

ANNA PORTER

# The Ghosts of Europe

*Journeys through Central Europe's Troubled Past and Uncertain Future*

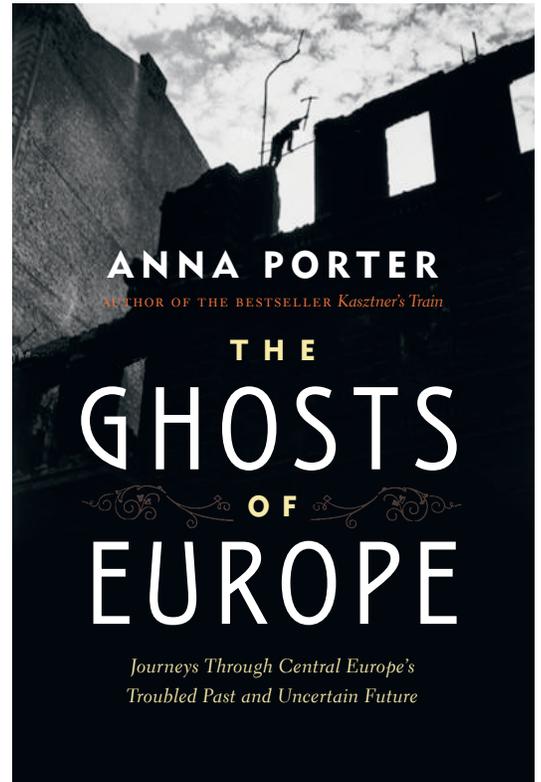
*One of the country's most distinguished writers and publishers returns to her roots to explore the consequences of democracy in the former Hapsburg lands*

IN 1989 THE BERLIN WALL was dismantled. Communism gave way to democracy. Since that time the former borderlands of the long defunct Hapsburg Empire and the more recently dispersed Soviet Empire have been trying to invent their own versions of democracy and market-driven economics. But these experiments have led to a widening gap between rich and poor. The worldwide economic crisis has severely tested Central Europe's determination to live peaceably, and there are many disquieting signs of old hatreds and racial tensions returning.

Acclaimed author Anna Porter travels through the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia to speak with leading intellectuals, politicians, former dissidents and the champions of aggrieved memories. She interviews great figures of the revolution (Václav Havel, Adam Michnik, George Konrád) and its new custodians, among them Radek Sikorski and Ferenc Gyurcsány, and also examines the younger generation with little or no experience of Communism and no interest in its aftermath. She visits Poland's Institute of National Remembrance, Prague's Jewish Museum and Hungary's House of Terror, each an attempt to reckon with dark episodes of history.

*The Ghosts of Europe* is a compelling exploration of power, nationalism, racism and denial in nations with a tumultuous history and an uncertain future.

ANNA PORTER spent her early childhood in Hungary. Her family fled after the 1956 revolution, and she lived in New Zealand before coming to Canada in 1969. The founder and publisher of Key Porter Books, she is the author of three crime novels and an acclaimed memoir, *The Storyteller*. Her most recent book, *Kasztner's Train*, won the Canadian Jewish Book Award and the Nereus Writers' Trust Non-Fiction Prize. Since 2007, she has been writing about Central Europe for *Maclean's* and *The Globe and Mail*. She lives in Toronto.



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