

Love and War Intertwine in "The Sky Is Red"

Julia Purdy translates Giuseppe Berto's tale of coming of age in WW2

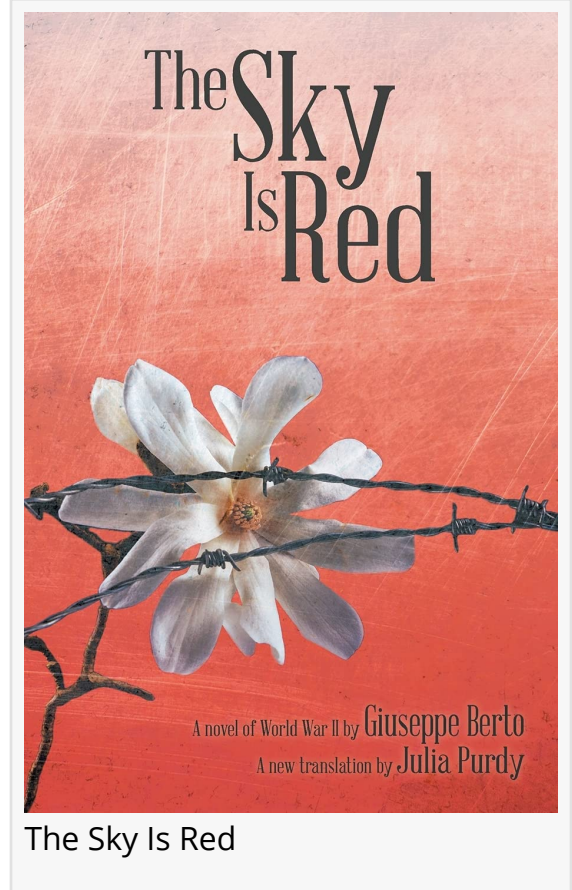
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/EINPresswire.com/ -- Italian author Giuseppe Berto's "Il Cielo è Rosso" originally appeared in Milan in 1947 and an English translation was published. This moving coming of age novel chronicling the civilian experience in World War 2 Italy was hailed by publisher James Laughlin as "one of the most important books of the year." Now [Julia Purdy](#) offers a new edition with an all-new contemporary American translation of the work so that new generations can appreciate Berto's "[The Sky is Red](#)."

Berto's narrative unfolds in an unspecified Italian locale that captures the state of the nation's cities in the wake of World War 2, particularly the bombing campaigns inflicted upon communities around Naples and Rome. It depicts the once scenic cityscapes reduced to rubble, serving as the backdrop of human dramas among the survivors, namely four teenagers who long for normalcy, who are representative of a people and a nation facing not only the challenges of their present circumstances but also an unknowable future.

Purdy has a personal connection with Berto's work, having received her mother's dog-eared copy of the work from when she worked for the Red Cross in Italy during 1944. The 1948 translation was by Angus Davidson, an early 20th century British writer, which led Purdy to contemplate an all-new translation with more accessible and modern wording as opposed to the dry English prose. Purdy wanted Berto's work to resonate with 21st century readers. With her version, she breathes new life into the text, in a way that American readers will appreciate, while staying true to Berto's original no-holds-barred prose. She believes that the work remains relevant now as it was then, as it not only captures universal human experiences but also tackles social issues that continue to affect people around the world.

"As I worked on it in 2016, the connection to the experience of Syrian – and now Afghan –



civilians caught up in the ravages of war was inescapable, and so I began to view the story as much more than just a coming-of-age narrative, although it is that also." Purdy says.

About the Author

Giuseppe Berto, 1914-1978, was an Italian officer who spent time as a prisoner of war in Texas from 1943 to 1946, and worked on his novel during that time. His style is akin to post-war Italian neo-realism.

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Julia Purdy

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