Georgia Charms World Publishing

‘Something very good indeed is happening today for centuries-old and unknown Georgian literature,’ says Georgian author Aka Morchiladze. He and many others from Georgia are in the Frankfurt spotlight this week to present their country’s culture and character to the publishing world.
Free Speech and Doded Questions

The first official day of the Frankfurter Buchmesse saw warm temperatures, even amid chilling worries about the world’s political realities.

German federal president Frank-Walter Steinmeier warned that “human rights are not respected by everyone and every country.”

Indeed, as trade visitors to the fair moved briskly through the sunlit Agora, Frankfurt vice president Claudia Kaiser opened a discussion of diversity in Asia’s contemporary literature by recognizing the suffering that has followed the earthquake and tsunami in Indonesia. “We must support everyone there,” Kaiser said, “as they try to rebuild their lives.”

Meanwhile, as industry dynamics triggered debates about how long audiobooks can dominate profits and the prospects for EPUB4 in the marketplace, John Sargent, the Macmillan CEO, said in his CEO Talk comments that the American market hasn’t seen the apparent attrition of book buyers that a Börsenverein survey indicates has removed close to 7 million readers from the German market.

But even Sargent, known as the first Big Five publisher to stare down Donald Trump, was unwilling to take on what may be even a higher power than the White House. When an audience member pointed out to him that Amazon is said by many to have too much market share and asked who Sargent would side with in a showdown, Trump or Jeff Bezos?—Sargent didn’t miss a beat: “No comment.”

Porter Anderson
Editor-in-Chief

New at the Fair: Frankfurt Kids

Children’s books are a strong segment of publishing globally, and Frankfurt is giving children’s and young adult books more visibility this year with its new Frankfurt Kids area. Located in the Foyer between Halls 5.1 and 6.1, this space includes an exhibition of international children’s books and toys, the Frankfurt Kids Stage, and the Illustrators Corner. The fair plans to grow this space over the coming years and to further invest in its children’s book initiatives.

The stage program includes business breakfasts, presentations on children’s books from various world regions, book prize ceremonies, and trend reports on toys, comics, books, and more.
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by Yoshiya Hasegawa

The World’s Best Way to Stretch
by Nakano James Shuichi

Seeing, Knowing, Thinking
by Bao Nakashima

Being Hungry Makes You Healthy
by Yoshinori Nagumo

The Kyocera Philosophy
by Kazuo Inamori
Frankfurt’s First Conference on the Evolving Audio Market

By Roger Tagholm

Welcome to “the happiest room in the Fair” was how Frankfurter Buchmesse vice president Thomas Minkus introduced the Fair’s first ever Audiobook Conference yesterday. Audio-books are the success story of the moment, and Michele Cobb of the US-based Audio Publishers Association had plenty of data to back this up.

She said that in the US, audiobook sales were up 34 percent and then gave a whistle-stop tour of markets around the globe. So we heard that for the year to November 2017, audio sales in the UK were up 16 percent by value and 18 percent by units. In Japan, sales were up 5 percent by value and 30 percent by volume. In France, while physical sales (CDs) were down by 9 percent, digital sales were up 75 percent and volume sales were up by 85 percent. In Italy, value sales were up by 51 percent and volume sales increased by 81 percent.

She noted a trend in the US that was being seen in other countries too: “Fifty-six percent of listeners said they were just relaxing, not doing anything else when listening to audiobooks. We’ve all grown used to the idea that we listen to audiobooks when we’re doing something else, but for some people that isn’t true. We’re all so busy these days, there’s a move to just listening to a story.”

She said there was a rise in smart speaker usage, something that John Ruhrmann, director of business relations at German audiobook distributor Bookwire thinks can only increase. A breakthrough in smart speaker take-up and voice AI were among trends he thinks should be watched. “Right now you have 54.4 million smart speakers in the US, but this is expected to double by 2020. The smart speaker is becoming the digital fireplace; it is what we will gather around to hear a story.”

