

literary fiction

Autobiography of Iesus Christ

Novel. AST. Moscow 2018. 500 pages

nominated for the prestigious ALEXANDER PYATIGORSKY AWARD
(best philosophical work outside the academic philosophy)

Publishers: Czech Republic - Albatros, Greece - Koukoutsis

The autobiography of Iesus Christ in the guise of a fictional novel. The language is simple and clear, the depiction nothing but scandalous, the message far more than provocative. Zobern's Christ does not intend to contest or refute Christian teachings, but he presents completely different backgrounds and motives. Even though this Iesus has no objection to homosexuality, abortion or suicide, it is not the intention of the author to convert the reader to a "more liberal" Christian doctrine. We are given virtual, first-hand reality combined with a flood of details so deeply rooted in the epoch concerned, that the story can only be seen to be authentic. As authentic as it is fanciful. From today's perspective, one would certainly not be ill-advised to consider it a significant omen when Neil Armstrong, wearing his white space-suit on the moon, appears to this Iesus in a dream.

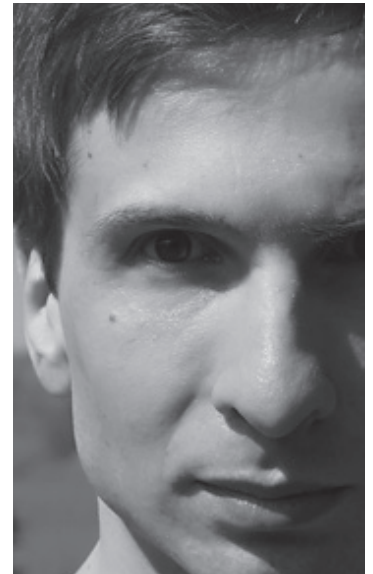
A highly intelligent, likeable philanthropist, stumbling through life as best he can. In times neither better nor worse than ours, where wheeling and dealing defines everyday life, where it is not only the poor soil and the raw climate that cause the frequent migratory movements, fanatical guardians of public morals and occupying forces make life difficult as well. This Iesus also wants to enjoy himself. Sex and drugs, albeit without rock 'n' roll. Nevertheless, this Iesus does acknowledge his own shortcomings: he does not want to hurt anyone, just heal and be benevolent. And talk and write about it. Always with sound common sense. Simply down to earth.

"Devastating! It looks as if we have our own Salman Rushdie."
Aleksandr Mikhailov (Lecturer at the Gorky Literature Institute)

"If we immerse ourselves too much in the text, we may identify ourselves too much with the hero, and run the risk that whenever the real Christ knocks on the door of the soul of humanity no-one will open up because His place has already been taken by this double."
Akhilla

"The Iesus in Zobern's 'Autobiography' is an icon of the antichrist."
Archpriest Chaplin (Former adviser to the Russian Patriarch Kirill)

Zobern was born in Moscow in 1980. After finishing the school of the Patriarch of Moscow, Oleg Zobern joined a forest monastery for a year. In 2004 he won the Russian Debut Prize with a volume of short stories and then went to the Gorky Literature Institute. He then studied at Saint Tikhon's Orthodox University. His first novel "Russian Demons" immediately won the NOS prize. His novel "Autobiography of Iesus Christ" sparked off a fierce discussion in the social networks. Orthodox Christians demanded that the book be banned and that the author be prosecuted. Members of the extreme-orthodox organization "Sorok Sorokov" (responsible, amongst other actions, for threats to the members of Pussy Riot and for campaigns against the movie "Mathilda") bought many copies of the books in order to burn them. As a result Zobern was provided with a private bodyguard by his publishers and, as the orthodox extremists obtained his address and set up pickets in front of his home, he felt obliged to change his place of residence in Russia.



THE AUTHOR

translations
2 languages

awards
Pyatigorsky Award nom. 2018
National Bestseller shortlist 2018
NOS Award 2017
Debut Prize 2004

sample translation available
english

Oleg Zobern