



by Hans Joachim Schädlich  
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Fiction

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## Kokoschkin's Journey *Kokoschkins Reise*

### review

*Kokoschkin's Journey* is both leisurely and laconic. One of the joys of the book is that the history is neither forcefully condensed nor skimmed over.

The novel is the tale of the ageing Kokoschkin's cruise to New York on the Queen Mary II in 2005. This often hilarious account of the staid and hypocritical middle classes, who gather for dinner onboard every evening, is overlaid with memories of Kokoschkin's numerous journeys across Europe during his young life as revolutionary and exile. Having just journeyed across Europe for – he suspects – the last time, Kokoschkin recalls the significant sites on his life's journey, and so tells a personal history of twentiethcentury Europe: tumultuous times, from the rise of Bolshevism and Nazism to the crushing of the Prague Spring. The calm ocean cruise is counterposed with these stormy memories.

Throughout this charming novel there is a sense of restraint, with little need to elaborate on any specific event or conversation. The self-control of the narrative reflects Kokoschkin's own attitude. He often cannot, or does not want to, get more than a passing glimpse of the stations of his past.

### press quotes

*'A colourful depiction of the twentieth century'– MDR*

## about the author

**Hans Joachim Schädlich** was born in 1935 in Reichenbach, and worked at the German Academy of Sciences in East Berlin before resettling in West Germany in 1977. Schädlich now lives in Berlin once again. He has received many accolades for his work, including the Heinrich Böll Prize, the Hans Sahl Prize, the Kleist Prize the Schiller Memorial Prize, the Lessing Prize, the Bremen Literary Award and the Joseph Breitbach Prize.

### Previous works include:

*Gib ihm Sprache* (1999); *Tallhover* (1986); *Ersuchte Nähe* (1977)

‘A master of condensation, whose clipped, concise style offers an extraordinary intensity.’– *Süddeutsche Zeitung*

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