development, or to the characters' evolution?

~ ENDING ~

Did the book end as you expected? If not, how would you have liked it to end?

Would you recommend this book to other readers? To your friends?

Do you consider it a moral duty to give a really great book like *The German Client* a really good Amazon review? ;)