WIEDLING
LITERARY AGENCY

Russian diaspora non-fiction

How to Slay a Dragon

A Manual for Start-up Revolutionaries

Essay. London 2022. Full version 190 pages/ short version 65 pages

Second Chechen war in 1999, followed by „special operations" throughout the North Caucasus, 2008 Georgia, 2014 annexation of Crimea with subsequent expansion of the conflict into Donbas region, since 2015 Syria with the Russian Wagner Group, which also operates in many African countries. Hybrid war with fake news and hacking worldwide. And finally, in February 2022, Putin's order to invade Ukraine, where he has been waging an increasingly aggressive war of extermination for 10 months now. A peaceful world order WITH Putin is ultimately hardly conceivable.

But how can a totalitarian regime be put to an end? By whom? From the inside or from the outside? With a totalitarian ruler acting aggressively both internally and externally, would there even be a chance of a reasonably peaceful change of power? After that, who would come to power in Russia? And what would that power look like? How should a new Russian state be organized in order to break through the compulsion to repeat imperialism?

These most pressing questions are not only being asked by politicians and decision-makers, but basically by all freedom-loving people around the world. Using the example of Russia, whose history, power structures and mentality Khodorkovsky knows in detail and from inside, the author wrote this „Manual for Start-Up Revolutionaries".

Far from any know-it-all attitude, the book poses questions, uncomfortable questions that have been avoided in the West up to now, such as non-violence, and derives the resulting options for action. It does not want to provide recipes, but to initiate a discussion long overdue.

In its pamphlet-like gesture, the text is very reminiscent of Stéphane Hessel's „Time for Outrage!" and is therefore available in a short version with 65 pages.

In order to primarily reach readers in Russia and experts on Russia and other totalitarian regimes, the author has made the unabridged version available online in Russian and English on the website of his Open Russia foundation.

THE AUTHOR

sample available
full english

other works
The Russia Corundrum
My Fellow Prisoners

M. Khodorkovsky is probably the most famous Russian dissident in exile alive. A successful businessman, he was head of YUKOS, one of the world's largest oil producers. Criticising endemic corruption at a televised meeting with President Putin in early 2003 he was arrested later that same year, and jailed on charges of tax evasion and fraud, charges, which he denied and vigorously defended. Khodorkovsky was sentenced to fourteen years in prison. He was declared a prisoner of conscience by Amnesty International; and finally released in December 2013.
As a pioneering philanthropist, he established the Open Russia Foundation in 2001 with the aim of building and strengthening civil society in Russia. As the leader of the Russian opposition in exile, Khodorkovsky advocates for an alternative vision for his country.
Oscar-winning documentarian Alex Gibney covered Mikhail Khodorkovsky's life story in his latest film „Citizen K" which is currently featured on Amazon Prime.

Mikhail Khodorkovsky