

## ASIA LITERARY AGENCY

Spring 2023

Highlights - Fiction

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### OWLISH

By Dorothy Tse

Translated from Chinese by Natascha Bruce

To be approx 70,000 words in English, delivery October 2021

Original publication with Aquarius, July 2020

#### Rights sold:

USA/Canada – Graywolf (for publication June 2023)

UK/Comm (ex Canada) – Fitzcarraldo (for publication February 2023)

Australia/NZ – Scribe

Italian – E/O Edizione

German – Büchergilde Gutenberg

#### Copy:

*Owlish*, by one of Hong Kong's most celebrated writers, tells the story of a middle-aged professor's doomed love affair with a doll called Alice, but really it tells the story of Hong Kong. Fairy-tale romance opens Professor Q's eyes to new, exciting sides of his city (as well as himself), but closes them to inconvenient truths – such as the growing student protest movement. When Alice finally takes on a life of her own, the fairy tale, as is so often the case, is revealed to be laced with menace. In a twisty, sinister narrative reminiscent of Helen Oyeyemi, threaded with the skilful oddness of Samanta Schweblin and Sabrina Orah Mark, Tse forces her readers to confront the perils of apathy, complacency and neoliberal subordination, asking us to look beyond her text and reconsider what, exactly, we are choosing not to notice.

#### A small selection of reviews/praise:

'Tse is an experimental writer whose work reimagines the cityscape of Hong Kong as mundane hallucination. Once a transnational hub for British colonial finance, now repossessed by an anti-Democratic China, Hong Kong for Tse is a space where identities are fluctuating and commodified.' **Ken Chen, PEN America**

'[The] struggle for liberation is at the core of each of Tse's stories. Anything is possible, and that's both exciting and terrifying.' **Three Percent**

‘Reading *Snow and Shadow* is akin to being lost in a snowstorm: dizzying, terrifying, but nevertheless thrilling.’ *Words Without Borders*

‘Tse envelops her readers in obscurity through bold, imaginative and artfully spare prose. Taut and unsentimental it may be, but the reader will find it hard not to be intrigued by the characters and their circumstances...*Snow and Shadow* challenges the boundaries and limitations of our narrow, conventional realities and forces us to re-examine our perspective of the world.’ *South China Morning Post, four-star review*

‘a fantastic if discomfoting work of art. In scintillant prose (as translated by Natascha Bruce from the original Chinese) ... Tse makes a compelling spectacle... [and] crafts a wondrous hinterland in her writing, imagining the waiting worlds we might dream ourselves into – if we try’ *Big Issue*

Excerpt in *Granta*: <https://granta.com/owlish-dorothy-tse/>

**Bio:**



Dorothy Tse is one of Hong Kong’s most celebrated fiction writers. Her awards include the Hong Kong Book Prize, Hong Kong Biennial Award for Chinese Literature, Taiwan’s Unitas New Fiction Writers’ Award, and the Hong Kong Award for Creative Writing in Chinese. Tse has published four short-story collections in Chinese, including *So Black* (2003, 2005) and *Ghost in the Umbrella* (2020), and has garnered attention in English since the 2014 publication of her collection *Snow and Shadow* (translated by Nicky Harman; longlisted for 2015 Best Translated Book Award). Describing *Snow and Shadow*, author Joyelle McSweeney observed, ‘Tse joins the ranks of artists currently remaking the world, from Yoko Tawada to César Aira’. According to Three Percent: ‘Reading *Snow and Shadow* is akin to being lost in a snowstorm: dizzying, terrifying, but nevertheless thrilling.’

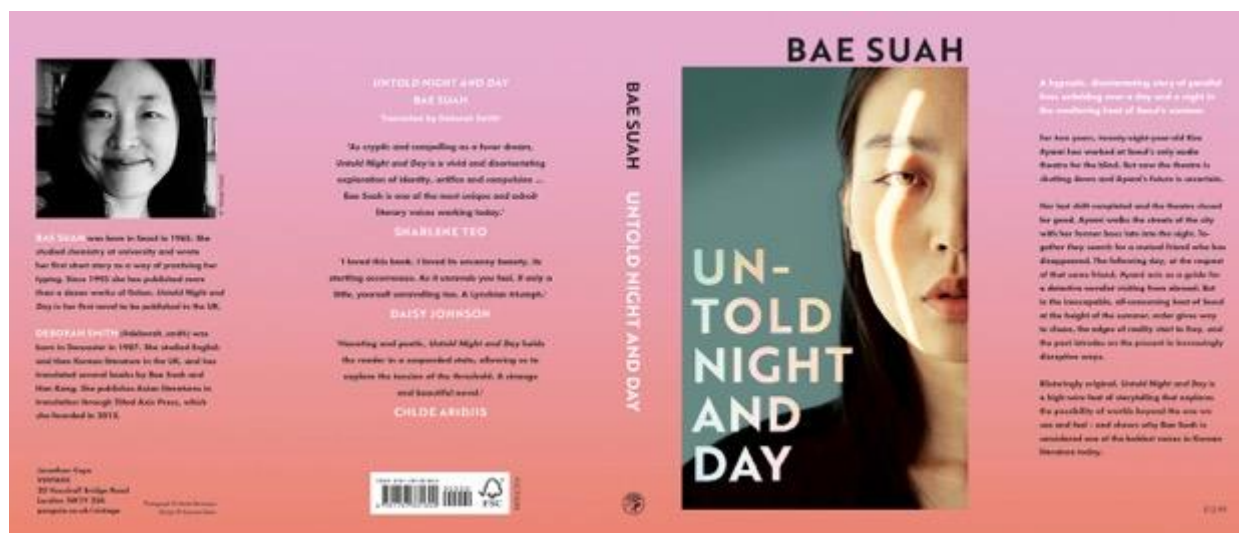
English translations of Tse’s stories have appeared in BBC Radio 3, *Denver Quarterly*, the *Guardian*, *Wasafiri*, *Washington Square Review*, and *Words Without Borders*. Her work also features in the anthologies BooksActually’s *Gold Standard* (Math Paper Press, 2016), *That We May Live: Speculative Chinese Fiction* (Two Lines, 2020; starred review from *Publishers Weekly*), and *Antipodean China: Reflections on Literary Exchange* (forthcoming from Giramondo).

She has been granted residencies at Art Omi, The Leeds Centre for New Chinese Writing, University of Iowa’s International Writing Program, and Vermont Studio Center. Tse has

appeared at international literary festivals in George Town, Hong Kong, Singapore, Leeds, Adelaide and Ubud.

Tse, who is fluent in English but who writes creatively in complex/traditional Chinese, currently lives in Hong Kong, where she teaches creative writing at Hong Kong Baptist University. With translator Natascha Bruce, Tse was a winner of the 2019 Words Without Borders Poems in Translation Prize.

