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awards
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Pappenheimstrasse 3
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authors list

NEW TITLES

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Gerasimov, Sergei

Lembersky, Pavel

Yuzefovich, Leonid

HIGHLIGHTS

Literary fiction

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Burchuladze, Zaza

Kurilov, Slava

Yuzefovich, Leonid

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Khodorkovsky, Mikhail

Lough, John

Mustafin, Oleksii

Navalny, Oleg

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Rudenko, Sergii

authors

Ukrainian narrative non-fiction

Near the War

Odesa. February 2022 - February 2023

Notes. Mikhail Greenberg. Jerusalem 2023. 237 pages

Awards: 2025 Dar Prize shortlist

These diary-like notes are not about the war, but about the new everyday life that was caused and created by the war. First and foremost, it is the record of a rift that quickly widens into an abyss, between the author and the Russians, between Odesa and Russianness. For Odesa, as for the whole of Ukraine, the last few decades have been a time of searching for a new identity. Just like for the author, who was born in Odesa, who lived in Moscow for thirty years and was integrated into the literary scene there, only to move back to her hometown in 2021, before the war began.

The author remembers the former Odesa as „nervous, ambitious, provincial and witty“, with painful memories of the „great cultural past“, with a cult of the „South Russian school“ (Babel, Olesha, Ilf and Petrov) and jovial humor. It was a brand aimed at export, especially to Russia.

In the decades of independence, a new Odessa has emerged – very European, like Lviv and London at the same time. A city with cozy wine shops, jazz concerts, well-groomed poodles and women walking along the beach with a cockatoo on their shoulders. A little run down, but democratic in a European way, unlike snob-bish Moscow.

Now a third Odessa is emerging, shedding its „image of a warm, relaxed city“ and turning into a „huge sea outpost“ whose face will be shaped not only by artists and musicians, but also by marines.

These painful descriptions of metamorphoses from Russian to Ukrainian, from life in Moscow to Odesa, from old to new communities, are autobiographically rooted. This book is not about the aggressors or the chaos they cause. It is about an author's return to her city, not about who is right and who is wrong. The fact that Odysseus has reached Ithaca again is good news in itself.



THE AUTHOR

awards

2025 Dar Prize shortlist
2016 Big Book finalist
2016 Big Book Reader's choice 2. winner
2016 National Bestseller shortlist
2016 New Horizons Award
2016 Novy Mir Award
2015 Best Book of the Year by World of Fantastika

other works

Autochthones
Little Boondock
Mole Crickets

Born in 1958 in Kalinin (now Tver), she spent her childhood and adolescence in Kiev and Odesa, Ukraine. Graduating Odesa State University as a marine biologist, she later got a diploma as a doctor of biology. In the early 1990s she did research of salmon in Bergen, Norway, in 1990-2020 she lived and worked in Moscow, but in 2021 she moved back to Ukraine (Odesa). Maria Galina was one of the subscribers of the letter "Russian Writers support Ukraine". Now being in Odesa in the wartime she mostly spends her time volunteering - weaving camouflage nets for Ukrainian military forces.

Maria Galina

Ukrainian fiction

Nothing New on the Eastern Front

Novel. Kharkiv. Ukraine 2024. 255 pages

Angelina and Gleb have known each other since school. Their school is one of only two in the small town of Kozachye, in the east of Ukraine. When Angelina and Gleb are getting married, Angelina is pregnant. Finally, at the age of 32, she marries Gleb, who as a twelve-year-old schoolboy climbed the 250-meter-high chimney of the disused Soviet factory as a sign of his love. While they have had as many fights as tender moments, Angelina knows Gleb is one she is meant to be with. And Gleb knows.

What they don't know is that two days after their wedding, Russian tanks will roll through their town and destroy everything. They don't know yet that seven months of occupation with all its harrowing moments lie ahead. The wedding guests see no reason to believe in the threat of an impending attack either. Not grandmother Katya, not father Grigory, not his wife Natalya, not the bull Semyon and not the dog Gavchik, none of the neighbours on Grushevaya Street. Only Gleb's school friend Pavel knows what is going to happen. He had gone to Moscow for training and has now returned as a soldier in the Russian army.

The Lugenko oligarch family and their four children are the first to flee. Gleb will later find their burned-out BMW with the corpses sitting upright inside. Angelina and Gleb's families stay. That's why Angelina and Gleb stay too. And in the end, none of them are spared suffering – not the people, not the animals, not the fruit trees, not the houses. And the readers are not spared either, although Gerasimov tells the story calmly, almost gently melancholically, even comfortingly.

Just as Gerasimov in the *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*, with his *Notes from Kharkiv* since day one of the attack, has subjected himself and his readers to the painful realization of everyday horrors and absurdities, so too in this novel about the war in Ukraine, which is permeated with true experiences, it is his unerring eye for the small details that make the great suffering the war has brought to Ukraine and Kozachye, with all its cruelty and psychological abysses, tangible, understandable and bearable from afar.

(about his diary of the first 2 months of the war, published as a book)

"A disturbing testimony." FAZ

"A stirring testimony and an appeal for peace and understanding." MUSIX MAGAZINE

"A document of terror and a document of Ukrainian courage and resistance." WDR

"A darkly shimmering panorama, a tableau made up of descriptions, reflections and memories." TAGESSPIEGEL

Sergei Gerasimov was born 1964, in Kharkiv where he has lived all his life. In the early 1990s he studied psychology and graduated at Kharkiv State University, wrote a psychology textbook for schools and a book on psychology in relationships. Since then he has been concerned with the psychological question of how human interest arises and functions. He is the author of several academic articles on cognitive activity with interest in popular literature as a phenomenon and object of human interest. So he became a writer, poet, and translator of poetry. His stories and poems written in English have appeared in many literary magazines. Gerasimov and his wife together with several cats live in the centre of Kharkiv in an apartment on the fourth floor of a high rise building, remaining in the embattled frontline town until today.



THE AUTHOR

text available
in full English

Sergei Gerasimov

Ukrainian fiction

Odesa is not on the Hudson

Short stories. Kyiv. Ukraine 2024. 213 pages

Odesa, as we know, is currently under attack (almost daily), like so many Ukrainian cities. Apart from the city being constantly in the news, the relevance of these „Texts from Odesa“ is in its paying tribute to the city rich in world-recognized literary tradition: chatty, irreverent, humorous, exuberant, ironic, whimsical. God knows, the irrepressible Odesans need that vibe in these dark times more than ever. But so does the world at large. Also, the book strives not to so much as to perpetuate the eternal 'Odesa myth' but rather to extend and enrich it, employing the new optics the author inevitably picked up during close to half a century of his living in the USA. Because you can take the boy out of Odesa but you cannot take Odesa out of the boy.



“It is not for nothing that Pavel Lembersky, of course, belongs to two cities imbued with the spirit of freedom - Odesa and New York.”

MAXIM MATUSEVICH, NEW JERSEY

“One can sense the dearth of that time’s aroma when no one had emigrated yet and our parents were still alive and young, and there were no irreparable losses yet. The book takes us back there, where we literally feel this already mythical time.”

IRINA KUZMENKO, ODESSA

“Pavel Lembersky’s new book, published in Ukraine, was conceived and written by him as a kind of hymn of admiration and support for his sunny hometown, to which the war came.”

GARY LIGHT, CHICAGO

“Imagine Borges writing philosophical conceptual anecdotes using the sparkling language of Isaac Babel. Sometimes the significant parts are located in the breaks between phrases, and one can feel the draft of pain and despair blowing from those gaps which perhaps irony alone can suppress.”

ANTON NESTEROV

“Despite his cheeky tongue, Pavel Lembersky is a melancholic who winks at us so that we don’t notice the tears of homesickness welling up in his eyes - about the lost days of Odessa, the warm wind in the harbor, or in the memory of an English professor who insisted on demonstrating important new vocabulary concerning anatomy on her own considerable physicality.”

