

A portrait of Ivan Philippov, a man with short dark hair and a beard, wearing a black blazer over a black t-shirt with a 'SEAFOOD' logo. He is standing in front of a dark wood-paneled wall.

IVAN PHILLIPOV

Writer, journalist
and film producer

ABOUT

Internationally bestselling author,
journalist and film producer

Ivan Philippov is a Berlin-based Russian journalist, writer, and expert on Russia's pro-war "Z" media ecosystem. Since 2022, he has closely monitored and analysed Russian military bloggers, propagandists, and pro-war Telegram networks, becoming a prominent commentator on the attitudes, narratives, and internal dynamics of this community.

His analysis and commentary have been featured in leading international media, including the French newspaper *Le Monde* and news agency AFP; the British newspapers *Financial Times*, *The Guardian*, and *The Times*; the German newspaper *Die Welt*; the Danish newspaper *Berlingske* and national broadcaster TV 2; the Swedish public broadcasters SVT and Sveriges Radio; the Finnish public broadcaster Yle; and the US newspapers *Chicago Tribune* and *Washington Post*. He has also been interviewed and cited extensively by independent Russian media, including *Meduza* and *The Moscow Times*.

Ivan is the author of several books, including the novels *Shadow* and *Mouse*; *Mouse* was banned from sale in Russia. In Russia, Philippov was designated a "foreign agent". Philippov regularly comments on Russian propaganda, the war in Ukraine, and the evolution of Russia's pro-war public sphere.

SELECTED TITLES



Featured in:

[Le Monde](#), [Financial Times](#),
[The Times](#), [The Guardian](#), [Die Welt](#),
[Berlingske](#)

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ZZ АПАДНОМ ФРОНТЕ БЕЗ

PUTIN'S RUSSIA AGAINST PUTIN The War According to Z

Non-fiction | Political Non-fiction |
Human Interest

PITCH

Ivan Philippov, an internationally recognised journalist, writer, and expert on Russia's pro-war media channels, analyses a vast archive of pro-war bloggers, deconstructing the myth of Putin's military might and chronicling the decay of the Russian state.

SYNOPSIS

Following the full-scale invasion of Ukraine, the Kremlin destroyed what remained of independent journalism inside Russia. Yet the resulting vacuum produced an unexpected alternative: thousands of pro-war Telegram channels whose authors support Putin and the invasion but regularly contradict official propaganda, shedding light on the actual catastrophic conditions and developments of the war.

This unprecedented freedom is explained by the fact that this community is as close as it gets to civil support for the war effort. It is also a major fundraiser for the front, and is thus allowed to exist as long as it remains useful to the state.

Collectively known as the Z-space, these channels provide a unique real-time account of the war and the situation at the front, strikingly different from the official coverage.

Having analysed a massive archive of **40,840 posts** from **1,834 channels**, Philippov deconstructs the myths of Russian war propaganda and presents a much broader portrait of Putin's Russia, paradoxically based on the accounts of Putin's most avid supporters.

Continued 

BOOK



DETAILS

Title: Putin's Russia Against Putin: The War
According to Z
Publisher: Freedom Letters
Publication date: 2026
Language: Russia
Print length: 192 pp

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ДЕС

ПЕРЕМЕН

РОССИЯ ПУТИНА ПРОТИВ ПУТИНА

PUTIN'S RUSSIA AGAINST PUTIN The War According to Z

Non-fiction | Political Non-fiction |
Human Interest

SYNOPSIS CONT.

The people behind these channels come from entirely different backgrounds. They include veterans of the so-called “Russian Spring” who have fought in Donbas since 2014, residents of Donetsk and Luhansk, retired officers, military instructors, jet and helicopter pilots, former and serving members of the security services, frontline soldiers, Wagner fighters, military doctors, drone operators and engineers.

The most valuable sources are Z-channels run by civilian volunteers who supply the Russian military, catering to the actual needs that simply don't exist on paper due to the utterly corrupt system based on lies at every possible level of command.

These volunteers remain in constant contact with soldiers at the front and often provide a first-hand account of the real state of affairs.

Essentially, Z-bloggers are not opponents of the regime. They want Russia to win. Yet by describing the war in real, often brutal detail, they inadvertently document the horror, chaos and utter inhumanity of what is happening. And, most importantly, they unveil fundamental flaws in the thoroughly corrupt Russian power structure, where system survival is achieved at the cost of human lives.

Philippov does not simply give these voices a platform. What makes his research unique is his in-depth, systematic analysis of this vast body of data. He collects and deciphers their accounts, then places them in the context of verified facts from the front line, revealing what the raw data alone cannot.

The author devotes a substantial part of the book to the new vocabulary of war coined by Russian Z-bloggers, including terms such as “zeroing”, “pits”, “meat-grinder assaults” and “grinding down”. Meticulously defined and explained by the author, this new lexicon reveals a shocking reality of how the Russian army conducts the war: the extrajudicial execution of servicemen; senseless infantry assaults carried out without artillery support, in which the majority of the attackers are killed; and the systematic destruction of Russian military units through repeated attacks on Ukrainian settlements or fortified positions.