**UNTOLD NIGHT AND DAY** - a novel  
By Bae Suah  
Translated from the Korean by Deborah Smith



English publication: spring 2020

**Rights sold:**

UK/Comm – Jonathan Cape/Penguin Random House

USA – Duckworth

German – Surkhamp

Italian – ADD Editore

Russian – Eksmo

Vietnamese – I Love Books

Original publication with Jaeum and Moeum 2013

**A selection of quotes/reviews:**

‘Disturbing, beautifully controlled...the entire novel resembles **performative art**, with reprised passages and the same lines spoken by different figures, at once a *danse macabre* and an examination of the frailty of ego and identity’ *Financial Times*

‘[A] dirty and cracked narrative that encourages questions about our 21<sup>st</sup> Century world and how we’re living in it... [a] **little masterpiece**’ *Books and Bao*

‘I loved [*Untold Night and Day*]. I loved its uncanny beauty, its startling occurrences. As it unravels you feel, if only a little, yourself unravelling, too. **A Lynchian triumph.**’ Daisy Johnson, Booker Prize-shortlisted author of *Everything Under*

‘**Haunting and poetic**, *Untold Night and Day* holds the reader in a suspended state, allowing us to explore the tension of the threshold. **A strange and beautiful novel**, wonderfully translated by Deborah Smith.’ Chloe Aridjis, author of *Book of Clouds*, *Asunder* and *Sea Monsters*

‘As cryptic and compelling as a fever dream, *Untold Night and Day*, is a **vivid and disorienting** exploration of identity, artifice and compulsion... Bae Suah is one of the most unique and adroit literary voices working today.’ Sharlene Teo, author of *Ponti*

‘Bae's intriguing new title [*A Greater Music* – also translated by Deborah Smith] is another multi-layered elegy, sure to find shelf space beside recent internationally lauded Korean imports.’ *Library Journal*

‘Bae Suah offers the chance to unknow – to see the everyday afresh and be defamiliarized with what we believe we know – which is no small offering.’ *Music & Literature on Recitation*, trans. by Deborah Smith

‘Bae dissolves conventional linear narrative, as though it were impossible for cause and effect to exist concurrently with such repression.’ *The National on Recitation*, trans. by Deborah Smith

‘*Nowhere To Be Found* [Bae's first novel translated into English] is a psychological novella, but in the most engaging manner, emotionally and aesthetically. Bae presents a psyche, in living depth, without psychoanalyses, without the pretense that psyches are chartable.’ *Quarterly Conversation*

### **Copy:**

For two years, 28-year-old Kim Ayami has worked at Seoul’s only audio theatre for the blind. But Ayami has just been made redundant, and thinking about the future feels like staring into the unknown.

Open to anything, Ayami spends a night in the company of her former boss, searching for a mutual friend who has disappeared, and the following day looking after a visiting poet who turns out to be not what he seems. Walking the streets of the city with each man in turn, Ayami talks about art, love and the inaccessible country to the north. But in the sweltering heat of Seoul at the height of the summer, order gives way to chaos and the edges of reality start to fray, with Ayami becoming an unwitting guide to its increasingly tangled threads.

Blisteringly original, *Untold Night and Day* explores the possibility of worlds beyond the one we live in – and shows why Bae Suah is considered one of the boldest voices in Korean literature today.

### **Bio:**



Bae Suah, who has an undergraduate degree in chemistry and became a writer at the relatively late age of twenty-eight. Her first short story, which she wrote while learning how to type, was published in a literary magazine. Prior to that, she had never taken any creative writing or literature classes. In 2001 she moved to Berlin, where she took a break from writing to learn German and in 2008 she began translating German literature into Korean. She

is one of the most highly acclaimed and innovative contemporary South Korean authors.

Her novels (*Recitation*, *A Greater Music*, *Nowhere To Be Found*) and stories (*North Station*, *Highway with Green Apples*, *From Noin Ula*) are influenced by the German authors she translates – including Kafka, W G Sebald and Jenny Erpenbeck, but also by the authors Clarice Lispector and Borges, et al.

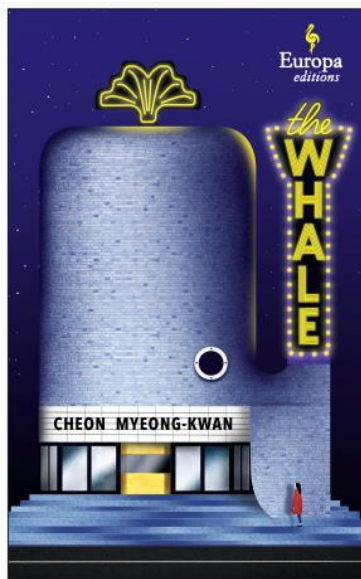
**She has gained cult status**, with an extremely devoted and enthusiastic fanbase. Her own themes often address ‘the sensuous interpolation of past and present, of I and thou, of life and literature’. Suah’s novels and stories are gifted to us in English by the most notable and award-winning translators: Man Booker Prize-winner, Deborah Smith, Sora Kim Russell and Janet Hong, all of whom vie for her attention. She has received the prestigious *Hanguk Ilbo* Literary Prize, as well as the Tongseo Literary Prize. She speaks English, German and... Korean.

*Untold Night and Day* marks Suah’s debut in the UK with a major publisher.

Her short story, ‘Milena, Milena, Ecstatic’ was recently chosen, alongside five other Korean authors (including ALA’s own Han Yujoo), to be published by Norwich Writing Centre’s chapbook-publishing project, Strangers Press.

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**WHALE** – a novel  
Translated from Korean by Chi-young Kim



Originally published by Munhakdongne in 2004

**Rights sold:**

**USA/Canada – Archipelago (for publication January 2023)**  
**UK/Comm (ex Canada) – Europa (for publication January 2023)**

Chinese - Xiron  
French – Actes Sud  
German – Weissbook  
Italian – E/O Edizione  
Japanese – Shobunsa  
Russian – Text  
Thai – Nanmee  
Turkish – Lotus

*Whale* – like *Master and Margarita*, on shrooms, though Mr Cheon would prefer if I described it as inspired by Toni Morrison's *Beloved*... has sold over 160,000 copies (and counting) in South Korea, which is a significant sum for the country - lots of info below for you but important to absorb.

The book has also been published (as above) in French, Russian, Chinese and Thai before the Korean wave and before I began representing him and since then in Japanese and we now have a deals in German, Italian, Russian and Turkish alongside English. In France I have just agreed a deal for one of his more recent novels *It's a Man's World* with Actes Sud, who publish *Whale* and *Modern Family*.

*Whale* is masterpiece of modern fiction; literary, fantasmagorically Fellini-esque in scope and scale - a mix of farce, Nietzsche-esque fable and fantasy.