CICERO

THE AUTHOR

samples available

English

German

Pavel Lembersky was born in Odesa, Ukraine, and emigrated to the United States in 1977. After receiving his BA in comparative literature from the University of California at Berkeley, Pavel did graduate work in film at San Francisco State University. He worked in New York City on film projects of Jonathan Demme and Spalding Gray and the Oscar-winning Appointment of Dennis Jennings, among others. Pavel lives in Brooklyn NY.

Pavel Lembersky

Russian historical fiction

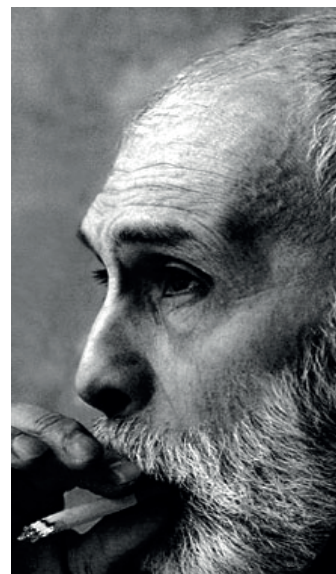
Hike to Bar Khoto

Novel. AST. Moscow 2021. 286 pages**Awards:** 2024 Yasnaya Polyana Award winner**Foreign rights:** Serbia/ Logos

In Leonid Yuzefovich's latest and again award winning book, he brings history back to life by again empathizing with the mind of a historically authentic figure. These are the fictional but based on real events memoirs of the Russian officer, Captain Solodovnikov, who served as a military adviser in the Mongolian army in 1912–1914, when the Mongols defended their independence from China.

It seems that nobody needs the Bar Khoto fortress. Its future fate, as Solodovnikov's notebooks indicate, is to disappear forever without a trace. So why? Money, power, vanity - the real reasons for the campaign are obvious. He has to write secretly and carefully hide his notes, each time for fear of denunciation and searches. Although his notebooks contain nothing rebellious. However, at that time any private opinion on historical events was viewed with suspicion. Not only at that time.

The book intertwines the siege of the Chinese-occupied fortress of Bar-Khoto with love for the wife of a Russian diplomat in Mongolia, the First World War and Solodovnikov's deportation from Leningrad to Transbaikalia in the mid-1930s. The hero rethinks his own life and, with it, the fate of a person in a critical epoch.



THE AUTHOR

translations
15 languages

awards

Yasnaya Polyana Award 2024
Big Book Award 2021
Yasnaya Polyana finalist 2021
National Bestseller 2016
Big Book Award 2016
Booker Translation Grant 2016
Russian Booker shortlist 2009
Big Book Award 2009

samples available

english
french and others

other works

Philhellenes
Winter Road
Horsemen of the Desert
The Putilin Series
Kazaroza

"With the passion of an all-powerful demiurge, Yuzefovich mixes history and fantasy, interweaves past and present, mixes rumors and facts, and swaps conventional heroes and villains. From different perspectives, the same act can seem like both a crime and a heroic deed: the author does not give up the pleasure of first convincing the reader and then proving him wrong..."

GOD LITERATURE

"Yuzefovich's prose is like autumn on Lake Baikal: clear, warm, windless, quiet."

EGOR SHUVALOV

Yuzefovich, born 1947 in Moscow, spent his childhood and youth in the Urals. He has a Doctorate in History and is known to a wide audience of readers through his historical thrillers about Ivan Putilin. Yuzefovich is capable of interweaving detailed knowledge of historical fact with masterly literary style into the plot of a thriller. L. Yuzefovich lives in Moscow and St. Petersburg.

Leonid Yuzefovich

LITERARY
FICTION

Russian diaspora literary fiction

Coincidences

Trilogy. 3 Novels. AST. Moscow 2023. approx. 350 pages each**Awards:** Ernest Hemingway Award 2023

The contemporary part of the first two books takes place in Russia (Moscow) and Belarus (Minsk, Polesie) 2019-2021. The historical part begins in 1924 in Belarus, and continues in 1926 in Algier, Paris, Moscow. The modern part of the third book is happening 2022 in Russia. The historical part (1930s-1950s) of the third book takes place in Russia (Moscow, the Far East), Belarus (Minsk, Polesie) and Germany. All plot lines are intertwined.

Vol. 1 Veronica's Nets

Ancestors who have long since disappeared into the darkness of time affect us much more than we think. However, thirty-year-old Alesya does not have time to think about such abstract things. Working as a nurse in a Moscow hospital, she barely has enough strength to support her family back home in Polesia. But the past is becoming more and more evident in Alesya's character. Her career choice is no coincidence either – her great-grandmother Veronica became a nurse during the First World War and had to make the big decisions in life amidst many dangers. When the son of a deceased nursing patient proposes to Alesya, she asks for time to think it over.

Vol. 2 The Sand Rose

A silver necklace with a sand rose goes to Sonia Artynova as a legacy. And it seems that this coincidence changes everything ... But Sonia does not know that such sudden turns in fate are a family legacy. Her great-grandmother once had to trade Germany for Russia, Crimea for Bizerte, an archaeological expedition for Tuareg captivity, Algeria for Paris... And it's not about wanderlust, it's about responding to evil in an effort to protect the most important values in life. From the 20s of the 20th century the heroes are thrown into the 20s of the twenty-first century, which only at first glance have nothing in common. In fact, then as now, a person must defy fate in order not only to save himself and his loved ones, but also not to lose respect for himself.

Vol. 3 The Golden Rhein

Ada's son lives in Moscow with his father, a top manager of Russian television working on propaganda. This led Ada to divorce him in 2014. Ada has since returned to Germany, but continues to visit Moscow, including after February 2022. She tries to convince her son to leave with her, not knowing that it is love that keeps him in Moscow. The historical line about Ada's grandfather and grandmother, Sergei and Xenia, takes place in 1938-1945: Gulag in the Far East, flight to Vladivostok, escape on a merchant ship going to Hamburg. Working for the British Secret Service, Sergei cannot take his wife Xenia and their adopted daughter with him, so he settles them in a convent on a Rhine island where they become witnesses of tragic events. The fate of loved ones later becomes Ada's main motivation to study the history of this period. And it also allows her to deeply understand the new war. Irreversible changes have also occurred in the life of Igor, a native Muscovite. He and Ada save each other from the despair they both feel at having to live with a redrawn past.



THE AUTHOR

awards

2023 Ernest Hemingway Award

sample available

English

Anna Berseneva was born in 1963. She graduated from the Journalism Department of the Belarusian State University, and later from the Gorky Literature Institute Moscow where she then became associate professor. Since 2022, she has been a professor at the Free University, established in Europe by political emigrants from Russia. She is a writer, scriptwriter and literary critic. To date, she published more than 40 books in the genre of psychological novels. Total circulation in Russia - about 5 million copies. 15 novels have been filmed in Russia. In 2022 she was subjected to political persecution in Russia and declared a foreign agent. Berseneva is Member of PEN-International. Since 2020 she lives in Germany.

Anna Berseneva

Russian diaspora

PRESS REVIEWS

"What Anna Berseneva writes is rare in Russian literature - it is upscale entertainment literature that does not require kitsch and has believable characters. The family saga „Veronica's nets" is nowhere near as dark as a book dedicated to history could be - and yet it is honest and presents the past in three dimensions using the example of a family saga."

ALEXANDRA BERLINA

"We are experiencing a very complex, terrible reality right now and we are struck by the repetitions, the rhymes of history. These rhymes sound in the novels of Anna Berseneva, they sound in the scale of countries, historical events, as well as in the fates of the main characters, intertwined in a bizarre knitting, penetrating the layers of eras."

SIMA VAILIEVA, artist (UK)

"In Anna Berseneva the plot is only a construction in which a huge amount of historical, philosophical, emotional material is placed. These are very complex and multi-layered themes and statements. And her texts are a great material for visualization, for cinema and for TV. In general, she has created a huge and multilayered world in which you can live for years. And it's also very valuable that her texts about very complex things can be accessible to a mass audience. They are democratic."