He agrees with Penguin Random House chief Markus Dohle that “listening is the new reading” and had some specific pieces of advice to help publishers grow their audio sales. Among these was an invitation to “hack your own product” and “Cut it into three-minute chunks, like hit singles. And produce serial content too,” which appeals to the Netflix generation. “The trend is for “access as opposed to ownership,” and he clearly believes streaming is the way forward. “Our streaming turnover was 1 percent in 2015, 17 percent in 2017, and is expected be 42 percent in 2020.”

Henrik Lindvall of Sweden’s Storytel spoke about the challenges of the Indian market, among which was the fact that it is not covered by any government policies and regulations. “So audiobooks attract 18 percent GST [Goods and Services Tax] as they are not defined in any category while printed books attract zero GST.”

However, in closing he noted: “The biggest positive factor is the size of the population and the ancient love for stories. The Mahabharata and Ramayana—the two stories that define India—were narrated for centuries before being written.”

It made the audience realize one curious fact; the rise of audiobooks is taking us back to where it all began, before printed text, when we gathered around a fire, and a village elder or a parent said “once upon a time . . .” •

New Rights Deals Reported to Publishing Perspectives

By Hannah Johnson

On Tuesday, several literary agents reported some of their Frankfurt rights deals to Publishing Perspectives, among them a story of love, a story of loss, and a ride through avant-garde Paris.

La Separación by Silvia Arazi

Laura Palomares at Agencia Literaria Carmen Balcells announced two new deals for La Separación by Silvia Arazi: Czech rights to Metafora and Macedonian rights to Ars Lamina.

The book has already been sold into Arabic (Masaa) and English in India (Yatra Books), and it was first published last year in Spanish by Galerna.

As the agency describes this novel, “La separación begins the very night Lucía resolves to split up with her husband and face the changes, some painful and others not devoid of humour, that this new life will bring.”

Cuaderno Ideal by Brenda Lozano

Also from Agencia Literaria Carmen Balcells, Carlos Masdeu has sold World English rights to Edinburg-based Charco Press for Cuaderno Ideal by Brenda Lozano. The book was originally published in Spanish by Alfaguara in 2014.

The agency describes this novel as “a love story narrated from the point of view of a woman who waits for her boyfriend Jonás to return from a trip to Spain . . . She waits for him as a sort of Penelope who instead of knitting and unweaving, writes and erases her thoughts in a notebook.”

The Joyce Girl by Annabel Abbs

Sharon Galant at Zeitgeist Literary Agency has sold North American rights to Harper Collins’ William Morrow imprint for The Joyce Girl by Annabel Abbs. This novel was first published in the UK by Impress Books, and rights have additionally been sold into Australia/NZ (Hachette), German (Aufbau Verlag), Turkish (Hep Kitap), Spanish (Galaxia Gutenberg), Russian (Centrepolygraph), Bulgarian (EMAS), and Poland (Wydawnictwo WAM).

On her website, author Annabel Abbs describes her book as a “fictionalised story of Lucia Joyce’s affair with a young Samuel Beckett and then a young Alexander Calder. The only daughter of Irish author, James Joyce, and Nora Barnacle, Lucia aspired to be a modern dancer. Talented and ambitious, she trained with many of the most famous dancers of her time. The novel switches between past and present as Lucia retells her story to pioneering psychoanalyst, Doctor Carl Jung.” •

Have foreign rights deals to report? Submit them online at http://bit.ly/PPrightsdeal
Freedom in Turbulent Times: Steinmeier in Frankfurt

By Holger Heimann

The current state of society and democracy was the topic of a discussion at the Frankfurt Pavilion, a new, iconic event venue at the book fair with the Federal President of Germany, Frank-Walter Steinmeier; the Croatian author Ivana Sajko, the recipient of this year’s International Literature Award from the Haus der Kulturen der Welt; and Belgian writer Stefan Hertmans. Under the title “On Opining. How to Defend Freedom in Turbulent Times” the three participants discussed “How to Defend Freedom in Turbulent Times,” while populism and extreme views stoke fears.