## Copy:

Set in a remote village in South Korea, *Whale* follows the lives of three linked characters: Geumbok, an extremely ambitious woman who has been chasing an indescribable thrill ever since she first saw a whale crest in the ocean; her mute daughter, Chunhui, who communicates with elephants; and a one-eyed woman who controls honeybees with a whistle. Brimming with surprises and wicked humour, *Whale* is an adventure-satire of epic proportions by one of the most original voices in South Korea.

*Whale*, told in three parts, as a narrative that circles back on itself... (the novel magically closes just as it opens, unexpectedly mirroring itself) makes you want to read it all over again when you reach the end, and makes the entire conversation we are having now about non-binary seem as if it's something that sprung from his imagination... years ago.

*Whale* is a complex, very possibly award-winning story gilded with intelligent, original narrative, a strong sense of reality as social history and political criticism, magical realism, etc, and with an almost mythical atmosphere – intriguing and charming, even when violent and painful.

## Bio:



Cheon Myeong-kwan is an outsider, with no formal education in a society where PhDs are dime a dozen and more snobbish than a what's-your-mother's-maiden-name drinks party in the home-counties.

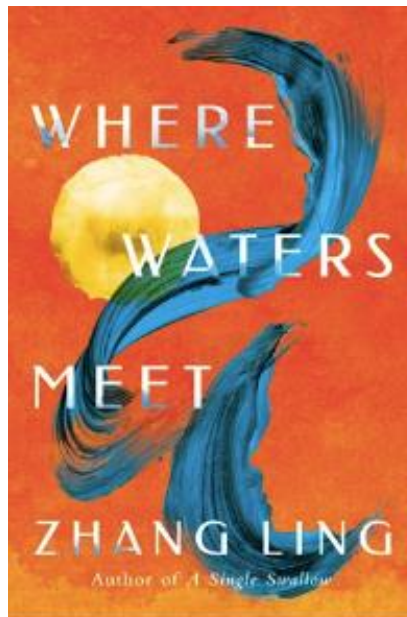
So he observes, not in a creepy-peeping-Tom or spitefully jealous way, but in way that just takes it all in, and filters the good and bad, and lays it out. He has a wicked, yet soulful sense of humour, which adds levity and which is - actually - the magic touch.

Like the best artists, he is simply compelled to write, the music flows through him. At first, he tried screenplays, and failed legendarily. Then he turned his hand to novels, one of which (*Modern Family*) was turned into a film (*Boomerang Family*) and succeeded spectacularly. The page turns.

I invited him to a publishing party once in Korea, not understanding how famous he is, but on his arrival all the girls gasped they couldn't believe he was in the same room. Cue: selfies, kowtowing, giggles. But he remained quiet, sweet, shy, modest, humble. And left the party early. Interview with him [here](#).



**WHERE WATERS MEET**  
By Zhang Ling



**Rights sold:**

WEL to Amazon Crossing, publication May 2023

Winner of the Chinese Media Literature Award for Author of the Year, the Grand Prize of Overseas Chinese Literary Award, and Taiwan's Open Book Award, Zhang Ling is a literary darling in her native China. Her 2009 novella, *Aftershock*, was made into China's first IMAX movie and became the highest-grossing film in China at that time. In 2020, English-speaking readers finally received the gift of Zhang Ling's exceptional literary talent when her novel, *A Single Swallow*, was translated by Shelley Bryant and published by Amazon Crossing.

Critics called Zhang's English-language debut 'truly extraordinary', 'superb', 'thought-provoking', 'vivid and moving'.

Now, Zhang Ling returns with *Where Waters Meet*, a captivating, multi-generational saga that brings much-needed attention to the suffering women endure during wartime and their extraordinary resilience in extreme circumstances.

Zhang vividly portrays historical events in modern Chinese history that are not well known to the Western audience, including the recruitment of 'comfort women' during the Japanese occupation; the famine of early 1960s and the exodus to Hong Kong in the 1960s-70s.

Her first novel to be written in English, Zhang, who has lived in Canada for over 30 years, says, 'A different language brings in a new sense of rhythm, contextual associations, and musicality, which rejuvenate me as a writer. Writing in two languages gives us an extra eye to perceive ourselves as well as the world around us. This third eye helps us to discover not only the differences, but also the overlapping areas, between the two languages. When we

start to explore these areas, we oftentimes find unexpected pathways to the depths of human minds

**Copy:**

‘A daughter discovers the dramatic history that shaped her mother’s secret life in this emotional and immersive novel by Zhang Ling, the bestselling author of *A Single Swallow*.

There was rarely a time when Phoenix Yuan-Whyler’s mother, Rain, didn’t live with her. Even when Phoenix got married Rain, who followed her from China to Toronto, came to share Phoenix’s life. Now at the age of eighty-three, Rain’s unexpected death ushers in a heart-rending separation.

Struggling with the loss, Phoenix comes across her mother’s suitcase, a memory box Rain had brought from home. Inside, Phoenix finds two old photographs and a decorative bottle holding a crystallized powder. Her auntie Mei tells her these missing pieces of her mother’s early life can only be explained when they meet, and so, clutching her mother’s ashes, Phoenix boards a plane for China.

What at first seems like a daughter’s quest to uncover a mother’s secrets becomes a startling journey of self-discovery. Told across decades and continents, Zhang Ling’s exquisite novel is a tale of extraordinary courage and survival. It illuminates the resilience of humanity, the brutalities of life, the secrets we keep and those we share, and the driving forces it takes to survive.

**Advance praise:**

‘*Where Waters Meet* brings us back to the turbulent decades in China where people fought one war after another, suffered famine, and endured political persecutions. However, instead of focusing on misery, Zhang Ling introduces us to those who defy their fates. They are brave enough to try sneaking across the border, determined enough to adopt a foreign tongue, and kind enough to care for their families no matter what. A true masterpiece filled with idiosyncratic yet admirable characters, suspenseful mystery, historical complexity, and ironic humor.’

Jianan Qian, O. Henry Prize winner and staff writer at *The Millions*

‘A gripping, epic novel . . . a remarkable achievement’

Paul Brinkley-Rogers, Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist and veteran war correspondent; author of *Please Enjoy Your Happiness*

‘Few writers could bring a story about China and other nations together as seamlessly as Zhang Ling.’

Mo Yan

‘Reading *Where Waters Meet* is like peeling the onion: after layers of layers of sorrows, pains, regrets, what you find at the heart of the novel is poignant but also an epiphany. Tragedies make the purest out of bare life: endurance, persistence, compassion. Zhang Ling’s first novel written in English is not a typical Chinese romance; it is a miracle testifying to the strength of womanhood, and the narrative itself is a miracle too, a delicately arranged puzzle

leading to the heart of love and darkness. A page-turner, Zhang's novel shines with cinematic splendor and unfolds a haunting story about home and exile, trauma and sacrifice, despair and hope, and most importantly, mother and daughter.'