LARISSA BELZER, cultural critic, professor at FU (Berlin)

Anna Berseneva

Ukrainian fiction

Autochthones

Novel. Novel. Eksmo. Moscow 2015. 272 pages

Foreign rights: French/ Agullo, US/ Columbia University Press

Galina set a triptych of novels in Ukraine: Little Boondock takes place in Odesa; Mole Cricets is set in the Odesa region, near Snake Island, where legend says Achilles was buried; and Lviv is the stage for Autochthones, an unusual detective novel. The three books play on fantasy, myth, geography, and history, creating characters and situations that nimbly combine coziness with unease.

In the 2010s a mysterious art critic comes from St. Petersburg to a certain European city with a complex history (Lvov is implied). He is interested in the one and only performance of the opera "Death of Petronius" by an avangarde theatre group. The premiere took place in the city in the 1920ies and became the fate of directors and performers. A single performance, as it turned out, launched a chain of strange events that the protagonist has to unravel. The protagonist is especially interested in the mysterious figure of the director - a certain Vertigo and the person hiding under this pseudonym (the prototype of Vertigo is the famous Ukrainian writer and literary critic Domontovich). Gradually, under the tourist gloss, the true face of the city is revealed to the protagonist, and completely different features appear under the mask of the art critic himself. The art critic, whose aims are anything but scientific, as it turns out in the end, finds himself at odds with the interests of the local tourism industry, who have not selflessly invented the city's fake simulacra. But these simulacra suddenly begin to take on a life of their own.

A novel about the search for one's own identity and „historical truth“, and whether both exist. A novel not only in the style of magic realism. Werewolves and ghoulish bikers are taken here as if from Gothic prose, and the "eternal Jews", undines and languid opera primas with a fatal secret in their chests are borrowed from the romantics.

"The novel „Autochthones“ immediately after the release became the subject of a local cult ... Maria Galina's book reminded me of David Lynch's „Twin Peaks“, which once opened up the abysses of everyday provincial life."
NOVAYA GAZETA (Dmitri Bavilski)

"The author has managed in recent years to walk the fine line between entertaining genre fiction, astute chronicle of modernity and Borgesian metafiction... Galina creates a world of elusive certainties in which the diligent reader is no more certain of his own existence than that of aliens and sylphs."
AFISHA (Aleksandr Gavrilov)

Born in 1958 in Kalinin (now Tver), she spent her childhood and adolescence in Kiev and Odesa, Ukraine. Graduating Odesa State University as a marine biologist, she later got a diploma as a doctor of biology. In the early 1990s she did research of salmon in Bergen, Norway, in 1990-2020 she lived and worked in Moscow, but in 2021 she moved back to Ukraine (Odesa). Maria Galina was one of the subscribers of the letter "Russian Writers support Ukraine". Now being in Odesa in the wartime she mostly spends her time volunteering - weaving masking nets for Ukrainian military forces.



THE AUTHOR

awards

2016 Big Book finalist
2016 Big Book Reader's choice 2. winner
2016 National Bestseller shortlist
2016 New Horizons Award
2016 Novy Mir Award
2015 Best Book of the Year by World of Fantastika

other works

Little Boondock
Mole Cricets

Maria Galina

Ukrainian fiction

Little Boondock

Novel. Novel. Eksmo. Moscow 2009. 354 pages

Foreign rights: French/ Agullo

Awards: 2009 Big Book finalist
2009 Big Book Reader's choice 2. winner
2010 Portal Award Ukraine

Galina set a triptych of novels in Ukraine: Little Boondock takes place in Odesa; Mole Cricets is set in the Odesa region, near Snake Island, where legend says Achilles was buried; and Lviv is the stage for Autochthons, an unusual detective novel. The three books play on fantasy, myth, geography, and history, creating characters and situations that nimbly combine coziness with unease.

The novel consists of two parts connected to each other „at a tangent“; so different in style, in mood, as if they were written by two different authors.

The first part of the novel, „SES-2“, is about an adventurous story with a mystical twist. The scene of action is a southern coastal city (behind which Odesa is guessed). The time of action is 1979, a kind of peak of Soviet stagnation. The main character, 17-year-old Rozka, who failed the entrance exams to the institute, for the sake of „work experience“ gets a job at the port SES (sanitary and epidemiological station). The new SES employee has nothing to do with herself and she spends her time reading books about Angelica's adventures. „SES-2“ is a cross-section of the era of late Soviet stagnation with shortages, queues, commercial rudeness, petty corruption, sweet dreams of „transfer to the ministry“ and moving to Moscow. Such a well-established and understandable reality is invaded by some occult-mystical forces, „parasites of the second level“, who arrived at the Soviet coast on board an ocean freighter.

The second part – Malaya Glusha, actually „Little Wilderness“ - is a story about the journey of the living to the land of the dead, there, beyond the „twilight threshold“, in search of the dead closest, dearest people. viscous, almost frozen time; smells of decay and decay, a feeling of inexplicable anxiety does not let go even in the midst of sun-drenched Ukrainian fields. In the air of „The Wilderness“ there seems to be a premonition of an inevitable catastrophe, a world break (the duration of the second part is 1987). Wilderness is an amazing quest in which the heroes not only try to get to the land of the dead, but travel deep into themselves, into their own souls. „The Wilderness“ is a truly tragic text, in which the hope of saving loved ones turns into an absurd nightmare.

“Here the past becomes the scene of the action - just like the world of the dead in Little Wilderness or the coastal town in SES-2. Mind you, not by time, but by place, and it is this place that many of Galina's readers still remember, a place inhabited by demons.” KSENIA ROZHDESTVENSKAYA

Born in 1958 in Kalinin (now Tver), she spent her childhood and adolescence in Kiev and Odesa, Ukraine. Graduating Odesa State University as a marine biologist, she later got a diploma as a doctor of biology. In the early 1990s she did research of salmon in Bergen, Norway, in 1990-2020 she lived and worked in Moscow, but in 2021 she moved back to Ukraine (Odesa). Maria Galina was one of the subscribers of the letter “Russian Writers support Ukraine”. Now being in Odesa in the wartime she mostly spends her time volunteering - weaving masking nets for Ukrainian military forces.



THE AUTHOR

awards

2016 Big Book finalist
2016 Big Book Reader's choice 2. winner
2016 National Bestseller shortlist
2016 New Horizons Award
2016 Novy Mir Award
2015 Best Book of the Year by World of Fantastika

other works

Autochthones
Mole Cricets

Maria Galina

Ukrainian fiction

Mole Cricets

Novel. Novel. Eksmo. Moscow 2011. 230 pages

Foreign rights: Arabic/ Arab Scientific Publishers

Awards: 2011 Best Book World of Fantastika
2012 Big Book finalist
2012 Big Book Reader's choice 2. winner
2012 Strannik Award
2012 Filigran Award
2012 Marble Faun Award

Galina set a triptych of novels in Ukraine: Little Boondock takes place in Odesa; Mole Cricets is set in the Odesa region, near Snake Island, where legend says Achilles was buried; and Lviv is the stage for Autochthons, an unusual detective novel. The three books play on fantasy, myth, geography, and history, creating characters and situations that nimbly combine coziness with unease.

An autistic loser in Odesa in the mid-90s lives in someone else's dacha and earns a living by inserting the adventures of customers into well-known books at their request, thereby revealing their secret aspirations and helping to realize hidden dreams. At the same time, he is in conflict with an unloved and unloving father, who accuses him of not living up to his father's expectations. One day, a strange client comes to him - Smetankin, a former orphanage resident, and asks him to come up with a "good" family story. The hero, who is fond of searching for cheap antiques ('things of the dead') at flea markets and online auctions, takes an order, selects old photographs of „ancestors“ and invents appropriate biographies for them. As expected, invented biographies are intertwined with real ones, and it turns out that the hero himself and his family history begin to intertwine with the fictitious history of the customer, and the hero's father begins to experience those feelings for the newly-minted relative that he denied his own son. And when Smetankin gathers together all the newly acquired relatives at a gala dinner, the celebration is expectedly resolved by a scandal and reveals a tragic secret hiding behind it.

At the same time, some events convince the hero that Achilles, the son of Hecate, is about to rise from the Serpent's Island, where the sanctuary of Achilles the Cannibal, the ancient chthonic god, is about to rise or has already risen in the terrible guise of a monster ...