People are worried about the position of democracy in modern societies, said the director of the book fair Juergen Boos at the beginning in his introduction remarks. The fair cannot give definite answers, but it can ask questions, he said. Nevertheless, the Federal President and his guests tried to find answers as well.

Steinmeier pointed out that the Universal Declaration of Human Rights as a reaction to the atrocities of World War II should be used as a standard around which countries should orient themselves. “We need it as a basis of intervention”, he said, knowing that the human rights are not respected by everyone and every country.

Steinmeier mentioned the hundreds of journalists and authors all over the world who have been murdered or sent to prison.

Ivana Sajko spoke about the role of literature in this situation. In her opinion, literature brings to us many individual stories, stories of fear and problems that are invisible. “Literature can give us a vision of where to go from here.”

Stefan Hertmans pointed out that literature is an exercise in empathizing with other people. He thinks that certain places in Europe are a kind of laboratory for how people of different nationalities live together. He said we live in a time of mixed identities, the longing for fixed identities he called “a kind of disease.” The question remains: “How can we be more relaxed about different identities? And how can we explain that to the people at the bottom of society?” For Hertmans, it is a social problem. “We need to find a language,” he appealed. Only through practice, not theory, can we find out how Europe should be, he said.

This is something Steinmeier agreed with. He said at the end, you cannot prescribe ideals. But we all should live and practice it so that change will happen.

Federal President of Germany Frank-Walter Steinmeier and author Ivana Sajko (Image: Johannes Minkus)
National Book Trust India is in Frankfurt for the 25th year (Image: Dorothea Grimberg)

Consultant Seth Russo and His Highness Sheikh Dr. Sultan bin Mohammad al Qasimi, Ruler of Sharjah (Image: Roger Tagholm)

Laura King and David Stephens of Lovell Johns celebrate 25 years as exhibitors in Frankfurt (Image: Dorothea Grimberg)

David Higham Associates, from left: Allison Cole, Emily Randle, and Claire Morris (Image: Roger Tagholm)

The Marsh Agency celebrates 25 years of coming to the Frankfurt Book Fair, pictured here are Jemma McDonagh and Imogen Bovill (Image: Riky Stock)

Agent Kelly Falconer and publishing entrepreneur Richard Nash (Image: Roger Tagholm)
The Loewe Verlag stand in Hall 3.0 features an actual tree house to celebrate the series *The Magic Treehouse* (Image: Johannes Minkus)

Juergen Boos, Frankfurt Book Fair director, in conversation with Georgian author Aka Morchiladze (Image: Johannes Minkus)

Literary agent Danny Baror celebrates 25 years attending the Frankfurt Book Fair with his own agency, Baror International. (Image: Riky Stock)

*Pachinko* author Min Jin Lee with Frankfurt Book Fair vice president Claudia Kaiser (Image: Johannes Minkus)

Delegation from Canada ahead of their tour of the Frankfurter Buchmesse, with the Honorable Stéphane Dion (center), Canada’s Ambassador to Germany and Special Envoy to the European Union and Europe (Image: Johannes Minkus)
Women Should Be Seen AND Heard

Authors Laksmi Pamuntjak, Andrea Pasion-Flores, and Kamila Shamsie, with moderator Claudia Kramatschek (Image: Johannes Minkus)

By Olivia Snaije

In a talk with women writers from the Asia Pacific region, three authors discussed the value of women’s prizes, stories by women, how women authors are read, and how social and political tensions in their countries affect their writing.

One of the speakers, Pakistani-British author Kamila Shamsie, won the 2018 Women’s Prize for Fiction for her novel Home Fire. She said that she felt the prize—set up in 1996 to counter the lack of women on literary prize lists—has shown how “action can transform literary culture. Some people think progress and action come with the passage of time, but I believe you have to take action. In Britain, the creation of Virago [a publisher of books by women] and this prize were part of this action. The number of women shortlisted for the [Man] Booker Prize rose exponentially since the original Orange [Women’s] Prize. We’re giving women a platform. It’s meant a lot to me as a woman, as a writer and as a feminist.”

