

Russian Pro-War Writers Say State Has Failed Them

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Poet Alexander Pelevin. **Arthur Novosiltsev / Moskva News Agency**

Russian writers who back Moscow's war in Ukraine have complained that they lack state backing and struggle to reach a broad readership, the Ostorozhno Novosti news outlet [reported](#).

Poets and authors at a literary roundtable in St. Petersburg accused the authorities of failing to promote their work and restricting their access to schools and literary events.

Poet Alexander Pelevin said Russia had failed to launch a "special cultural operation" since the war began, using a phrase that echoes Moscow's official term for its invasion of Ukraine.

He said Russian authors had produced a body of "magnificent poetry" during the war, but the state had failed to help distribute it and had marginalized writers who describe themselves as patriotic.

Pelevin also acknowledged that patriotic poetry was in decline, saying it was difficult to keep

writing about the capture of yet another small village.

Related article: [Pro-War Books, Bomb Checks and Z-Poetry Reign at St. Petersburg's Literary Fair](#)

Another pro-war poet, Ukraine war veteran Axel Kobokki, blamed the failure to launch a cultural campaign on the image of patriotism promoted by the state, adding that Russians had little trust in people aligned with the authorities.

Participants also argued that liberal public figures built credibility by defending people facing state persecution, while patriotic figures lacked comparable successes.

One participant alleged that school extracurricular reading lists included books only from certain publishers of pro-war authors, describing the arrangement as a way to siphon off money.

Another claimed that orders to keep patriotic writers out of schools came from the highest levels of government. Participants also complained that writers serving at the front were not granted leave to attend literary events.

The exiled investigative outlet Vyorstka previously [reported](#) that Russian publishers had released at least 259 books about the war since 2022, with most getting print runs of between 1,000 and 3,000 copies.

Book industry representatives told Vyorstka that publishers had little interest in pro-war literature because of weak reader demand. Poor sales meant the books were often sent to publicly funded institutions like schools, universities and libraries, they said.

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