"Her novel is like a Rorschach test, everyone sees something different in it. One - loneliness and madness, another - chthonic forces gradually dominating the world, yet another - secret meanings of blood ties."
GALINA YUZEFOVICH

Born in 1958 in Kalinin (now Tver), she spent her childhood and adolescence in Kiev and Odesa, Ukraine. Graduating Odesa State University as a marine biologist, she later got a diploma as a doctor of biology. In the early 1990s she did research of salmon in Bergen, Norway, in 1990-2020 she lived and worked in Moscow, but in 2021 she moved back to Ukraine (Odesa). Maria Galina was one of the subscribers of the letter "Russian Writers support Ukraine". Now being in Odesa in the wartime she mostly spends her time volunteering - weaving masking nets for Ukrainian military forces.



THE AUTHOR

awards

2016 Big Book finalist
2016 Big Book Reader's choice 2. winner
2016 National Bestseller shortlist
2016 New Horizons Award
2016 Novy Mir Award
2015 Best Book of the Year by World of Fantastika

other works

Autochthones
Little Boondock

Maria Galina

historical novel

Fighting Rivers

Historical novel. Ripol Classic. Moscow 2023. 684 pages

Russia at the beginning of the 20th century is a rapidly developing country with a huge advanced river fleet, almost entirely in private hands. This entire complex economic mas-sif was practically blown up by the tragedy of 1917. Not only smaller armored personnel carriers and armored trains fight in the civil war, but also armed ships: tugboats that have been converted into gunboats; ships of the line used as transport ships; barges converted into floating battle batteries. Then in 1918 these river fleets were confiscated by the „constituents“ in Samara, by Trotsky in Nizhny Novgorod, by the rebels in Izhevsk, by the Chekists in Perm.

A technical revolution is also raging in the world as steam engines begin to compete with diesel engines. The Russian confrontation between the Reds and Whites is permeated by a fierce struggle between the leaders of oil production - the British concern Shell and the Russian company of the Nobel brothers. War is being waged by people, technology and capital. In the bloody and burning storm, the river boatmen are sometimes on the side of the Reds, sometimes on the side of the Whites, and are forced to shoot at those who are actually comrades in the real main occupation of their lives. They must sink steamers - glory and pride of river navigation. How does one maintain a moral conscience in the midst of such a catastrophe? How do you save those you love, who have confided in you? How to protect progress indifferent to social struggles? There, on the decks of the river steamers, the captains search for an honest path to the future. There the so-called little man shows greater strength than his huge and mighty ship.

The main plot happens within one and a half years only, during the odyssey of the smuggler „Levshino“, who in the battles on the Kama River in 1918-1919 has enough time to fight for the Reds, the Whites, the Greens and for himself. Everything begins in Perm, everything will end in Perm. On the one hand brother against brother, neighbor against neighbor. On the other hand, society is extremely atomized, guild and friendship ties make every effort, but there is no longer any class or regional solidarity between people. And in fact nobody has any ideology. Those who went to war voluntarily fight either because war can bring glory and career prospects, or because there can be looting and killing. The rest, including many military leaders, fight simply because of the circumstances: they were mobilized, ordered to command the fleet, and sent to the front with their ship. The population is not completely mute, they scold, but are weak-willed.

A novel about a seemingly distant war. But under the magnifying glass of Ivanov's prose we see a truth hidden deep within that extends to contemporary Russia.

“What amazes is the ease with which these almost seven hundred pages fly by. This novel is one of those when readers say: I opened it, did not have time to blink an eye, and immediately found myself on page three hundred. And then immediately on seven hundred.” FONTANKA

Aleksei Ivanov was born in 1969 in Gorky (today Nizhny Novgorod). He grew up in Perm in the Urals. In 1996 he graduated from the University of Ekaterinburg with a degree in art history. He then worked as a caretaker, laboratory assistant, tourist guide, teacher, journalist and lecturer. His first publication in a magazine in 1990 was a fantasy novel. His first book publication was the mystical-historical novel „Heart of Parma“ 2003. 11 novels and 7 non-fiction books by him are now available with a total circulation of over 1.5 million. 5 books have been filmed, 5 more are currently being filmed. Aleksei Ivanov lives in Perm.



THE AUTHOR

languages

8 languages

awards

2021 audiobook of the Year
2006 Yasnaya Polyana Award
2006 Big Book Award
2006 Strannik Prize
2004 Book of the Year
2004 Bazhov Award
2003 Mamin-Sibiriyak Award

Aleksei Ivanov

Synopsis

Despite the outwardly cruelty of the novel, it is full of emotions and human experiences. Partly because of this, but also because of the volume, the number of characters, the appeal of historical figures from Admiral Kolchak to Larisa Reisner, the novel inevitably begs to be compared to „War and Peace“ and „The Quiet Don“. Surely there will be readers who will flip through „Peace and Love“ and readers who will rush to get through „War and Battles“ as quickly as possible. Only neither Tolstoy nor Sholokhov had such fabulous descriptions of steel colossuses, their engines, their movement through the water. There was no admiration for the entrepreneurs of that time. Progress is not technology, progress is a state of mind. It doesn't work without people - without entrepreneurs, engineers and inventors and also not without those who work with the machines - like Ivan Nerechtin, and those who care about the safety of technology - like Khamzat Mammadov. And not without those who are willing to give their lives so that the world can go on and their loved ones can go on. Because progress, as Ivanov writes, is belief in the future.

First, the Bolsheviks take Grand Duke Mikhail Alexandrovich from the Perm Hotel, where he is serving his exile, and have him shot. But the execution is carried out in a very bungling manner, the emperor survives and now has to leave Perm urgently.

Second, proto-frontwoman Laris Reisner dreams of making history as the Valkyrie of the Revolution, throwing herself into the spectacle of military operations for fame and adventure.

Third, Muslim superman Mamedov, the Nobel family's personal goon, tries to save the Swedish oil tycoons' business in Russia.

Fourth, young Alyosha dreams of technological advances and becoming the new Shukhov.

Fifth, the most experienced, but endowed with a bad character, river captain Ivan Nerekhtin, has no ambitions of his own, but only does his duty and tries to save people close to him.

Sixth, the veteran of Tsushima and Moonsund, Admiral Stark, does not want to fight a general battle, for the war on the river is not a battle at sea where ship is against ship. In the war on the rivers everything gets mixed up: chases, skirmishes, battles on land and sea and even a little in the air.

Seventh, Dmitry Yakutov, a great steamer owner nicknamed "Lord of Kama", immediately grasps what is to come and shoots himself to the heart from the very beginning of the war and the book. He'll miss all the fun. The way the author presents us with this no less carefully described character to have him shot almost immediately evokes a sense of startled excitement in the reader.

Eighth, however, his daughter becomes the female protagonist of the novel.

Ninth, Goretsky dreams of a warm place in some branch of an international oil company and is ready for any meanness.

Tenth, the Rothschilds decide to expel the Nobels from Russia.

"Ivanov is an engineer of literature, a mechanic of historical science. The heroes of his prose are always part of a great historical machine. Ivanov opens the outer shell, shows readers how this mechanism works, which gear rotates faster and which fails, which screw is more important, which handle allows the machine to move in the other direction and why it stalls." GORKY MEDIA

Aleksei Ivanov

Belarusian literary fiction

The Good always Wins

Novel. Novel. Manuscript. Minsk 2023. approx. 320 pages

Publishers: Germany - Volland&Quist

ATTENTION: Only backup copies of this text exist in the West. In order not to endanger the personal safety of the author and his family in Belarus, a translation should not be published until 2025 at the earliest.

Summer 2020. Mass protests against Lukashenko's regime out on the streets of Minsk. Inside the State Theater the rehearsals for a contemporary play about the Inquisition process against Joan of Arc. Matvei has only a small supporting role. The big role in his life awaits him elsewhere.

Matvei has to save the cat of his beloved former teacher from her apartment, because she was sentenced to prison for a critical social media post. He manages to take home Heidegger the cat, who meows his pitiful hungry "Daazain". Feeding him becomes more important to Matvei than the protests on the streets or the long theater rehearsals. While buying cat food Matvei gets caught in a raid and is sentenced to prison. A punk poet, Lady Di, who is also on trial, manages to convince the judge to acquit her by speaking boldly. She wants to make the world a better place, her weapon is words. She promises Matvei to take care of Heidegger during his arrest.