Mingwei Song, poet and Professor and Chair of East Asian Languages and Cultures,  
Wellesley College

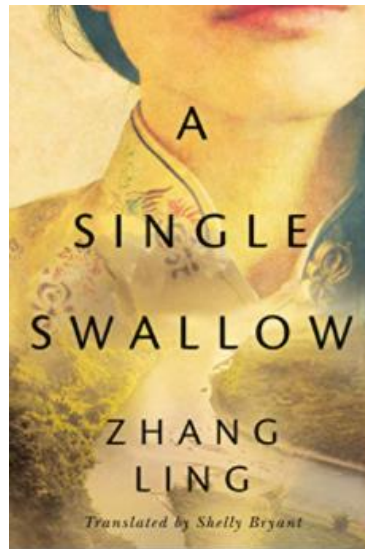
'A stunning, gorgeous novel. Zhang Ling's *Where Waters Meet* is haunting and heart-breaking as it navigates mother-daughter relationships in the face of war and famine. I simply couldn't put it down.'

Devi S. Laskar, author of *The Atlas of Reds and Blues* and *Circa*

'I love this novel. It is an intriguing and moving story of a Chinese family who have survived terrible wartime sufferings. It reminds us of the resilience of the human spirit.'

Xinran, author of *The Good Women of China* and *The Promise*

**A SINGLE SWALLOW**  
by Zhang Ling  
translated from Chinese by Shelly Bryant



**Rights sold:**

WEL to Amazon Crossing, publication October 2020  
Italian to Casa Editrice Nord

Original published as *Loayan* by People's Literature Publishing House, China 2017  
**Over 50,000 copies sold since publication February 2021**  
**9,000 reviews on Amazon – and counting...**

'I am in awe of Zhang Ling's literary talent. Truly extraordinary. In her stories, readers have the chance to explore and gain a great understanding of not only the Chinese mind-set but also their heart and soul.' Anchee Min, bestselling author of *Red Azalea*

**Copy:**

On the day of the historic 1945 Jewel Voice Broadcast – in which Emperor Hirohito announced Japan's surrender to the Allied forces, bringing an end to the Second World War – three men, flush with jubilation, make a pact: to meet again in the Chinese village of their younger days, where they forged their friendship. It's where they had fought – and survived – a war that shook the world and changed their own lives in unimaginable ways. But it is not until seventy years later, when their pledge is finally fulfilled. The only person who's missing from this reunion is Ah Yan, also known as Swallow – the girl each man loved, each in his own, profound way.

American missionary Pastor Billy, brash gunner's mate Ian Ferguson, and local soldier, Liu Zhaohu – dispersed into the world after the war – unravel their personal stories, what took them to the front lines and what carried them away, and through their stories we see Ah Yan's life take shape, vividly and intrinsically woven into their memories, and their hearts. Ah Yan suffered unspeakable atrocities, yet found grace and strength and dignity to rise above, carry on and, ultimately, bring them back together, allowing them to make sense of their own lives, and be at peace with them.

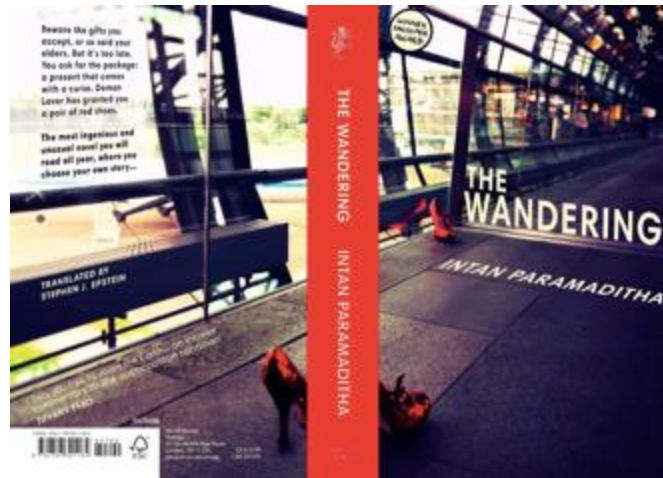
**Bio:**



Zhang Ling is the award-winning author of nine novels and numerous collections of novellas and short stories. Born in China, she moved to Canada in 1986. In the mid 1990s, she began to write and publish fiction in Chinese while working in English as a clinical audiologist. Since then she has won the Chinese Media Literature Award for Author of the Year, the Grand Prize of Overseas China Literary Award and Taiwan's Open Book Award. Zhang Ling's first novel in translation was the best-selling *Gold Mountain Blues*, translated into multiple languages. Her novel, *Aftershock*, adapted into China's first IMAX movie, and to date China's highest grossing film ever made, will also be published by Amazon as part of a two-book deal agreed in February 2022 for Ling's next two novels, including *Where Waters Meet*, which she wrote in English and which has been awarded a generous prize from the Canadian Arts Council.

**THE WANDERING** – a novel  
By Intan Paramaditha

Translated from the Indonesian by Stephen Epstein, winner of the PEN Heim



**Rights sold:**

UK/Comm – Harvill Secker/Penguin Random House  
Polish –Tajfuny  
Turkish –April Publishing

First published by Gramedia Pustaka Utama in 2017

[THE WANDERING WEBSITE](#)

**A small selection of reviews:**

‘An **ingeniously crafted debut** which lets you make your own choices about where you want the story to go. This is **an electrifying novel** about cosmopolitanism and global nomadism that keeps readers on their toes.’ *Book Riot*

‘[a] crystal ball of a novel...this book is **escapism taken to the next level**, while still making serious and significant comments about modern societies. Intertexts range from well-known literary works, popular songs and films to more subtle...references to Indonesian literature’  
*Translating Women*

‘*The Wandering* offers not only an incisive commentary of the cosmopolitan condition [but also] **a literary vindication of the unashamedly unfettered female.**’ Tiffany Tsao, reviewing the Indonesian edition for the *Jakarta Post*

‘Intan’s concerns for increasing conservatism and neo-authoritarianism are conveyed through sarcasm and dark humor.’ *Kompas*

‘Woman constrained by stifling societies find new avenues of escape, or subversion, and inflict fierce revenge on orthodoxy and chauvinism. **Brittle, bloody and brave.**’ *Belfast Telegraph*

‘A tale of restlessness... and belonging... [a] **deeply affecting, intensely personal** novel that uses its experimental method of storytelling to worm its way into your very bones’ *Books and Bao*

‘Sometimes disturbing, often humorous, but always unapologetically feminist... [*Apple and Knife* is] a deeply, brilliantly macabre, visceral collection which pulls very few punches.’  
Mariella Frostrup, Open Book interview

