



# Long Shadows: Truth, Lies and History

*Erna Paris*

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## **Long Shadows: Truth, Lies and History** Erna Paris

*Long Shadows* offers a personal examination into the shifting terrain of war and memory that seeks to understand how nations come to terms with their most painful history. Combining storytelling with observation, Paris takes the reader on a remarkable journey through four continents to explore how nations reinvent themselves after cataclysmic events. She seeks out politicians and powerbrokers, as well as men and women living in the aftermath of repression, asking the question: Who gets to decide what actually happened yesterday, then to propagate the tale? How do people live with the consequences? Any why is it that many countries cannot lay the past to rest?

Her journey takes her to the United States, with its memories of slavery; to South Africa, to sit in on a Truth and Reconciliation hearing to heal the divisions of apartheid; to Japan, to probe the unresolved struggles for truth in Second World history; to France, still wrestling with its wartime legacy of collaboration; to Germany, where ferocious 'memory battles' continue to swirl around the Holocaust; and to the former Yugoslavia, where she exposes the cynical shaping of historical memory, and the way the international community responded to the lethal outcome.

Paris takes us directly to the places of reckoning; she finds hope in the way ordinary people grapple with defining events of their lives, and in the changing face of international justice. *Long Shadows* illuminates the modern world and makes us question where we stand as individuals in relation to our own collective histories.

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