Released after 40 days Matvei finds out that the judge resigned. Also the ranks of the best-known TV propagandists gave up their jobs – due to Lady Di's powerfully eloquent persuasive skills? Only one last chief propagandist keeps rushing. The theatre premiere is banned by the censors, moving it to an exile stage in Vilnius brings no attention. The depressed theatre diva commits suicide. It seems that the dead Belarusian culture can no longer be brought back to life, even in exile.

Matvei is blacklisted in Belarus and remains unemployed for 16 months. His savings are gone. He has nothing to lose and decides to kill the still agitating chief propagandist. Arriving at the hater's apartment he finds Lady Di murdered by secret service agents and the hater writhing in remorse, and begging for forgiveness. Instead of murderous hatred, Matvei starts feeling empathy with him and understands: before having been murdered Lady Di had managed to convince this last hater to renounce the deadly poison of propaganda. In the end, the good always wins.



THE AUTHOR

translations
4 languages

awards
Bogdanovich Literay Award
2012
Best European Fiction anthology
2011 (Dalkey Archive)

sample translation available
english

other works
Night
Revolution
Mova
Paranoia
Lake of Joy

Martinovich was born in Oshmiany, Belarus in 1977. He is a political scientist, doctor of art history, and professor at the Vilnius University. He is a regular contributor to the German weekly DIE ZEIT. His literary works are published parallel in the Belarusian and Russian languages. «Paranoia», published in Russia at the end of 2009, was immediately banned from sale in Belarus (unofficially prohibited). In 2017 he was Writer in Residence at the Literaturhaus Zürich and PWG foundation. Martinovich lives somewhere in the backcountry of Belarus.

Viktor Martinovich

Russian diaspora horror thriller

Vixen Hill

Novel. Moscow. 2022. 716 pages

The action of this horror thriller in the genre of mystic realism takes place in the Far East, on the border of the Soviet Union and Manchuria (China) in 1945, right after the end of World War II and the Japanese occupation of the region. The novel combines the history of the USSR, Chinese mythology, Japanese genetic engineering and Siberian shamanism.

After his adventurous escape from the GULAG, prisoner Max Kronin journeys to Vixen Hills: a village in the middle of a no man's land on the Manchurian border, in the hope of finding his long-lost wife. Vixen Hills is a place of strange miracles and supernatural phenomena – an appropriate hunting ground for Max who, before the war, was trained by mentalist extraordinaire and KGB officer Gleb Aristov to manipulate his own dreams, trance-walk, predict the future, and bring lost people back to reality. But just like all the others who once found themselves in this cursed place, Max does not find what he is looking for. And he does not realise that he is still being manipulated by his former trainer Aristov, whose ultimate goal is to find and deploy the mythical Terracotta Army. To conquer the world, Aristov wants to resurrect this Army with the Waters of Death and Life, a mighty biological weapon developed by Japanese scientists in Vixen Hills, where they conduct inhuman experiments in their laboratory for breeding the perfect soldier. But so does a German count, with his own links to Max Kronin. Here Soviet soldiers fall in love with Chinese were-foxes. Here KGB agents face a taoist master who knows the secret of immortality. Here those from fascist Ahnenerbe and those from the Soviet Secret Department represent one and the same ruthless totalitarian monster. Here the war never ends.

This is a spectacular and frightful trip to the heart of darkness, where the protagonists not only find themselves contending with shamans, Old Believers, the KGB and the Red Army, a hypnotists and a Tao Master, but everyone finds exactly what he or she has deserved. Some find love, others find death, but everyone finds the only appropriate fate predestined either by God or by the devil.

"Starobinets doesn't let the reader relax for a minute as she manages to keep up the hellish pace over seven hundred and something pages."
MEDUZA (Galina Yuzefovich)



THE AUTHOR

translations
over 20 languages

awards
2021 Spanish Celsius-232

2018 ESFS award
«Best European Sci-fi author»

2017 Winner Imaginales
festival in Epinal/ France

2016 Grand Prix of Utopiales
Sci-Fi book festival/ France

2014 National Bestseller Russia

2014 Prix Masterton

2014 Winner «The Portal»
Scifi Assembly Ukraine

sample translation available
full english

Anna Starobinets was born in Moscow in 1978. She is a Russian and Israeli citizen, writer and scriptwriter who works in various genres: sci-fi, dystopias and horrors for adults, fairy and detective stories for children. She is the widow of Alexander Garros, a critically acclaimed Latvian author. Her anti-government views have forced Starobinets to escape from Russia with her two children and dog in spring 2022.

Anna Starobinets

Russian literary fiction

The Bridge Protection Committee

Novel. AST Publishers. Moscow 2023. 416 pages

They were playing Minecraft, but the court believed they intended to blow up the new bridge over the Yenisei. They worked as mechanics, doctors, businessmen - but life forced them to set up a committee to save their own children. They were journalists and came across a bloody history of provocation and a Siberian cult.

This is a book about anger - fueling heroes whose children are in danger. This is a book about Siberia - the events of the novel take place in Krasnoyarsk, Novosibirsk and Tomsk. This is a book of hope - that the heroes might be able to resist the terrible Siberian history and the prosecutor's bloodthirstiness.

In Krasnoyarsk, an extremist organization called „Committee“ is on trial. Its seven members (mostly students from the local and Novosibirsk universities) are accused of wanting to blow up a new bridge over the Yenisei.

Nikita, an investigative journalist for an online portal, also starts researching and comes to the conclusion that the „Committee“ case is an attempt to weaken the oligarch Ruzhinsky, a prominent party official. When the oligarch's daughter suddenly disappears and Nikita is interrogated, he decides to ask the reclusive oligarch Ruzhinsky himself for help. Nikita learns from him that there is no daughter and that someone obviously made up the story on purpose.

The parents are also trying to save their children. But all in vain: they are not released, a middleman is killed in a strange way, their money is gone. There they find a strange helper Zhenya who has been gathering other parents around for some time. Zhenya convinces everyone else that the children were taken by the Winter Prosecutor, a cannibal of a Siberian legend. The only salvation would be a special ceremony - they would have to weave a magic web that alone could capture the enemy who sits in the regional administration.

“About honor in dishonorable times - and about old cliques: old-fashioned, drunk, corrupt and pointless, but which forces the heroes to become the true heart of society, which lives and beats. Until death.”
SHAMIL IDIATULLIN

Dmitri Zakharov was born in 1979 in a ‚closed‘ city in Siberia near Krasnoyarsk. After training as a journalist, he worked as a correspondent and editor for Kommersant newspaper and headed various marketing departments in the government and the private sectors. Dmitri Zakharov lives in St. Petersburg



THE AUTHOR

sample translation
english

other works
Moscow Banksy

Dmitri Zakharov

NARRATIVE
NON-FICTION

Russian narrative non-fiction

The True Anna Karenina

Narrative non-fiction. AST. Moscow 2022. 384 pages

Why was the fate of Anna and Vronsky decided during a mazurka, what does participating in horse races tell us about Vronsky, what a dinner about Oblonsky? If Anna was a seasoned socialite, why could the daughter she had by Vronsky only be given the one surname - Karenina?

Anna Karenina is probably Tolstoy's most mysterious work. Why is it still controversial? There's a lot we don't know about the harsh laws and paradoxical mores of the golden 19th century. Basinski explores the novel through the eyes of a curious and devoted reader. The facts laid out in the book surprise, discourage and explain many of the oddities of this tragic love story. In doing so, Basinski focuses on the darkest and most ambiguous turns of the novel's plot.