Indonesian poet and author Laksmi Pamuntjak, who won the 2016 LiBeraturpreis for authors from Africa, Asia and Latin America for her novel Amba, said that she was very happy to have won the prize because “the greatest challenge for a writer in Indonesia is to be heard. Not much of our literature has traveled.” However, she said, “I don’t think any woman would like to be undervalued or overlooked for [simply] being a woman but at the same time they don’t like to be encumbered by just that, being a woman. That is the paradox.”

“It’s important for there to be women’s prizes, says short-story writer Andrea Pasion-Flores, a former literary agent, and currently general manager of Anvil Publishing in the Philippines. Pasion-Flores has also noticed that the portrayal of women in novels often “feels like they’re accessories or not as well-developed as characters.” A prize that recognizes how women write about women would fill a much-needed space, she added. “In the Philippines most writers are expected to write about the nation, it has to be political or historical. If you’re writing about family, relationships, or your body, this is seen as less important than a big political story.”

The issue isn’t just about women writing certain kind of books and men others, said Shamsie, “It’s the way the books are being read.” She has noticed that writers from Pakistan, such as Mohsin Hamid or Nadeem Aslam often have a strong romantic line in their novels. But it has been pointed out to her that as a female author, even if she writes about politics, the romantic side is talked up and the political side downplayed, contrary to male authors.

Nevertheless, said Pamuntjak, “the world is experiencing a seismic shift on how we pay attention to women. Even I have been affected by heightened feminist awareness.”

And what about gender imbalance in publishing? In 2015 Shamsie had published a provocative article in the Guardian calling for 2018 to be a year in which only women writers should be published, to redress the balance. Although only the publisher And Other Stories stepped up to the challenge, it made other publishers stop and look at their figures and realize that in fact they had been publishing more men. In the UK, said Shamsie, “Sometimes imperative thinking just requires one to say stop, look at the books you publish.”

Pasion-Flores said that as a publisher she is always on the lookout for women’s writing and when she is in the process of editing a book she looks closely “at the treatment of women’s characters. If I find something offensive, we will discuss this with the writer. It’s to help bring out a great story all the while with careful reading.

Even in her own work, a collection of short stories called For Love and Kisses, she found she had been affected by the social culture in the Philippines where “there is a deeply ingrained sense of shame among women and women should be seen and not heard.”

There have been recent events in the Philippines in which women politicians have been publicly shamed, said Pasion-Flores and there is an atmosphere of “toxic masculinity . . . It has been accepted that the macho attitude seems to have paved the way for the type of government we have right now.” She is not sure, however that writers have sufficient distance from what is happening currently and doesn’t yet know if “the writing is ripe yet.”
By Porter Anderson

Perhaps the most interesting element of the comments from Macmillan CEO John Sargent on Wednesday (October 10) at the Frankfurter Buchmesse’s CEO Talk had to do with the dismissal in late August of the head of another Holtzbrinck publishing house, Rowohlt.

Barbara Laugwitz had worked for Rowohlt in various roles since 2005 and had taken over the publishing direction after the departure of Alexander Fest in 2014. She’s to be replaced on January 1 by Florian Illies—manager of the auction house Grisebach and an author, himself. Many writers have been loudly displeased. The Nobel laureate Elfriede Jelinek was quoted by Harry Nutt in the Berliner Zeitung saying, “Now another woman has been dumped out like rubbish. . . . We all share [her] fate, we share it sisterly, because we are all worth nothing.”

After taking care to first congratulate Rowohlt—the publisher of this year’s German Book Prize winner Archipel (Archipelago) by Inger-Maria Mahlke—Sargent was guarded about the situation, which has left many observers perplexed as to why Laugwitz, seen as successful, was sent packing.

“I’m the guy who offered Barbara the job as publisher of Rowohlt,” he said, “and I approved the recent management change. . . . I think the world of Barbara and I’m not going to sit here and say anything against her.”

