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Russian Translator Censors Putin Questions at George Martin Q&A

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Writer George R.R. Martin **Chris / Flickr**

Game of Thrones author George R.R. Martin is known for his excessively gorey plot twists, but for his Russian translator, exposing the writer to questions about President Vladimir Putin would have been a step too far.

When a journalist from the Fontanka.ru outlet asked Martin during a press conference in St. Petersburg on Wednesday which house Putin would have belonged to in Westeros, the Russian translator failed to pass on the question, saying, in Russian: "We don't have an answer to this question."

A journalist from the opposition-leaning Dozhd television channel later repeated the question in English, asking Martin why he would not comment on the Russian president. The translator, repeating the question after her, once again omitted Putin's name.

Martin responded by saying that he commented on U.S. affairs because he followed them closely, but that he had little knowledge of the situation in Russia.

“You have to sort that out yourselves,” he said, a comment which the translator did not pass on to his Russian colleagues.

The translator also avoided a question from a journalist comparing Cersei Lannister to U.S. Donald President Trump.

Prior to the press conference, journalists had been asked to avoid questions on politics and Martin’s health, the Vedomosti business daily reports.

Martin is visiting Russia for a fantasy writers’ festival in St. Petersburg which will begin on Aug. 18.

During the Q&A, which lasted almost two hours, Martin was also asked why he had such a “merciless” approach to his characters.

"As a reader, what I came to hate pretty early in my life were books that were predictable,” he replied.

“The only way to [prevent] that is to kill someone important unexpectedly. Then [readers] know that you’re playing for real and that this is a book where anything can happen.”

Asked about recent leaks of the upcoming Game of Thrones series, Martin said he did not share “the panic” some viewers felt towards of spoilers.

“Just knowing that something is going to happen is not the same as viewing it,” he said.

“I can enjoy rereading ‘War and Peace' even though I know that Napoleon lost,” he said, referring to Lev Tolstoy’s masterpiece.

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