"I am aware that there is no true story of Anna Karenina. There are as many Anna Kareninas as there are readers of this novel. But I do hope that my book will help fanatics like myself, who are addicted to this novel, sort out their personal Annas more clearly. Admittedly without agreeing with me on everything."
Pavel Basinski



THE AUTHOR

translations
18 languages

awards
2010 Big Book
2010 Book of the Year
(Tolstoy: Escape from Paradise)
2008 Big Book shortlist
1998 Anti-Booker Prize

"A true philosophical thriller. The novel is reconstructed from individual words, plot twists and other „evidence“ and its incomprehensible passages are explained."
SOBAKA.RU

"In great detail and at the same time as far away from academic difficulty as possible."
KOMMERSANT

"Like turning the pages of a familiar novel, but still full of mysteries and secrets."
LITERATURNAYA GAZETA

Basinski was born in 1961 in Frolovo town (Volgograd region). He studied at the Saratov University and the Maxim Gorky Literature Institute in Moscow. Basinski is one of the most influential and highly acclaimed literary critics in Russia. He publishes in Literaturnaya Gazeta, Novi Mir, Oktyabr, Znamya, Druzhba narodov and others. He was a jury member of several major Russian literary prizes, such as the Russian Booker, the Alexander Solzhenitsyn Prize and the Yasnaya Polyana Prize. His fascinating documentary books about the life and work of Leo Tolstoy aroused a new wave of interest in the phenomenon of the "Apostle of Yasnaya Polyana". Basinski lives in Moscow.

Pavel Basinski

Georgian narrative non-fiction

My Song

Narrative non-fiction. Bakur Sulakauri Publishing. Tiflis 2023. 206 pages

«My Song» is a "romance", an ode to the sacred relationship between an artist and a listener. And to Music itself — the sole form of art that gives meaning to our Life, and more importantly, to our Death as Burchuladze puts it.

He explores his personal relationship with Keith Jarrett's music. This text speaks of the power of music, that could forever change the perspective of a 10-year-old boy growing up behind the Iron Curtain of the Soviet Union. Overhearing Keith Jarrett's piece on his father's record player would become his gateway to creativity, defining his perception of this world, and his longing for cognition.

Burchuladze does not invent anything in this book, but he does not write a biography of Keith Jarrett either. He explores the recordings – well known and the unknown ones – track by track, to the exact date and sometimes to the minute, and links them to his personal listening time. So he lets the music take him back to historical moments and down into his own life:

Giving away his only Keith Jarrett pirated copy to someone he loves as a token and the girl disappears with it forever. Being kidnapped by a Chechen drug smuggler at the customs station who does no harm and instead leaves a walkman with the Cologne Concert behind. A police checkpoint wants to be bribed, hears My Song from Burchuladze's car audio player and gives free travel.

The book is filled with the sound of music. The act of reading is like listening "novelized music" switching on the famous soundtracks in our own memory. This book is the search for peace and a piece of homeland that can never be taken away from you.

"This is a divine book about divine music.."

LEVAN BERDZENISHVILI (writer, literary critic, literature professor)

"Many Eastern Europeans today have to flee to the West again out of fear, into exile. One of these refugees is Zaza Burchuladze... The country that you bring with you into exile is only as big as the soles of your feet and the sadness in your head. And only the homesickness we brought with us is as big as the country on the map."

HERTA MÜLLER



THE AUTHOR

translations
8 languages

awards

Book of the Year Georgia 2022
Bruecke Berlin Preis 2018
Best Georgian Novel 2011
Ilia State University Award 2011

samples available

english, full german

other works

Adibas
Mineral Jazz
The Inflatable Angel
Zoorama

Zaza Burchuladze was born in Tiflis in 1973. He started writing after graduating from the National Academy of Arts in Tiflis and has since published novels, short prose and screenplays. He translates Russian authors, including Dostoevsky, Khams, Sorokin and Bitov, into Georgian. He played the leading role in the film version of one of Dzhavakhishvili's novels, a Georgian literature classic. Burchuladze is considered one of the most important writers of post-Soviet Georgian literature. As an underground writer he initially provoked outrage within Georgian society with his scandal topics and language experiments and was long ignored by critics. Since the appearance of his novels he has become a leading intellectual and one of the most promising authors, and is beginning to achieve fame beyond the borders of Georgia. After aggressive press, a severe insult on the radio by former president Saakashvili, physical attacks on the street of Tiflis and ultraorthodox publicly burning his books, he had to flee to Germany with his family. He has received several awards for his novels, including the Friedrich Naumann Foundation Prize and the Brücke Award. Today he lives and works in Berlin.

Zaza Burchuladze

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

Russian narrative non-fiction

Philhellenes

Narrative non-fiction. AST. Moscow 2021. 426 pages

2021 Big Book Award
2021 Yasnaya Polyana finalist

Foreign rights: Greece/ Kastaniotis (request), Romania/ Editura, Serbia/ Russika (request)

The twenties of the 19th century. In Greece there is a war for independence from the Ottoman Empire. The revolutionaries have many sympathisers throughout Europe who are willing to voluntarily defend the old culture and fight to preserve the old greatness. This is what they are called: Philhellenes - lovers of the Greeks. Although the Russian Tsar Alexander I is not eager to interfere in the war of others, there are such Philhellenes in Russia too. One of them is the retired Ural staff captain Grigory Mostsepanov. He is sure that he has found a way to radically change the course of the war in Greece, and must tell everything to the Emperor himself as soon as possible.

This historical novel, told in the form of letters, diary entries and mental conversations of absent heroes, focuses not only on the Philhellenes of the Urals. Numerous people and representatives of different nations and social classes come to word, which paints a multi-faceted picture of a bygone era.

The plot begins in the factories of Nizhny Tagil, continues in Yekaterinburg, Perm, Tsarskoye Selo and Taganrog, leads from Russia to Nafplio and Alexandria and ends in Athens on the Acropolis. The novel's main characters include Alexander I, the mystical baroness Julia Kriedner, the Egyptian general Ibrahim Pasha and other documentary figures.

"Philhellens" is one of those novels in which characters and destinies that are at first unconnected gradually coalesce into a single ornament; watching this pattern emerge is a particular pleasure for the reader. What connects them here is not simply a whim of the author. It is the war by which they are slowly but inexorably drawn and united.... What seems to begin as a beautiful stylisation turns into a reflection on war, its mysticism and mystery." *Meduza*



THE AUTHOR

translations
15 languages

awards
Big Book Award 2021
Yasnaya Polyana finalist 2021
National Bestseller 2016
Big Book Award 2016
Booker Translation Grant 2016
Russian Booker shortlist 2009
Big Book Award 2009

samples available
english
french and others

other works
Philhellenes
Winter Road
Horsemen of the Desert
The Putin Series
Kazaroza

Yuzefovich, born 1947 in Moscow, spent his childhood and youth in the Urals. He has a Doctorate in History and is known to a wide audience of readers through his historical thrillers about Ivan Putin. Yuzefovich is capable of interweaving detailed knowledge of historical fact with masterly literary style into the plot of a thriller. L. Yuzefovich lives in Moscow and St. Petersburg.

Leonid Yuzefovich

non-fiction

Russian non-fiction

The Mining Civilization

Non-fiction. Alpina. Moscow 2022. 284 pages with photos

Publishers: China - NeoCogito

The Urals is the most industrialized zone on planet Earth. The full industrialization of the region began with the reforms of Peter I, and under Catherine II, thanks to the Urals, the Russian Empire became a world-leading industrial nation. In Russian history, this happened only once – at the end of the 18th century. By this time, more than two hundred mining facilities were being built in the Urals.

The Russian government achieved such an excellent result using very specific methods. National industry, private and state, was extracted from the laws of the empire and organized as a separate power within the power. A mining state was established in the Urals with its own legislation and court, its own bureaucratic hierarchy and administrative department, and its capital – the „ideal city“ of Yekaterinburg.

The economic potential of mining equipment gave rise to a new and unprecedented cultural phenomenon, dubbed by 20th-century sociologists as the „mining civilization.“ This is a variant of the Russian world, but with a special value system, with a special mythology, with special culture heroes. And the identity of Russian mining and metallurgy, which is also the identity of the Urals, turned out to be the benchmark for its industrialization.

At a time when globalization is reshaping the world into a post-industrial consumer society, it is very important to consider what the industrial creation society looked like, especially in this exemplary Russian version.