When asked if the change means that Holtzbrinck’s houses may be coming under a more centralized management regime, Sargent said, “I’m thinking of how to put this emphatically enough. The editorial decisions in the German companies and the American companies, in the UK company, and in the Australian company, and in the South African company, are made with enormous independence.”

Sargent in the United States is now admired for showing corporate independence in January when he responded to Donald Trump’s effort to stop publication of Michael Wolff’s Fire and Fury: Inside the Trump White House. He conceded, in answering Publishers Weekly’s Andrew Albanese on the issue that on hearing of Trump’s cease-and-desist effort, his first thought was, “We’re going to sell a shitload of books.”

But he went on to reveal that at their peak, pre-orders for the book on Amazon had run as high as 23,000 per hour. “This was unprecedented,” Sargent said, “we hadn’t seen it before.

In general, the questions put to him—by journalists whose news outlets sponsor the Global Ranking of the Publishing Industry produced by Rüdiger Wischenbart—were relatively mild, and elicited predictions from Sargent that print will survive digital challenges, and that long-form reading and storytelling will weather the onslaught of electronic entertainment.

His message was that reading, while challenged by many distractions, is safeguarded in today’s culture by its unique activation of the consumer’s imagination. “We still have 250-to-400-page books on the shelf.” •

Jon Sargent (Image: Johannes Minkus

CEO Talk: Sargent on Rowohlt and ‘Fire and Fury’

The year Canada will be the GUEST OF HONOUR at the FRANKFURT BOOK FAIR

Networking reception at Québec stand, Hall 5.1 E111, Thursday, Oct. 11, 5 pm

This year, meet us in Frankfurt | Rencontrez-nous cette année à Francfort:
Canada stand, Hall 6.0, B67 | Stand du Québec, Hall 5.1 E111
- Translation Incentives
- Online Rights Catalogue: French and English Selection
- Fellowship Opportunities to Canada

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À bientôt!

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Quick Quotes: One-Question Interviews

Kenza Sefrioui
Journalist, Literary Critic, Editor, En Toutes Lettres

Q: Can you tell us about the books you brought to the fair?
A: This book [Islam et Femmes] is about important issues about women and Islam. It won a prize in Morocco and just published the paperback version in France. . . . We have four books about women’s issues because we think it’s important. One of the books has several stories of feminine conditions in our country, another provides research on female strawberry pickers in Spain that are victims of a dangerous system; they are sexually harassed, abused, and raped and paid under wages. Another is on how to live together in Morocco and takes you through difficult points of living together, such as the issue of equality of men and women. Social justice is the main question of our work.

Sofie Dewanyani
Executive Director, Litara

Q: Tell us about your publishing house?
A: Litara is an NDO founded in 2014 focused on publishing children’s books to promote literacy in our country, especially in remote areas. Our books have quality illustration, with little text so it’s easier to read. These kinds of books are not provided in Indonesia by commercial publishing. Some of our books have won awards like those awarded in Singapore, Slovakia, Korea, and The White Ravens in Germany. We’re a small publisher of 4 people and some illustrators and some designers. We do a lot of online marketing and collaborate with schools, other NDOs, and government literacy projects.

Our most popular book is A Playground in My Wardrobe because of the quality of illustrations and how it portrays a girl going on one adventure to another in her batik, a traditional dress in Indonesia.

Itzel Hsu
Literary Agent, The Grayhawk Agency

Q: What books are popular in Taiwan today?
A: One title that is very huge in Taiwan right now—it’s about education and how parents should treat their children. Each family has their own kind of unhappiness. The TV series is an anthology loosely based on the book. It’s kind of like Black Mirror, and it’s on TV and Netflix. The book is called On Children—the title was inspired by a poem—and it’s the #1 bestseller for many weeks. It was published a few years ago but after the TV series came out, the TV series tie-in helped make it a bestseller.