‘[U]nsettling and intoxicating. Often revising fairy tales, the stories are reminiscent of Angela Carter’s *The Bloody Chamber*, though the direct manner of narration resembles the narrative style of Haruki Murakami, who also has a penchant for the Gothic... Paramaditha’s stories are shockingly bold and macabrely funny, powerfully defamiliarising the cultural lore of patriarchy. What makes them special is their lack of interest in representing women as victims – here, the taboo of feminist anger is flagrantly and entertainingly broken.’ *The Saturday Paper* (Australia) on *Apple and Knife*

‘The women in [Intan’s] fiction, as the porcelain doll puts it, despise having their feet bound.’  
Norman Eriksson Pasaribu in the *Mekong Review* on *Apple and Knife*

‘A sharply subversive feminist retread of fairy tales and myths... [these] **darkly humorous**, sometimes viscerally violent tales are inspired by horror stories, exploring taboos and the female body in the modern world’ the *I* (a London paper reviewing *Apple and Knife*)

### Copy:

***The Wizard of Oz* meets *Red Shoes* by Anne Sexton meets *Faust* – this novel is already the recipient of the *Tempo* magazine award for best work of literary fiction 2017 and the PEN Heim Award for translation.**

This innovative novel engages with issues of mobility and displacement in a globalised world. The reader, addressed as ‘you’, assumes the role of the protagonist: a young woman who makes a pact with the devil to escape her dull life in Jakarta. The devil, reminding the protagonist of Faust’s tragic story, gives her a pair of red shoes that then whisk her away on the journey that she desperately longs for far beyond the borders of Indonesia. The trope of red shoes pays homage to other stories that highlight dreams of travel from *The Wizard of Oz* to Hans Christian Andersen’s ‘The Red Shoes’, and Anne Sexton’s poem of the same name.

So, inspired by the transformative power of the sparkly red slippers Dorothy inherits from the Wicked Witch of the East, and by subversions of folklore, fairytale and horror, *The Wandering* invites you to inhabit the main character as she goes on her journey and wear the shoes yourself, and to discover yourself as you venture out on this Faustian journey to New York, to the city of rats, to the Tijuana Border, to a church in Haarlem or a mosque in Jakarta, in an airless taxi or on a train that does not stop, with fellow passengers dead or alive, or bored.

*The Wandering* invites readers to follow a variety of different yellow-brick roads including, if you'd like, a path straight through.

Like Intan's previous fiction, such as the well-received *Apple and Knife* (Brow Books 2018 and Harvill Secker, 2019), [she reframes the narrative] with a feminist perspective. *The Wandering* underlines the agency of women who travel and "experiment at the borders" with a tagline 'good girls go to heaven, bad girls go wandering'.

The novel's presentation of the complexities of transnational lifestyles also engages with questions of home...and Indonesia not as a static, romantic land left behind but a fast-moving, neoliberal urban space where Islamic resurgence, legacies of authoritarianism, and voices of resistance collide. As Asri Saraswati notes in a review for *Kompas*, 'Intan's concerns for increasing conservatism and neo-authoritarianism are conveyed through sarcasm and dark humor.' Yet the ability to travel brings the protagonist/reader closer to traumatic events in Indonesian history like the 1965 communist massacres and the anti-Chinese riots of 1998 as Suharto's regime fell.

This novel is a magical matryoshka, multi-layered and contextual, full of deeper meaning and symbolism.

**Bio:**



Intan Paramaditha is a novelist, short-story writer and an academic with a PhD from NYU and now based in Sydney at Macquarie University, where she teaches media and film studies. Her collection of short stories, *Apple and Knife*, was translated from Indonesian into English by PEN Award-winner Stephen J. Epstein and published in 2018 by Brow Books and in 2019 Harvill Secker. Her novel *Gentayangan* (2017), was selected as *Tempo* Best Literary Work for Prose Fiction in 2017, has also been translated into English by Stephen Epstein. It will be published as *The Wandering* in 2020 by Harvill Secker.

Intan's short-story collection *Sihir Perempuan* (*Black Magic Woman*, 2005) was shortlisted for the Khatulistiwa Literary Award, and the collection *Kumpulan Budak Setan* (*The Devil's Slaves Club*, 2010) was written in collaboration with Eka Kurniawan and Ugoran Prasad.

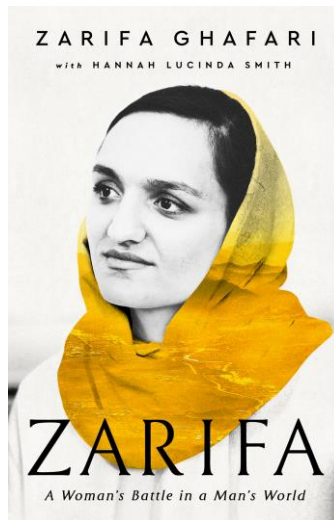


## Highlights – Non-fiction

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### **ZARIFA: A WOMAN'S BATTLE IN A MAN'S WORLD**

by Zarifa Ghafari, first female mayor Afghanistan,  
written with Hannah Lucinda Smith – former Turkey correspondent for *The Times* and author  
of *Erdogan Rising*



#### **Rights sold:**

UK/Comm – Virago  
USA/Canada – PublicAffairs  
Danish – Gronninge  
Dutch - Alfabet  
Finnish – Bazar  
French – Lattes  
German – dtv  
Hungarian – OpenBooks  
Italian – Solferino

**Publication September 2022**

#### **Copy:**

At the age of twenty-four Zarifa Ghafari became mayor of Maidan Shahr, a province of Kabul, Afghanistan; before that she had completed a MSc in Economics and launched and operated a women-focused radio station. During her tenure, violent threats were made to dissuade her from taking up her role, including six attempts on her life, and her father murdered in retribution. After overseeing 70,000 families during the fall of Kabul, she escaped from the Taliban in August 2021 to seek refuge in Germany.

Ghafari was included by the BBC as one of the 100 most inspiring and influential women in the world in 2019, and has received the International Woman of Courage Award from the US State Department in 2020, the Oxi Day Foundation Award for Courage in 2021 and many

other awards since then. She is now setting up a foundation for women in Afghanistan.  
[zarifa-ghafari.com](http://zarifa-ghafari.com) Twitter: [@Zarifa\\_Ghafari](https://twitter.com/Zarifa_Ghafari)

The memoir will describe Ghafari's ground-breaking work to end corruption, promote peace and lift up women in her role as mayor of Maidan Shahr, Kabul; how she overcame violence, assassination attempts and the constant oppression of her sex, and endured the murder of her father in November 2020 – a killing meant to dissuade her from continuing in her role; and how she fled her homeland when the Taliban took control in August 2021. She will tell the stories of women still in Afghanistan under Taliban rule and share her vision for how grassroots activism can change their lives.