THE AUTHOR

languages

8 languages

awards

2006 Yasnaya Polyana Award

2006 Big Book Award

2006 Strannik Prize

2004 Book of the Year

2004 Bazhov Award

2003 Mamin-Sibiryak Award

The Ridge of Russia

Non-fiction. Alpina. Moscow 2022. 220 pages

Publishers: China - NeoCogito

People live on earth, life takes place in space. So country, territory, space cannot help but influence the destiny and thinking of a society. Only modern megacities are „one-dimensional“, but the world looks very different outside of urban globalization.

With every jolt forward, Russia's mainstay rested on the Urals. Russia has always been aware of this, but without really knowing the Urals. Ivanov's book is a systematic description of the Urals as a sociocultural phenomenon. Not a portrait, but an identification of the region, an explanation of its „inner structure“.

Russians have settled in the Urals for half a millennium, but also the Urals the Urals have been fitting the immigrants for five centuries. The development of the Urals was industrial, and the old industry required a special organization of life: production, social relations and even culture had to correspond to unique local conditions.

Thus arose in the Urals quite an amazing world, unlike the Russian one, with a complex set of local ideas about nature and man. In everyday life it is difficult to understand how the Urals differ from Russia – and yet remain Russia. In any case, the fact is that the world of the Urals is not an alternative to the Russian world, but one of its versions. And the happiness of the Urals is to live by rules that are organic and as fate wills. To be needed and in demand right here on site. To move up without losing the ground. This is only possible in the mountains. Even in low ones.

Aleksei Ivanov was born in 1969 in Gorky (today Nizhny Novgorod). He grew up in Perm in the Urals. In 1996 he graduated from the University of Ekaterinburg with a degree in art history. He then worked as a caretaker, laboratory assistant, tourist guide, teacher, journalist and lecturer. His first publication in a magazine in 1990 was a fantasy novel. His first book publication was the mystical-historical novel „Heart of Parma“ 2003. 11 novels and 7 non-fiction books by him are now available with a total circulation of over 1.5 million. 5 books have been filmed, 5 more are currently being filmed. Aleksei Ivanov lives in Perm.

Aleksei Ivanov

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

Foreign rights: Germany/ Europa, World English/ Polity Books

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

non-fiction

Germany's Russia Problem

The Struggle for Balance in Europe

Political non-fiction. Manchester University Press 2021. 304 pages

With a new foreword reflecting the war against Ukraine

The relationship between Germany and Russia is Europe's most important link with the largest country on the continent. But despite Germany's unparalleled knowledge and historical experience, its policymakers struggle to accept that Moscow's efforts to rebalance Europe at the cost of the cohesion of the EU and NATO are an attack on Germany's core interests. This book explains the scale of the challenge facing Germany in managing relations with a changing Russia. It analyses how successive German governments from 1991 to 2014 misread Russian intentions, until Angela Merkel sharply recalibrated German and EU policy towards Moscow. The book also examines what lies behind efforts to revise Merkel's bold policy shift, including attitudes inherited from the GDR and the role of Russian influence channels in Germany.

Germany has the most developed relationship with Russia of any EU country, spanning business, education, politics, culture and sport. But Germany has a Russia problem: its policymakers struggle to accept that Moscow's efforts to rebalance Europe are an attack on Germany's interests. Any conflict with Russia is deeply discomforting, and arouses emotions that impede clear thinking and consistent action.

In this bold and original analysis, John Lough explains the scale of the challenge facing Germany as it strives to design policies for managing its relations with a changing Russia. Beginning with an account of how the countries' attitudes to each other were formed over several centuries, he proceeds to explore how German governments from 1991 to 2014 misread Russian intentions and inadvertently supported the emergence of a Russian system hostile to German interests, until Angela Merkel sharply recalibrated German and EU policy. The book looks at the role of German business interests and Germany's vulnerability to Russian interference, including misinformation and cyber attacks. It concludes by considering how Germany can strengthen its position against Russian influence in the future.



THE AUTHOR

available
full English

"I have found John Lough's Germany's Russia Problem an ideal book as we contemplate the source of energy we will draw on for heat and light in the decades ahead." TLS

"The title of John Lough's book itself makes clear that this is not another academic sand box exercise. He wants to make things better." DIE WELT

"John Lough has written a stimulating book rich in knowledge." FRANKFURTER ALLGEMEINE

"Provocative and brilliantly written, this book examines the deep relationship between two mutually indispensable nations and explains how Russia triggers reflexes in Germany that distort its policy thinking and produce contradictory results. With courage, honesty and insight, John Lough navigates one of the most sensitive areas of global politics today and sees a crucial role for Germany in creating a transformative environment around Russia that can facilitate its return to Europe."
LILIA SHEVTSOVA, author of „Putin's Russia“

John Lough is an Associate Fellow of the Russia & Eurasia Programme at Chatham House (since 2009) and a regular commentator on Russian and Ukrainian affairs. He spent six years with NATO managing information programmes aimed at Central and Eastern Europe, including a posting to Moscow, where he set up NATO's Information Office in Russia and was the first Alliance official to be permanently based in the country. He runs his own consultancy business, advising clients on political and investment risk in Russia, Ukraine and other countries of the former Soviet Union. He studied German and Russian literature at Cambridge University.

John Lough

Ukrainian non-fiction

In Bed with the Bear

Neighbouring Russia as a historical challenge

Non-fiction. Kyiv 2023. approx. 200 pages

This book tells the story of the uneasy experience of coexistence with a state that is constantly seeking to expand its borders, while at the same time complaining about prejudiced attitude from those who live next door to it. Even after the aggression of Russia against Ukraine not all people in Europe have understood that they shouldn't reassure themselves that such problems only affect Ukrainians, Belarusians or Moldovans. History shows that if the aggressor is not dealt with in time, any country in Europe and even in the world can eventually become Russia's neighbour.

Comparing Russia to a bear seems obvious to many today. However, such an association arose in the 16th century completely unintentionally and almost by chance. Only later did the Moscow rulers do their part to justify this association with a bear. Could it have been different? In the corresponding Russian folk tale, too, the bear does not defend his private space from invasions like his three English colleagues, but forces a girl who has gotten lost in the forest to live with him under the same rule – and threatens her with death if she does try to escape.

Russia itself usually does not wait for someone to come, but boldly invades other people's houses and declares them its own. This book attempts to tell the story of exactly how that happens.

From the first victim Novgorod where people lived and developed independently, forming their own cultural, economic and political tradition, being absorbed by Muscovy in the 15th and 16th centuries, to the Tatars, Belarusians and Ukrainians over many centuries. Finally, all of this culminated in an attempt to establish a power over the whole of Europe by fueling up national conflicts between the Western States, using not only the army, but also bribes and propaganda.

Mustafin reveals also historical details mostly unknown to the broad Western audience. For example Bakhmut known today as a place of heavy fighting between the Russian army and the Ukrainian Armed Forces. The town has a long history though. It first came into prominence in the early 18th century. Back then, Ukrainians and their Russian neighbours, the Don Cossacks, were fighting each other for the local salt mines.



THE AUTHOR

sample translation available
english

Oleksii Mustafin was born in Kyiv in 1971. He studied history at the Mykhailo Drahomanov Pedagogical University in Kyiv, but later worked mainly in the fields of journalism, politics and media management. He has held the position of news director at leading Ukrainian TV channels (INTER, STB, ESPRESSO). From 2013 to 2016 he was the general director of educational channel Mega-TV, from 2016 to 2017 as a producer of Media Group Ukraine he created a new information cross platform for the TV channel „Ukraina“ and the newspaper „Segodnya“. He is a member of the Ukrainian Television Academy and sits on the supervisory board of the “Honor of the Profession” journalism award. Between 1990 and 2005 he was politically active for the Ukrainian Social Democratic Party and also was engaged in media and political consulting. Mustafin has published over a dozen popular books on historical topics, including “The Power of the Maidan. Who Invented Democracy and Why” (2016), “Downfall: Crises of Political Regimes” (2021), “Pearls in the Steppe: Conversations about the Past of the Ukrainian South” (2023). Mustafin lives in Kyiv.

