

# Born In Chechnya

By *Olga McPhail*

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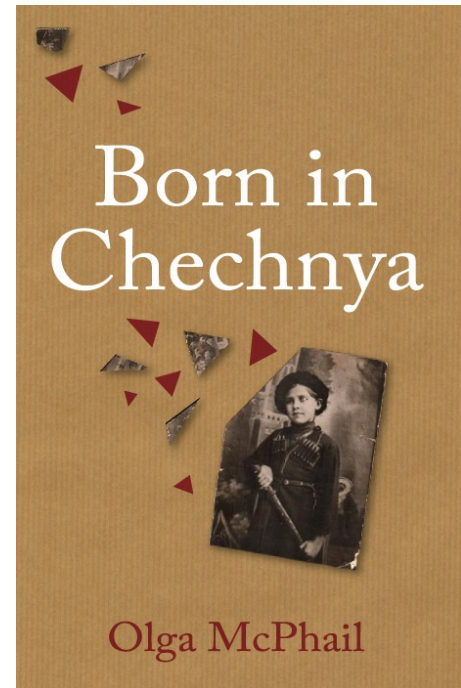
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“Born in Chechnya” is an autobiographic novel. It depicts the ethnic contradictions during the escalation of Chechen conflict. The narrator revisits historic aspects of its roots. The novel deals with the inevitability of ethical choices made by its central characters.

Sofia, a local Russian professional woman in her late thirties, divorced, with two young daughters and Mark, a British salesman, meet in the early 90s in Grozny. The capital of the former Chechen-Ingush Autonomous Republic of the Soviet Union is on the brink of political upheaval. Trapped in a situation of extreme danger, Sofia is writing a book in attempt to make sense of the roots of the Chechen problem. Her reflections on historical issues of Chechnya take her back to her childhood memories and the stories told to her by her grandmother.



PUBLIC EVENTS WITH VISITING WRITERS FROM AROUND THE WORLD

**International writers at Leeds**

*Spring Festival 2013*

**Massimo Carlotto Weds 17 April**  
Italian detective novelist, reading from his recent novel *Respiro corto*, partly set in Leeds, and launching the latest English translation of one of his novels, *At the End of a Dull Day*. In collaboration with LivItaly. Bringing Italian Culture to Yorkshire ([www.leeds.ac.uk/arts/livitaly](http://www.leeds.ac.uk/arts/livitaly))

**Antonio Altarriba Weds 24 April**  
Spanish graphic novelist, author of *El arte de volar* (The Art of Flight), a history of twentieth-century Spain through the eyes of the author's father, including his participation in the Spanish Civil War.

**Olga McPhail Tues 30 April**  
Russian author resident in Leeds, writing in English; launch of her autobiographical novel *Born in Chechnya*, with dramatized readings and book signing.

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*I read an early draft of this memoir. Absolutely fascinating, I loved it. It gets across a sense of the fragility of a self-hood spanning historical upheavals - the collapse of the Soviet Union and the war in Chechnya. It hints at everyday prejudices which only get questioned many years later. There's great depth to this memoir, and it's one I'll read again.*

[Aiden O'Reilly](#)