Catalina González Restrepo
Poet and Editor, Luna Libros

Q: Tell us about Luna Libros.
A: Luna Libros is an independent publishing house founded in 2008. We publish books about the geography, history, and main biographies of Latin America, and the humanities (mostly philosophy and history). We also publish poetry, essays, and narrative nonfiction . . . One of our new books is The Forgotten Irish Who Changed the Face of Latin America—the Irish were very important for the independence of our countries. It was launched at the Guadalajara Book Fair.

Interviews by Amanda Orozco
Publishing and the Web May Not Be So Different

By Mark Piesing

"Developing standards requires a lot of tea, coffee, and violence," says Ivan Herman, technical lead for publishing at W3C. Herman was the keynote speaker at the busy "Internet For Publishers: What W3C can do for us?" presentation at the Frankfurter Buchmesse on Wednesday.

The World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) is an international community that sees itself as the stewards of the open standards that ensure the long-term growth of the Web. Tim Berners-Lee, the inventor of the internet, is the director of W3C. They are supported by a diverse ecosystem that includes big tech companies like Google, Amazon, and Microsoft, and publishers like Penguin Random House, HarperCollins, and Hachette.

"The world of publishing and the Web are not two different worlds," says Herman. "Many of the issues raised by the publishing industry are relevant to the web in general."

These issues include accessibility, and offline access.

One of the critical goals of W3C is to develop and promote EPUB, ebook format used by iBooks, Kobo, Google Play, and a submission format for Kindle.

Essential to achieving this goal is the new version of EPUB—version 3.2—that is coming out soon, followed by a more radical update of EPUB4 in the future.

"EPUB3.2 is an update of EPUB that will bring it closer to current Web standards," says Herman, "and put right some of the mistakes of the last update, such as restoring the backward compatibility with earlier versions.

"But there are plenty of challenges with EPUB3. It is still rooted in the XML world even though it has largely been abandoned. There are content types that can't be represented in EPUB such as audiobooks."

An EPUB3 file can be seen as a frozen and packaged Web site—which causes problems.

"Some publishers are not interested in packaging content. They want to publish on the Web. There is a split in the community. This split means that EPUB is often ignored by non-book publishers."

"Other publishers just want more complex layouts."

The purpose of what Herman calls EPUB4 is to address these challenges.

"The future is EPUB4. You will be able to publish in a browser or specialist reader, whatever the requirements of the business model, and be displayed properly. It should be able to be read online or offline. Any content that can be interpreted on the Web, like audiobooks, should be functionally compatible."

However, he concedes that it does represent an "architectural challenge."

The bottom line is, he says, that "publications—with all their specialities and tradition—should become first-class entities on the Web." •
What About Brexit? UK Publishers Weigh In

By Porter Anderson

New to Frankfurt this year, the Pavillon des Lettres d’Afrique can be found in Hall 5.1 B125 and might be thought of as a hub for African publishing at the fair.

The area includes a central stage program of some 30 events on African publishing and exhibitors from 19 countries in Africa.

Publishing Perspectives spoke with Raphaël Thierry, who is in charge of the Pavilion’s programming, which at Frankfurt is subtitled “Changing the Narrative.”

Publishing Perspectives: What is the intent of this program?

Raphaël Thierry: We questioned several African publishers from Senegal, Togo, Tanzania, and Guinea about their needs in Frankfurt. Obviously they were interested in gaining stronger visibility to facilitate their networking during the book fair.

The challenge was to build a program that will not put “African publishing” at the center of the topic, as it is often the case, because this always involves a listing of African publishers’ problems. This is absolutely understandable as the problems are real, but we don’t want to miss the essence of FBM here: a place dedicated to the international publishing business, in which African publishing has always been represented, even if discreetly.

African publishers are not less or more than other publishers: they defend authors’ voices, editorial policies, look to make the best of their market, hopefully to sell or buy rights.

PP: Can you give us an overview of the program?