This dictionary of war lays bare the military's deep dysfunction and the systemic problems plaguing what was once widely believed to be Putin's all-powerful army.

Z-bloggers are well aware of these problems, openly and often passionately writing about what official Russian propaganda conceals or distorts. They describe military failures, shortages, corruption, incompetence and the consequences of decisions made by the Russian state. But despite all this understanding, they are unable to reach a logical conclusion from their own observations. Philippov does that for them.

Put in perspective, this thorough analysis of Z-channels produces a raw, unvarnished chronicle not only of the war, but also of the degradation of the Russian state.

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La Souf

IVAN PHILIPPOV

LES ZOMBIES ENGINE

MOUSE

Zombie Apocalypse | Horror | Action |
Survival Story

PITCH

After a lab experiment to make Putin immortal goes wrong, a deadly virus is unleashed on Moscow. The city of 12 million is quickly overrun, leaving few survivors. Two brothers, a prison guard and her prisoner, and a theatre student dressed as a pink mouse accompanied by a migrant worker fight for their lives as they navigate the infected city.

SYNOPSIS

In 2020, an infected mouse escapes from the Institute of Functional Immortality, where technology for Putin's immortality is being developed. This results in a devastating zombie apocalypse that sweeps through Moscow, leaving behind a trail of destruction and death. Millions of people die, becoming zombies. The infected have heightened senses of hearing and smell, but their vision and motor skills are severely impaired, which makes an escape possible, if far from easy.

The story follows three different groups of characters: Seva (15) and Kostya (10), two brothers trapped in their apartment, their parents killed, looking for a way to get out of town; Asya, a girl dressed in a full-length costume of a pink mouse, who is also trying to escape the city and return to her hometown, finding romance along the way against all odds; and the 80-year-old doctor of biological sciences, Lavr, and his prison guard, Tonya, stuck in a paddy outside the prison, where Lavr is kept on charges of treason.

The three groups set off from different parts of town heading in the same direction as they try to escape the city. The story unfolds through the three parallel narratives, each group facing various dangers and challenges. As we follow their journeys through devastated Moscow, they will get to visit the Pushkin museum, escape from a deranged cannibal, walk through the metro tunnels, climb the rooftops and hijack a train. Eventually, they all converge in the final chapter, where their paths cross and their fates are intertwined.

The novel ultimately explores the themes of survival, hope, and human connection in the face of adversity, all while providing a sharp social critique of contemporary politics through its satirical depiction of the brutal deaths of well-known political figures.

BOOK



DETAILS

Title: Mouse
Publication date: 2023
Language: English
Original language: Russian
Print length: 345 pp
Available in English, French

REFERENCES

The Last of Us, Craig Mazin, 2023
The Walking Dead, Frank Darabont, 2010-2022
28 Days Later, Danny Boyle, 2002

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The Shadow

Urban Fantasy | Superhero Action | Fantasy
Thriller

PITCH

When death is only the beginning.

A recently deceased investigator must save Moscow and the supernatural world of the city below from destruction and his own soul from the torments of hell.

SYNOPSIS

On a hot August night, a girl in downtown Moscow is ran over by a car. This is not an ordinary hit-and-run, but a premeditated murder. However, the murder is deemed an accident and an innocent migrant worker is quickly arrested.

Stepan is a Moscow police detective. Far from a hero, he is just an ordinary Russian cop – a little corrupt, indifferent, not outright evil, but getting there. His one redeeming quality is his soft spot for girls who fell victim to violent crimes, due to his own past. Stepan will easily take a bribe from a drug-dealer, but Lord have mercy on a rapist who will cross paths with him.

Sonya's death worries Stepan, who sets out to find the truth, ignoring the violent objections and direct order of his superior officer not to dig into it. He quickly realizes that he will lose his job if he doesn't stop, but before he can admit defeat and fall in line, Stepan is gunned down by two of his fellow officers. His body is thrown into a sewage well.

This is how the story begins. Stepan finds himself in The Other Moscow – the so-called Moscow Down Under, inhabited by all the unclaimed dead of the city's 900 years of history.

But Stepan is no ordinary deceased, he was chosen by the City as a Champion. Not unlike a huge prehistoric animal, the City can sense danger. It knows not where the danger is coming from, but it chooses a Champion – someone who will identify and neutralize the threat. The chosen Champion is known as The Shadow. As a reward the City gives The Shadow a chance at redemption, a chance to avoid hell. It also gives The Champion a superpower: an ability to inhabit shadows.

Stepan soon realizes that death brought him true freedom. He no longer has desires, he no longer has to play by anyone's rules, he can be himself. With grim satisfaction Stepan agrees that a dead cop is a good cop. And now this good cop will find the people who are responsible for his death. And, while he's at it, save the city.

BOOK



DETAILS

Title: The Shadow
Publication date: 2022
Original language: Russian
Available in French
Print length: 352 pp

"Philippov has a masterly command of film production methods, which results in this fascinating story with a range of interweaving storylines from different periods of Moscow's history that tie together in a grand finale."

– Antenna Daily

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