Kathrin Pabst

Granddad’s Bunker – A Family Story

Bestefars bunker. Hvorfor krigen ikke slipper taket : en generasjonsfortelling

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Kathrin Pabst's ancestors were living in Pomerania when, in the winter months of 1945, the Red Army advanced and pushed millions of German civilians out of the areas that would now fall to Poland. Throughout a long year on the run, the great-grandparents kept a diary describing the cold, hunger and disease, forced labor and systematic rape. But none of this was ever talked about in the family.
At the same time, their son, Kathrin's grandfather, was a Wehrmacht soldier in one of Hitler's elite troops. He too wrote a diary, but it does not mention acts of war in which he probably participated, and he never talked about them. Later in life, he would build a house with a bunker in the basement. Why would he do that? And how could he, who was so loving, fail to distance himself from Nazism and the crimes his own regiment must have committed?
Kathrin Pabst's personal story shows how traumatic events can leave their mark on several generations, and why it is so important to talk about even the painful memories.

Photo: StudioArt Media

Kathrin Pabst was born in Gummersbach in Germany and moved to Norway in 2001. She has a PhD in ethics and has many years of experience working with difficult and tabooed stories.

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