**ERDOGAN RISING: THE BATTLE FOR THE SOUL OF TURKEY**  
by Hannah Lucinda Smith - Turkey correspondent for THE TIMES



WEL – William Collins/HarperCollins  
Complex Chinese – Marco Polo Press  
Greek – Gutenberg

**Quotes/reviews:**

‘Smith’s narrative has **an empathetic and fair-minded grasp of Turkey’s colliding narratives**...[and is] full of dazzling cameos and incidental delights’ *Financial Times*

‘[A] **comprehensive and nuanced** account of Erdogan’s rule and the way he has ridden the tides of politics. For anyone interested in Turkey it is a must, but it also **roams widely through the study of power and populism**, full of revealing detail about Erdogan’s relationship with the City, Nato and the EU... Smith has a subtle intelligence; she deftly weaves the blowback from the collapse of Syria into her contemporary story while never losing sight of the looming presence of Ataturk, the founder of the republic. She writes very well, with an engaging mix of personal anecdote, acute observation, interviews and well-informed research; **there’s no fat on this book and never a dull page.**’ *The Times*

‘**fascinating**... rich in imagery and anecdote without ever straying into mawkishness or superficiality... **refreshingly fair**’ *The Literary Review*

‘A brilliant guide, filled with insights, into Erdogan the leader and Erdogan the man. Not only essential reading for those wanting to understand contemporary Turkey, its politics and those of the wider region; essential reading full stop.’ - **Peter Frankopan**

‘Warm, funny, engaging and always informative, Smith’s writing stands among the finest of a new generation of journalist authors. Essential reading.’ - **Anthony Loyd**

**Copy:**

Who is Recep Tayyip Erdogan, and how did he lead a democracy on the fringe of Europe into dictatorship? How has chaos in the Middle East blown back over Turkey’s borders? And why doesn’t the West just cut Erdogan and his regime off?

Hannah Lucinda Smith has been living in Turkey as *The Times* correspondent for nearly a decade, reporting on the ground from the onset of the Arab Spring through terrorist attacks, mass protests, civil war, unprecedented refugee influx and the explosive, bloody 2016 coup attempt that threatened to topple – and kill – Erdogan.

*Erdogan Rising* introduces Turkey as a vital country, one that borders and buffers Western Europe, the Middle East and the old Soviet Union, marshals the second largest army in NATO and hosts more refugees than any other nation. As president, Erdogan is the face of devotion and division, a leader who mastered macho divide-and-rule politics a decade and a half before Donald Trump cottoned on, and has used it to lead his country into spiralling authoritarianism.

Yet Erdogan is no ordinary dictator. His elections are won only by slivers, and Turkey remains defined by two warring cults: those who worship Erdogan, the wilful Muslim nationalist with a tightening authoritarian grip, and those who stand behind Ataturk, the secularist, westward-looking leader who founded the republic and remains its best-loved icon – now eighty years dead.

Erdogan commands a following so devoted they compose songs in his honour, adorn their homes with his picture, and lay down their lives to keep him in power, *Erdogan Rising* asks how this century's most successful populist won his position, and where Turkey is headed next?

**Bio:**



Hannah Lucinda Smith is *The Times* correspondent in Turkey, where she has covered conflicts, a coup attempt and the rise of controversial president Recep Tayyip Erdogan. During her time in the country, she has also reported from inside rebel-held Syria, on the front lines of battle against ISIS in Iraq, and joined the mass movement of migrants on their journey to Europe in 2015. A Pulitzer Award recipient, Hannah also contributes regularly to *Wired*, the *Atlantic*, the *Economist* and *Monocle*, and is a sought-after regional consultant.

**NARCOTOPIA:  
HOW ASIA'S MOST VILIFIED TRIBE OUTFOXED THE DEA (AND THE CIA, TOO)**

by Patrick Winn, author of *Hello: Shadowlands*

WAL ex UK/Comm – PublicAffairs/Hachette USA  
UK/Comm – Icon Books

Manuscript delivery by October 2022

*Narcotopia*, the result of ten years of research, exposes the explosive ideological and power-thirsty clash between the CIA and DEA, at war over the fate of the Wa – a Burmese ethnic minority formerly known as head-hunters but who have gone on to found their own state (though it remains unrecognised by the UN) and boast the region's (and one of the world's) largest and best-equipped armies. Nestled in Southeast Asia's 'Golden Triangle' – bordering Burma, Thailand and China – Wa State also runs the largest narco cartel in the world.

Only now revealed in full, this is a story of bugged coffee tables and informants tossed into dark cells, and with the fallout from this conflict still rippling across the world.

*Narcotopia* is a wake-up call to those who believe the War on Drugs begins and ends with tales of El Chapo and Pablo Escobar. As Hollywood wrings dry every last narrative about Latin American kingpins, Asia's narcotics trade is overlooked, even as it surpasses the cash and power of Mexican cartels.

Winn will take readers on a narrative odyssey into this 21st-century game of cops and robbers, and all those in-between, a tale essential to understanding the future of Southeast Asia, and the full reach of the American empire.

**Bio:**



Patrick Winn is an award-winning investigative journalist who covers rebellion and black markets in Southeast Asia. He enters the worlds of guerrillas and vigilantes to mine stories that might otherwise go ignored.

Winn has received the Robert F. Kennedy Journalism Award (also known as the ‘poor man’s Pulitzer’) and a National Press Club award. He’s also a three-time winner of Amnesty International’s Human Rights Press Awards, among other prizes.

His writing and short documentaries have appeared in or on *The New York Times*, NBC News, the BBC, the *Atlantic*, NPR and many other outlets. He is a co-creator of the Netflix documentary *Hope Frozen*.

Winn has served as a consultant for *Anthony Bourdain: Parts Unknown* on CNN. Working closely with the show’s director, he selected people, locations and food featured on the debut, multiple Emmy-winning episode in Myanmar.

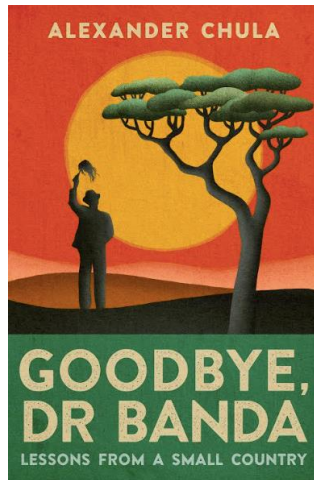
Winn is currently Public Radio International’s Asia correspondent. He appears on PRI’s *The World*, a BBC co-production. The show is broadcast on more than 300 NPR stations across America to reach roughly 3 million listeners each week.

Winn, was raised in Eden, a dwindling North Carolina factory town that once manufactured carpets and beer, and graduated from UNC-Chapel Hill in 2003 with a journalism degree. His early reportage explored economic decay in the American south and crime within the US military.

Since 2008, Winn has lived in Bangkok and reported almost exclusively on Southeast Asia. He reads and speaks Thai.