Oleksii Mustafin

press reviews

"Oleksii Mustafin combines scientific rigor and journalistic expressiveness, making his book easy to read and trustworthy."
ANDRYIY LYUBKA, Writer

"The style of this work might remind one of a fictional story, but the author is very accurate in his facts and meticulous in his details."

SERHYI OLHOVSKY, Historian, professor at Taras Shevchenko National University

"Even if you think you are well versed in history, Oleksii Mustafin might well surprise you."

OLEKSANDR ZINCHENKO, Historian, former Vice-Director of Ukrainian Institute of National Memory

"Unlike many other historians, Mustafin is distinguished by his thorough knowledge of history, simple language and logical, consistent and generally spot-on presentation of facts and their interpretation. Mustafin could easily be compared to Serhii Plokyh, if he were a scholarly historian like the latter. But Mustafin is a journalist first and foremost, and therefore his writing is easy and understandable for all non-fiction readers, be it about misfortunes that determined the fate of nations or about the real history of the late modern period. And most importantly, the stories Mustafin tells can be understood not only in Ukraine, but also abroad, on all continents."

SERHIJ RUDENKO

"Oleksii Mustafin's book „In Bed with a Bear“ is not just interesting, but also extremely necessary. In simple language, fascinating fact and captivating characters, it traces the chronology of Russian imperialism from the destruction of Novgorod to the present day."

OLENA KONDRATIUK, Vice-Chair of the Verkhovna Rada (Parliament) of Ukraine

"Oleksii Mustafin combines his skills of a historian with many years of experience as a media manager. This allows him to analyze global processes from the point of view of what actually engages the general audience. Respect for details, analysis of long-term processes and trends of how humanity becomes ever more aware and sensitive of rights and dignity for everyone makes his texts interesting for both professionals and a wide range of readers. Mustafin's irony does not only liven up how the information is presented, but also makes it impossible to use his books for ideological indoctrination. „In Bed with a Bear“ is a dynamic, thorough and convincing work that encourages the audience to think for themselves, debunks historical stereotypes informed by centuries of propaganda and negligence, uncovers the roots of processes that still affect things in Europe, Asia and the world, and satisfies intellectually."

KOSTIANTYN DOROSHENKO, Publicist and art curator

Oleksii Mustafin

Russian narrative non-fiction

3 1/2 . With Prisoner's Respect and Fraternal Warmth

Nonfiction memoir. Individuum. Moscow 2018. 416 pages

Foreign rights: Hungary/ Athenaeum

In December 2014, the Navalny brothers, Oleg and Alexei, were convicted in the 'Yves Rocher case'. Alexei got 3 years of probation, while Oleg was sentenced to 3 years in prison. Although the European court of human rights ruled that the convictions were arbitrary and unfair, Oleg served the entire term, 1278 days.

This book, mostly written in prison, gives an account of everything that happened to him during that time. Plus, the narrative is complemented with detailed drawings. If you read this book, you will find out what is the difference between the red and the black zone, what prison sheets and towels are for, where to hide a sim card during a search and more. But most importantly, this book is about remaining resilient even in the most outrageous, horrible and bizarre circumstances.



THE AUTHOR

"All stories about prison are to a certain extent similar to each other, like road movies. Therefore, what is important, who talks about the prison and how. Navalny's book is a book about how not to get lost even in the most wild, terrible and ridiculous circumstances."
AFISHA

"Oleg Navalny's book continues a huge tradition: prison has always been among the places where the history of literary, religious, philosophic, and political thought was created. Some writers began their literary careers in the solitude of the cell. Prison was not only embarrassing, but also inspiring, demanding not only silence, but also words. Oleg Navalny's book is an excellent example of such writing."
KOMMERSANT

"Perhaps the most important Russian work of 2018. The illustrated story of a person who was wrongly convicted and lost 3.5 years of normal life. Without an understanding and awareness of what North Korean wilderness the country is heading towards, it will be difficult to build a beautiful Russia of the future. This should be public task number 1."
LABIRINT

Oleg Navalny is a Russian businessman and social activist, the younger brother of Alexei Navalny. He became famous when, together with his brother, he was convicted of embezzlement and sentenced to 3.5 years of incarceration. The European Court of Human Rights ruled that his conviction was arbitrary and unfair. Oleg wrote his book while in prison. He was released in June 2018. Navalny has left Russia.

Oleg Navalny

Russian non-fiction

A Recent History of Russia in 14 Bottles of Vodka

How the Number One Russian Drink Draws Together
Business, Corruption and Crime

Non-fiction. Individuum. Moscow 2021. 352 pages

Vodka is one of the most iconic symbols of Russia, a drink that's synonymous with its people. A drink that is even hard to understand. It's also an incredibly profitable business. Where there is money, there is blood, power, dizzying ups and downs and, of course, silence. This book speaks up about these super-lucrative assets and universally known brands.

A Recent History of Russia in 14 Bottles of Vodka opens the public's eyes to the events of the past thirty years and shows them from an unexpected and thrilling point of view.



THE AUTHOR

"Puzyryov's book is true Russian non-fiction."
MEDUZA

"It's a real mine of plots for new movies and TV series. It's hard to believe that we witnessed such fantastic events."
MITYA BORISOV

Denis Puzyryov is an alumnus of the SPbU faculty of journalism. He has been in business journalism since 2010: he was the head of consumer market department and then the investigation department of RBC. Denis focused on professional sports, alcohol beverages and the tobacco market. He works as an editor at Sports.ru.

Denis Puzyrev

Ukrainian non-fiction

Anatomy of Hate. Putin and Ukraine

Non-fiction. Stary Lev. Lviv 2024. 170 pages

The new book by the author of „Zelenskyi without make-up“.

Russia's war against Ukraine is the most important event in the life of President Vladimir Putin. He staked everything on this war: the future of Russia, his political career, his well-being and even his life. Putin's hatred of Ukraine rests on a good foundation – the Ukrainophobia that has prevailed in Russia for centuries.

The current master of the Kremlin devoted a third of his life to trying to conquer Ukraine. He has spent 24 years, hundreds of billions of dollars, and the lives of more than 300,000 Russian soldiers to destroy Ukraine. Unsuccessful attempts to change presidents, poisoning of political leaders of the Ukrainian state, assassinations and bloody war – Putin is using the entire arsenal of a bloody criminal in the fight against Ukraine.

This book is of course about when, how and why Vladimir Putin launched the largest continental war in Europe since World War II – from a Ukrainian point of view. But it is even more about the pre-history of this decision routing also in Putin's personal relationship with Ukraine and providing an almost exclusive insights, first-hand information, the backstage of Russian politics and events witnessed by the author himself.

Rudenko has been a political journalist in Ukraine since Putin came to power in Russia and even before. Since then he has built up a network for insider and first-hand information, which gives him access to people who know Putin well or who met him directly during their work.

Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine (2007-2009) Volodymyr Ohryzko, Head of the Security Service of Ukraine (2006-2010 and 2014-2015) Valentyn Nalyvaichenko, and Russian opposition leader and Putin critic Andrey Piontkovsky participated in the project.



THE AUTHOR

other translations
25 languages

sample translation
English

other titles
Zelenskyi without make-up
Battle for Kyiv

“The origins of Russia's war on Ukraine go back to the turn of the century and Vladimir Putin's rise to power in Kremlin. This is the key argument of the book by Sergii Rudenko, who demonstrates the centrality of Ukraine for Putin's pursuit of Russia's “greatness”. Written by one of the leading Ukrainian journalists, the book tells a story that is little known in the West and is often lost in the day-to-day coverage of the war.”

Sergii Plokyh, the author of The Russo-Ukrainian War and Chernobyl Roulette

Sergii Rudenko was born 1970 in the Sumi region in Ukraine. He is a publicist and television journalist, author of a weekly author column for Deutsche Welle and anchor man at „Espresso.TV“. He worked for the Ukrainian service of Radio Svoboda, was the editor-in-chief of the editions „Now“, „Gazeta 24“, „Glavred“. He is founder of the book portal „Bukvoid“. He became famous by his quite critical political biography about President Zelenskyi translated into more than 25 languages.

Sergii Rudenko