RT: Lettres d’Afrique is not a space centered on a single language, and so the narrative is not one of a single language, neither is it a single focus on Africa. We don’t want to create an African isle in Frankfurt, but to bring a global dialogue on African publishing’s relationship with the international book market.

I also want to stress the “Indaba” moments of our program, which are related to publishers presenting their catalogues to other professionals, and making a connection with the Zimbabwean International Book Fair, which is asking the question, “What about an ‘African Frankfurt?’”

PP: How is African literature progressing in the world industry?

RT: Progress starts by considering it not as simply an “African matter” but as a necessary contribution to world literature, which paradoxically lacks publishing diversity.

Publishers like Cassava Republic in Nigeria, Amalion in Senegal, Mkuki na Nyota in Tanzania, Elyzad in Tunisia, Ifrikiya in Cameroon, East African Educational Publishers in Kenya, and hundreds of others prove this through their existence.

Visit the Pavillon des Lettres d’Afrique in Frankfurt: Hall 5.1 B125
Translation Funding:
Translation funding is available for all literature and children’s titles that have won the Sheikh Zayed Book Award.

Email info@zayedaward.ae for info and application instructions.

Discover the latest winners of the Sheikh Zayed Book Award:

**Literature:**
- *Remorse Test* (Ikhtibar al-nadam) by Khalil Sweileh (Syria)
- *Summer Rains* (*Amtar Sayfiyyah*) by Ahmad Al Qarmalawi (Egypt)
- *The Autumn of Innocence* (Khareef al Bara’a) by Abbas Beydoun (Lebanon)
- *Beyond Writing* (Ma Wara’a al-Kitaba) by Ibrahim Abdelmeguid (Egypt)
- *The Madmen of Bethlehem* (Majaneen bait lahem) by Osama Alaysa (Palestine)

**Children’s / YA Literature:**
- *The Dinoraf* (al-dinoraf) by Hessa Al Muhairi (UAE)
- *Hatless* (Bila qubba’a) by Lateefa Buti (Kuwait)
**Russian Author Dmitry Glukhovsky’s Cyber-Noir Novel**

By Porter Anderson

If you have yet to hear the name Dmitry Glukhovsky, he wants to assure you, “You’ll hear of me yet.”

This September, the Moscow-born author flew from Burning Man in Nevada to Europe to promote the German edition of his latest book, *Text* (published by Europa Verlag on September 12).

Since the book’s original Russian publication by Eksmo in mid-2017, translation rights to *Text* have already sold into at least 14 territories, with more deals on the way, according to Glukhovsky’s literary agent, Bettina Nibbe.

*Text* is classified as a cyber-noir novel set in contemporary Russia—a “corrupt state,” as the book’s descriptive copy puts it, with “a decaying value system.”

For better or worse, Glukhovsky shows no fear in addressing the Kremlin and, as he puts it, “the ever-rotting, pretentious, cynical, and proudly immoral caste of Russian rulers.”

The book opens in 2016 with Ilja’s return to Moscow after seven years of detention. A huge mistake puts him on the receiving end of a dead man’s smartphone: text messages, videos, and calls from his family, his drug accomplices, his girlfriend. Ilja is being drawn into another person’s identity.

“*Text,*” Glukhovsky tells *Publishing Perspectives,* is an attempt to draw a very scrupulous portrait of today’s Russia. Because, strangely enough, very few Russian authors today seem to care—or dare—to describe our present tense. They tend to look back or try to look forward. They choose to ignore the now. And this seemingly so-stable Russia actually contains so many contradictions and tensions under the surface.

*Text,* Glukhovsky says, “isn’t my first political book. *Tales of the Motherland,*” a short story collection, “was even more politically charged, having the relationships between the rulers and the ruled as its main point. The next novel I’ve got plans for is not political at all—but then, I continue writing columns for Russia’s last independent newspaper, *Novaya Gazeta,* and for a few European newspapers, including *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* and *Gazeta Wyborcza.* And these columns are very political.”

