

Russian diaspora narrative non-fiction

Alone in the Ocean

Documentary Novel. Chas Masteriv. Kyiv 2021 (Moscow 2004). 110 pages

An oceanographer by profession, a romantic by nature and a cosmopolitan by vocation. The Soviet Union had imposed an exit ban on Slava Kurilov but this was not something he was able to come to terms with. In December 1974 he jumped overboard from the tourist steamship „Sovetsky Soyuz“ near the Philippines. Without food, drink or diving equipment, just goggles, a snorkel and flippers, he swam some 100 kilometres to the Philippine coast, spending three whole days in the sea. His knowledge of ocean currents and his Yoga experience helped him to survive. At times he swam as if in a trance. His journey to freedom is described in this book written by himself but only published after his death.

It was only in 1993 that the newspaper Ogonyok was able to publish an abbreviated version of his novel „Flucht“ (Escape) in Russia for the first time in. In 1994 Hachet brought out a much shortened adaptation as a children's book. Prior to that, the complete „Flucht“ appeared only once in the magazine "22" (in Israel in 1986). A book version in Hebrew and in Ukrainian has been published.



THE AUTHOR

sample available

English

"Never, not before and not since, have I read such a tangible and such a thrilling account of the ocean forces. It is how a dolphin would right, if it possessed the art of writing. There he is, swimming through the waves at night and, due to the micro organisms that have stuck to him during his three-day odyssey, his every movement produces a glow in the ocean."

VASILY AKSENOV

Slava Kurilov was born in Russia in 1936. Following his escape to the Philippines in 1974 he left for Canada. In the years that followed he worked for Canadian and American firms as a diver in both equatorial waters and in the Arctic sea prospecting for minerals. In 1986 he settled in Israel where he worked for the Oceanographic Institute in Haifa. Kurilov died in a diving accident in Israel on 29 January 1998.

Slava Kurilov