

Russian non-fiction

A Russian Chronicle of the War

Documentary. Library Grinberg. Jerusalem 2022. 120 pages

Written day by day - from March until mid June 2022 - in direct response to what was happening in Russia in the early months of the war Russia unleashed. The author got into the car, drove to the province, 1000 kilometers from Moscow, and talked to people he met on the trip. Only direct contact could clarify something and convey the reactions to compatriots and the rest of the world. Stories about people, conversations with them, their lively reaction - that was important to the author as direct evidence. Many were against the war from day one. Many, especially those who watched television, were under the influence of Putin's propaganda. The book contains impressions of a journey through a country at war, but on whose territory no hostilities are taking place. But the war is felt by every cell of the body, and surprisingly the author met many who were against the war against the brother people of Ukraine from the very beginning.

The author's position is clear from the first line. The experience and horror of what happened is not hushed up, on the contrary, it is the driving force behind the book. The book was published in Israel because the author would have faced a long prison sentence in Russia. The author is sure that what is described is important for people who do not understand the situation in Russia very well, and he hopes that with him the reader will experience moments of hellish powerlessness and a sense of catastrophe, shame and hopelessness that today very, very many people in his country experience. The text of the book was printed day by day on the author's Facebook page and duplicated in telegram, with more than a thousand subscribers every day. Under the conditions of military censorship, this was the only way to communicate with compatriots who share the author's views.

"This is Aleshkovski's strongest book ... The chronicle of a mad war, which in Russia must not be called a war. A chronicle that is honest, courageous, emotional, sometimes almost to the point of screaming and yet at the same time firm, without any hysteria ... A terrible chronicle from which a strangely stuffy fear and despair blows.."
NIKOLAI ALEKSANDROV

Petr Aleshkovski was born in Moscow in 1957. His parents were archaeologists, the famous singer and author Yuz Aleshkovski was his uncle. After studying archeology himself, Petr Aleshkovski helped for many years on expeditions in northern Russia with the restoration of monasteries such as in Novgorod or the Solovki Archipelago. Since the 2000s he has worked as a radio journalist and directed various programs of his own. Immediately after February 24, 2022, he left his post at Russian Radio, where he had worked for over 20 years, and refuses to cooperate with the regime any further.

Aleshkovski is the author of many books for adults and children, several have been published in translation by Suhrkamp, Fayard, Varrak and others.

Aleshkovski has a Russian and an Israeli passport and continues to live in both countries because as he says: „I cannot leave my readers who know that there is opposition to Putin within the country.“



THE AUTHOR

awards

2016 Russian Booker Prize

sample available

English

Petr Aleshkovski