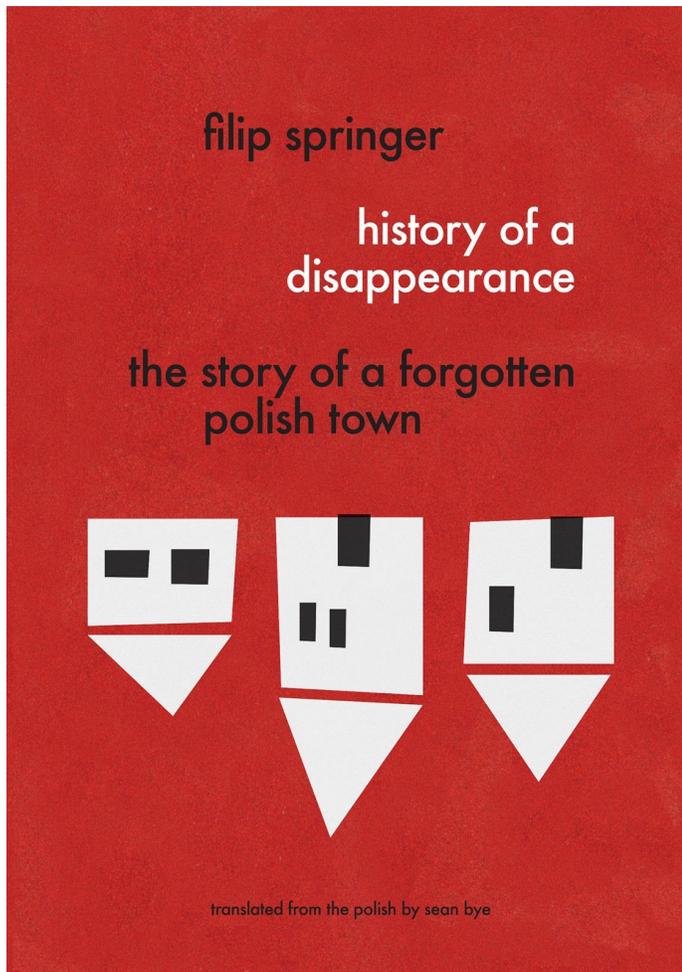


The Gripping Story of a Polish Town at the Crux of History



“This is journalism you read holding your breath, like with a thriller, though you know it doesn’t have a Hollywood ending at all.” —*Polityka*

“Springer marvelously describes the atmosphere of terror, silence, and hidden suffering that people experienced firsthand as a result of the arms race and the drive for nuclear weapons.” —*Rzeczpospolita*

“An archeologist, ethnographer, reporter, and photojournalist, Springer reveals an extraordinary talent for storytelling in *History of a Disappearance*. Everything is masterfully balanced.” —*Gazeta Wyborcza Wrocław*

History of a Disappearance:

The Story of a Forgotten Polish Town

By Filip Springer

Translated from the Polish by Sean Gasper Bye

Paperback ISBN: 9781632061157 • Pub: 4/4/17 • 5.5” x 8.25” • 352 pp • \$17.99 • History: Poland / 20th Century Europe • Rights: North America

***History of a Disappearance* is the fascinating true story of a small mining town in the southwest of Poland that, after seven centuries of history, disappeared.**

Lying at the crucible of Central Europe, the Silesian village of Kupferberg suffered the violence of the Thirty Years War, the Napoleonic Wars, and World War I. After Stalin’s post-World War II redrawing of Poland’s borders, Kupferberg became Miedzianka, a town settled by Poland’s displaced people, and a new center of the Eastern Bloc’s uranium-mining industry. Decades of neglect and environmental degradation led to the town being declared uninhabitable, and the population was evacuated. Today, it exists only in ruins, with barely a hundred people living on the unstable ground above its collapsing mines. In this work of unsparing and insightful reportage, renowned journalist, photographer, and architecture critic Filip Springer rediscovers this small town’s fascinating history and restores its lost human elements.



Filip Springer (born 1982) is a self-taught journalist who has been working as a reporter and photographer since 2006. His journalistic debut—*History of a Disappearance*—was shortlisted for the Ryszard Kapuściński Literary Reportage Prize in 2011 and was nominated for the Gdynia Literary Prize in 2012. He was also shortlisted for the Nike Literary Prize in 2012 and winner of the third annual Ryszard Kapuściński fellows contest for young journalists.

Sean Gasper Bye is a translator of Polish, French, and Russian literature. He has translated work by some of Poland's leading nonfiction writers, including Małgorzata Szejnert, Paweł Smoleński, and Lidia Ostałowska. An excerpt from his translation of *History of a Disappearance* won the Asymptote Close Approximations Prize in 2016. He lives in New York.

Highlights

- **AN INTIMATE PORTRAIT OF “GOD’S PLAYGROUND”:** Long known as “the doormat of Europe,” Poland has seen great powers come and go, leaving an indelible record. By zeroing in on a single town, Filip Springer exorcises the ghosts of centuries past and their effects on real people and landscapes.
- **A TELLING EXAMINATION OF INDUSTRIAL EXPLOITATION AND ENVIRONMENTAL CATASTROPHE:** *History of a Disappearance* will appeal to readers of Nobel Prize winner Svetlana Alexievich’s oral history of the Chernobyl disaster, *Voices from Chernobyl*. Rife with parallels to America’s deindustrialized, economically troubled regions and cities in the Rust Belt and Appalachia, Springer’s book will speak to anyone interested in why cities decline.
- **A PROMISING YOUNG JOURNALIST’S DEBUT:** Born in 1982, Filip Springer is a self-taught journalist who has been working as a reporter and photographer since 2006. His journalistic debut—*History of a Disappearance: The Story of a Forgotten Polish Town*—was shortlisted for the Ryszard Kapuściński Literary Reportage Prize in 2011 and was nominated for the Gdynia Literary Prize in 2012. He was also shortlisted for the Nike Literary Prize in 2012 and winner of the third annual Ryszard Kapuściński fellows contest for young journalists.