While both *Text* and *Tales of the Motherland* have yet to be translated to English, Glukhovsky’s better-known and most popular work, the Metro saga, began with his first book, *Metro 2033,* which he self-published online in 2002. The book was developed into a video game, has been translated into 37 languages, and sold more than 3 million copies. In February, the Metro Exodus PC game is to be released, and other authors now are creating new content in The Universe of Metro 2033 franchise, which saw 70 books published by October 2015.

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**FEP Rendez-vous Addresses EU Copyright Directive**

By Porter Anderson

Today (Thursday October 11) at 1:30 p.m., the Federation of European Publishers (FEP) welcomes Axel Voss—Member of the European Parliament and rapporteur for copyright in the EU’s Digital Single Market negotiations—to the annual FEP Rendez-vous in the Frankfurt Buchmesse’s Congress Center.

The FEP’s newly installed president, Rudy Vanschoonbeek, and Marija Gabriel, European Commissioner for the Digital Economy and Society, will also be there to discuss the developments around the Copyright Directive element of the EU’s Digital Single Market.

In a vote widely hailed as supportive of Europe’s creative industries, the EU Copyright Directive was approved in a September 12 plenary vote by members of the European Parliament.

The hard work now is to come ahead of the final vote in January on copyright reform. The FEP sees this legislation as fundamental for the sustainability of EU’s cultural and creative sectors.

**Axel Voss: ‘Very Optimistic’**

In an exchange with Voss, he tells *Publishing Perspectives* that he’s upbeat about where the effort lies this autumn, as the FEP convenes in Frankfurt: “I am very optimistic that we will finalize this file early next year. The result of the vote of September 12th showed that a large majority of the parliament sees the need for this reform.”

Voss is also eager to quell the fears of those who worry that freedom of speech could be affected by the final form of the Copyright Directive. “The freedom of speech is not limited at all,” he says. “We just want to avoid copyright infringement—and they have never been covered by the [right to] freedom of speech.”

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**Dmitry Glukhovsky at the fair:**

**PP Talk: Dmitry Glukhovsky**

Thursday, 11 October
10:30–11:00 a.m.
International Stage, Hall 5.1 A128

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**Rudy Vanschoonbeek: Effects for Publishers**

Some observers have found it worrisome that the Copyright Directive isn’t directly applicable to book publishing.

“It’s obvious that the provisions on illustration for teaching, text, and data mining and preservation as well as out of commerce will have an impact on the book sector,” Vanschoonbeek says, with “teachers using a few pages, a map to illustrate their classes, researchers mining the content they have access to or libraries preserving books in their collections.”

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**Michael Healy: ‘The Clock Is Ticking’**

Michael Healy, Executive Director of International Relations at Copyright Clearance Center, has been monitoring the votes in the European Parliament quite carefully.

“There’s consensus that the recent vote in the European Parliament, Healy says, ‘was a victory for rights holders and a setback for the Big Tech platforms,’” he says.

“Everyone is keenly aware that the clock is ticking. European Parliamentary elections will be held in May 2019, so there’s some urgency to get everything completed.”

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On 12 September, the European Parliament voted in favour of a balanced reform of copyright.

439 MEPs supported this reform, find your MEPs in the list and thank them.

The draft legislation is now being discussed between the Council of Ministers, the Parliament and the Commission before it returns to the whole Parliament for a final vote. A balanced copyright reform is key for the sustainability of EU cultural and creative sectors, and the book ecosystem is an essential part of it. Books have a key role in education, research and knowledge. The draft legislation foresees exceptions on text and data mining, illustration for teaching and preservation that will impact books. It is essential that each of these exceptions are balanced. It is also crucial that when a book is used under an exception, the money paid for that use is shared by the authors and the book ecosystem. The final legislation must respect that balance. It is European. It is technical. Yet, it will shape the future of our cultural and creative sectors.

**THE BOOK CHAIN NEEDS TO MOBILISE**

Thanking MEPs for their vote

Testifying on the impact of the legislation

Supporting a fair compromise when the text comes back to Parliament

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