

Exit into History: A Journey through the New Eastern Europe

Eva Hoffman



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Shortly after the dramatic events of 1989, Eva Hoffman spent several months travelling through her native Poland and four other Eastern European countries, what was then Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Romania and Bulgaria, all of which had just undergone an historic transformation.

While making her way from the Baltic to the Black Sea, Eva Hoffman ranged from capital cities to wayside villages and sleepy provincial towns; she visited shipyards, museums, homes and the coffee-houses of the intelligentsia, and she talked to a great variety of people, many of whom were struggling with the transition from an unwanted pass to an uncertain future.

Through these encounters, through anecdotes, revealing observations and biographical portraits, Eva Hoffman evoked the eclectic mosaic of the new Eastern Europe, while also reconstructing the turbulent experiences of the post-war decades and reflecting on the uses and misuses of historical memory.

Exit into History remains an arresting and intimate report from a contemporary revolution, one that has changed Europe for ever.

'It is the enormous merit of Hoffman's book that it is free from ideological claptrap. It is beautifully written, full of word pictures that stay in the mind. She understands the way human beings have been moulded by politics, gender, race and generation.' *Independent*

'It is a great achievement and a unique book . . . This is an indispensable clue for anyone who is keen to understand how the new Europe is emerging from the debris of the Cold War period.' Ryszard Kapuscinski

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