<http://patrickwinnonline.com/>

**GOODBYE, DOCTOR BANDA**  
by Alexander Chula



WEL to Birlinn/Polygon  
Publication: May 2023

Pages: 236

When Alexander Chula, an Oxford-educated classicist-turned-doctor, sifted through the debris of a presidential library in the heart of the African bush, he made an astonishing discovery. Lying in a leather-bound chest studded with brass was a priceless copy of Julius Caesar's *Gallic War*, printed in 1584 and, on the flyleaf: Libris Hastings K. Banda. This unexpected talisman of Western culture belonged to the enigmatic president of Malawi, a man of many parts: peasant-scholar, kindly physician, murderous tyrant, and fallen philosopher-king.

Chula – in Malawi to teach Latin and Greek at the Kamuzu Academy ‘the Eton of Africa’ - discovers an ambivalent affinity with Banda, who had died eight years earlier. The man who led his country to independence in 1964, was a popular doctor in Edinburgh and elsewhere, proclaimed his love of Latin.

However, this book is not a biography of Banda, who brutally suppressed opposition during his thirty-year reign, nor is it a travel guide. Rather, it is an examination of two cultures – the one rooted in the classical past, the other in the soil of Malawi. They have more in common than is realised. The myths and legends of Rome and Greece, and the values and beliefs of Malawi's Chechwa people – together celebrate life.

Using memoir, travelogue and history, and with Banda leading the way, Chula uncovers an extraordinary meeting of worlds. Here tribal ritual collides with Greek theatre; masked dancers with roving classicists; poets and pop stars with missionary-explorers; hippies and kleptocrats with valiant, long-suffering peasants.

This is the ‘great dance’ of Malawi, with all of its tumult and strangeness, which – when examined alongside our own Western culture, past and present - we find ourselves reflected, and admonished.

**A selection of the various and glowing advance quotes:**

‘Timely, erudite, and a fascinating insight into the complex diversity that is the real modern Africa.’ - Robert Twigger, best-selling author of *Red Nile* and *Angry White Pyjamas*.

‘Reading Alexander Chula’s travelogue, I kept imagining I was soaking in the prose of my travel-writing hero, Bruce Chatwin. Absolutely engaging from beginning to end, *Goodbye, Doctor Banda*, is very likely to position Chula as a leading literary voice in months and years to come. I recommend this work for the way it informs, its cultural insights, and for its keenly-observed detail.’ - Tahir Shah, author of *Time* magazine best-seller *The Caliph's House: A Year in Casablanca*

‘I have read this with great enjoyment. Learning about the tradition of classics in Malawi since Banda is fascinating, and the author's personal experiences as a teacher at Kamuzu Academy - and at Oxford prior to that - are vivid, memorable, and described with directness and elegance.’ - Writer, academic and broadcaster Professor Armand D'Angour, author of *Socrates in Love* and Classics Professor at Jesus College, Oxford

Roger Scruton's widow has very kindly replied to say she would be delighted if we used his comments (he was hugely enthusiastic). She has also said that she would be glad to recommend the book to the Roger Scruton Legacy Foundation and the Salisbury Review in case they were able to help promote it in due course.



## THE TIGER AND THE DRONE

By Carlo Pizzati



Publication autumn 2020

Italian – Marsilio

**Between the sacred cows and cities of 8 million inhabitants marred by increasingly unseasonable monsoons and unstoppable urbanisation, Carlo Pizzati takes readers on a fascinating journey that offers a point of view of a privileged continent in search of its own identity.**

*La Tigre e il Drone*, a reworking of Pizzati's columns published over the years by *La Repubblica*, gives us a glimpse of modern India, with its 1.3 billion inhabitants, the country is the stone guest at the table of the world's powers, yet the imagery surrounding the Asian sub-continent seems to have remained as it was in Gandhi's time: a land of Brahmins, peaceful in poverty, divided into a millenary caste system; a favourite destination for those who want to find themselves and their spiritual roots; and, at the same time, it seems an eternal spring of cheap labour.

Pizzati, journalist, author, lecturer, who has lived and worked in Asia for over ten years, describes instead a different reality, of a place suspended between unstoppable social and technological progress, an unprecedented climate crisis and the re-emergence of religious tensions. He shows us a country which had at the same time a female prime minister but at the same time in some regions upheld the practice of burning witches alive with 'false accusations of heresy; where on Valentine's Day Hindu fundamentalists attack couples who hold hands and where 5 million feminists demonstrate on the street to protest against the fact that they have been barred from entering temples.

**Bio:**



**Carlo Pizzati** is a journalist and the author of two novels, a collection of short stories and three works of non-fiction.

Carlo has worked for over sixteen years for the Italian national daily newspaper *La Repubblica*, corresponding from New York, Rome, Mexico City, Buenos Aires and Madrid. He's covered Northern Ireland, guerrilla war in Colombia, the narcos business in the Andes, illegal immigrant smuggling in Mexico, civil rights battles in Chile, pro-environment militancy in the French atoll of Mururoa, and the GMO battle in Europe and the US. He also contributes to *The Hindu*, *Vanity Fair*, *GQ*, the *AP*, et al, and was at one point in his career a political talk-show host in Italy.

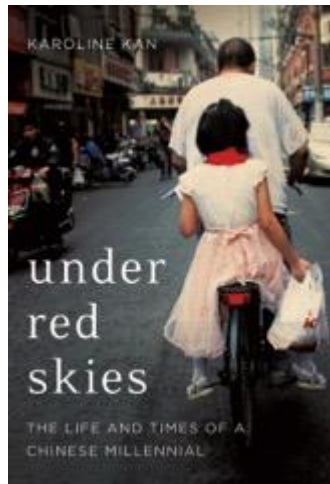
*Mappillai: An Italian Son-in-Law in India*, Carlo's previous book, has been described by William Dalrymple as: "A warm, witty and completely charming account of one man's passionate love affair with the India which has taken over and utterly transformed his life."

[Visit Carlo Pizzati's website.](#)

**UNDER RED SKIES:  
THE LIFE AND TIMES OF A CHINESE MILLENNIAL**  
by Karoline Kan, ex NYTIMES in Beijing, ex China Dialogue,  
ex Bloomberg, now a Chevening Scholar at Oxford

**A BBC Radio 4 Book of the Week**

WEL – Hachette Book Group USA  
UK/Comm – Hurst  
Italian – Bollati  
Portuguese – Bertrand  
Spanish – RBA



**Copy:**

Karoline Kan was born in 1989, the year of the Tianenmen Square massacre: her generation has always been caught between China's authoritarian politics and its hyper-modern technology and economic boom. In her quest to understand the shifting sands of global, connected China, Karoline turns to her family, who have survived Maoism and its legacy by breaking with tradition. Navigating a society beset by poverty and often violent political unrest, the Kans swapped rural villages for crowded city streets in search of a better way of life.

Now a journalist, Kan recounts gripping tales of her grandmother, who struggled to help her family through the Great Famine; of her mother, who defied the One-Child Policy by giving birth to Karoline; and of her cousin, a factory worker scraping by on less than a dollar an hour. An ambitious millennial pursuing her career and personal life in a time of dizzyingly rapid social change, Kan discovers her own story's roots in the China of previous generations.

Of course, Karoline's story is one of millions of others – but through the story of her life we can see and understand what's happening in China now, and how this will lead us into the future.

**A selection of the various and glowing advance quotes:**

‘Vivid and humane, Karoline Kan’s memoir of coming of age in China is richly revealing and contemporary, shaped both by the pain of history and the hope of the future – at turns bold and vulnerable, like China itself’ – Evan Osnos

‘At first glance, *Under Red Skies* is a simple coming-of-age story...but contained within is a sharply observed critique of all that is dysfunctional in Chinese society. You can learn more about China through this compulsively readable memoir than from weightier tomes’ – Barbara Demick

‘I couldn’t put this book down... [Karoline Kan] compellingly narrates the fervent story of China’s shift from farm to city while she lives it, breathes it, and feels it so that the reader does so, too’ – Rob Schmidt

‘Inspiring and heartfelt...this book should be read by people from all corners of the world’ – Xinran

‘Revealing and introspective... Kan fills a void in contemporary literature on [China]’ – Eric Fish

**Bio:**



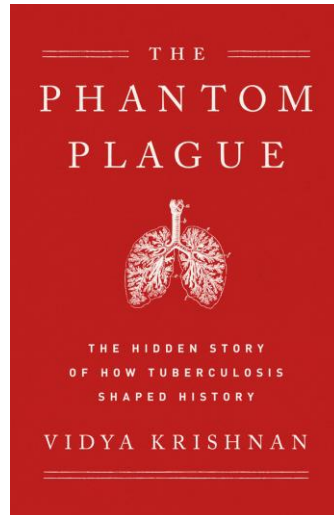
**Karoline Kan**, currently a Chevening scholar at Oxford, began her career in journalism working for Radio France International in Beijing. Since then, she has worked for *The New York Times*, China Dialogue and Bloomberg, writing about Chinese people’s lives in a society shaped by a changing culture, economy and politics, and the affect of climate change on society as a whole. Karoline has also contributed to *Foreign Policy*, CNN, the *Financial Times*, *Roads and Kingdoms* and Index on Censorship.

In 2019 and 2020 she received 'The Honorable Mention' by The Society of Publishers in Asia Awards (SOPA) for her reporting on arts and culture; in 2022 her investigative reporting on Chinese state-owned companies' carbon emissions was shortlisted in SOPAwards for Excellence in Reporting on the Environment. She is also the winner of the 2019 Young China Watcher of the Year Award.

## PHANTOM PLAGUE: HOW TUBERCULOSIS SHAPED HISTORY

by Vidya Krishnan

WAL – PublicAffairs/Hachette  
(with India/sub-continent to PRH India)



**The definitive social history of tuberculosis, from its origins as a haunting mystery to its modern reemergence that now threatens populations around the world.**

‘A penetrating social history of a virulent disease... A timely, significant analysis of the dire consequences of public health failures.’ **Kirkus, starred review**

### Copy:

It killed novelist George Orwell, Eleanor Roosevelt, and millions of others – rich and poor. Desmond Tutu, Amitabh Bachchan, and Nelson Mandela survived it, just. For centuries, tuberculosis has ravaged cities and plagued the human body.

In *Phantom Plague*, Vidya Krishnan, traces the history of tuberculosis from the slums of 19th-century New York to modern Mumbai. In a narrative spanning century, Krishnan shows how superstition and folk-remedies, made way for scientific understanding of TB, such that it was controlled and cured in the West.

The cure was never available to black and brown nations. And the tuberculosis bacillus showed a remarkable ability to adapt – so that at the very moment it could have been extinguished as a threat to humanity, it found a way back, aided by authoritarian government, toxic kindness of philanthropists, science denialism and medical apartheid.

Krishnan’s original reporting paints a granular portrait of the post-antibiotic era as a new, aggressive, drug resistant strain of TB takes over. *Phantom Plague* is an urgent, riveting and

fascinating narrative that deftly exposes the weakest links in our battle against this ancient foe.

#### **A selection of endorsements/reviews:**

‘Shot through with tragic and inspiring stories of patients and doctors who have battled against the disease, this is a bracing look at what might be the next public health catastrophe.’  
***Publishers Weekly***

‘What makes Ms. Krishnan's book worth the price of admission is the tableau she paints of the current plague. She writes with authority about the current state of TB globally, especially in her native India, which is the epicenter of the disease today. A 20-year veteran of medical journalism, Ms. Krishnan is a powerful storyteller, and her accounts of frustration, suffering, grief and resilience are moving.’ ***Wall Street Journal***

‘[S]trong, compelling and addictive... It is literary nonfiction at its best.’ ***Irish Times***

‘*Phantom Plague* is a fascinating tale of humankind's determined struggle against one of its most dreaded illnesses - overcoming science denialism, medical apartheid, and other prejudices.’ ***Scroll.in***

‘At its best, Krishnan's writing is clear and compelling, and the book is a worthy read for anyone interested in public health and infectious diseases.’ ***New York Times Book Review***

‘At a time when the world is paralyzed by a virus that mutates and resists modern medical interventions, Vidya Krishnan's sobering account of the return of tuberculosis is timely. As she notes, the world is vastly different from lab conditions, and distinctions of wealth, race, class, caste, and inequities and imbalances of power and accountability clash, delaying interventions, denying access, and destroying lives. With lucidity and passion, wisdom and compassion, expertise and curiosity, she demystifies the science, revealing how human frailties and arrogance are letting the disease prevail. That the sickness is not physical, but goes beyond that, suggests how difficult the path ahead is going to be.’ **Salil Tripathi, author of *Offence: The Hindu Case***

‘In *Phantom Plague*, journalist Vidya Krishnan has written an engaging and informative account of the history of TB and other infectious diseases and their impact on humanity. Anyone with an interest in how microbes and politics contribute to inequality and sickness should read this book.’ **John Joe McFadden, professor of molecular genetics, University of Surrey**

#### **Bio:**



Vidya Krishnan is a multi-award winning independent journalist who has been reporting on India's HIV and TB epidemics for the past two decades. Her work has been featured in the *LA Times*, the *Atlantic*, *The Hindu*, the *British Medical Journal*, and *Caravan* magazine, et al.

Krishnan's awards include a global health journalism fellowship from Oxford University, a National Press Foundation fellowship and a global health media scholarship from McGill, and most recently a Neiman Fellowship at Harvard.

She completed her MA in Critical Media and Cultural Studies from the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London and has served as a consultant for the Indian Health Ministry's think-tank, Public Health Foundation. In 2014, she wrote India's National Health Profile for the India office of the World Health Organization, SEARO and was until October 2018 *The Hindu's* health and science editor.

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