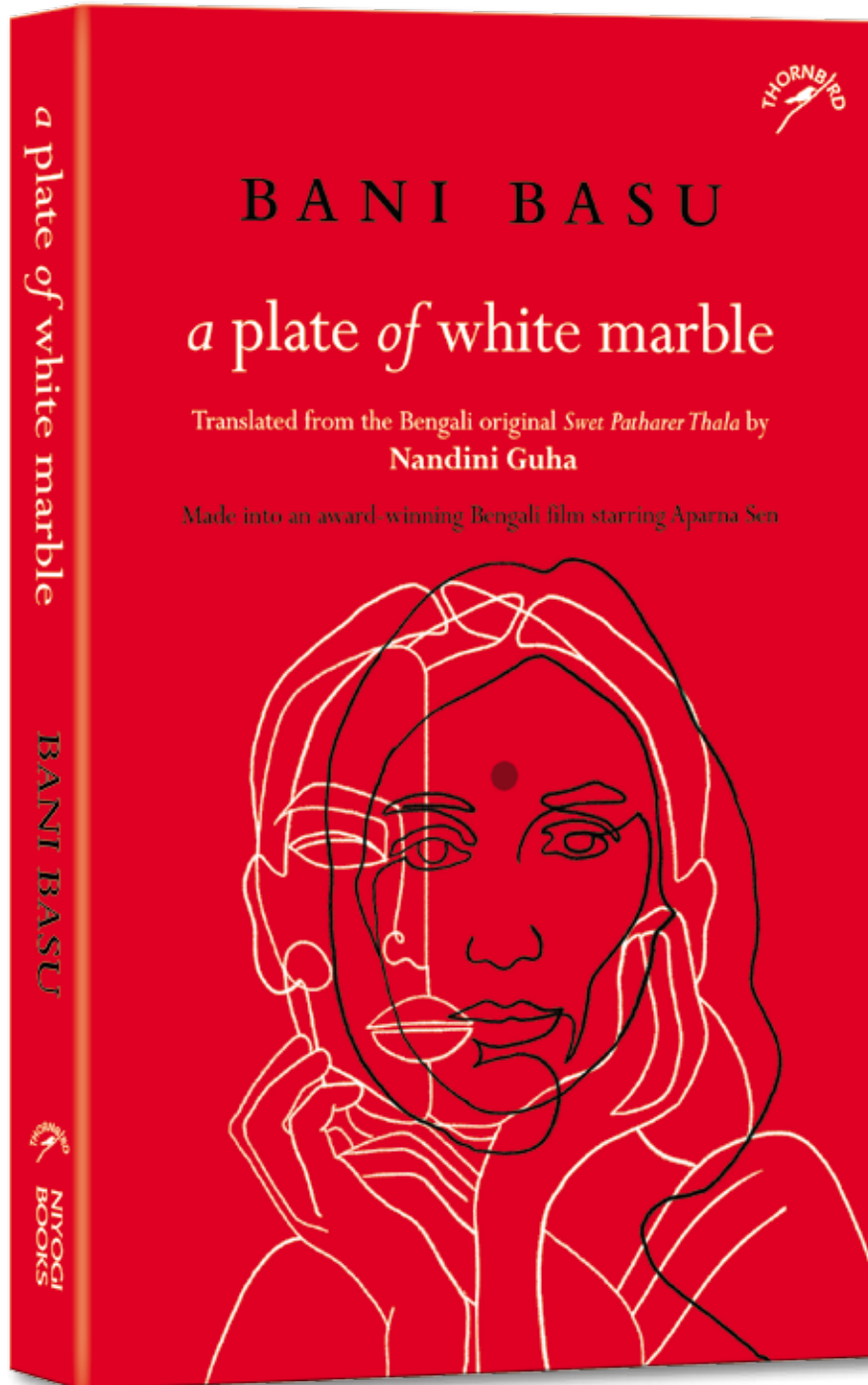


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# A plate of white marble

by  
**Bani Basu**

Translated from the Bengali original *Swet Patharer Thala* by  
**Nandini Guha**

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**F**irst published in 1990 in the original Bengali, *A Plate of White Marble* tells the tale of the 'new woman' of an era that just witnessed the independence of a nation. Bandana, the protagonist, though grieves over her husband's early death, never conforms to the social connotation and ideals of 'widowhood', thanks to her uncle. She dares to begin her life afresh in every possible sense. But naturally, the road proves to be full of thorns as she gradually faces bitterness from many quarters of the society. The only thing she clings to is her son, but once that anchor too is lost, she leaves behind the safe concrete walls of what she used to consider 'home', only to work for a far greater cause—she joins a children's home to work for those who need her the most.

This first translation brings a significant Bengali novel with important social concerns to a wider audience.



**Bani Basu** (B. 1939) is one of the most versatile contemporary writers in Bengali. An eminent academician, poet, novelist, essayist, critic and translator, Basu writes on diverse topics ranging from history and mythology to society, psychology and gender. She served as a lecturer and later, as the head of the department of English at Bijoy Krishna Girls College, Howrah. Her translations of Shri Aurobindo's poems and two volumes of Somerset Maugham's stories and one volume of D.H Lawrence's stories won a wide readership. She started her career as an original author with the publication of the novel, *Janmabhumi-Matribhumi* in 1980. Bani Basu has won a number of awards including **Tara Shankar Award (1991)**, **Shiromani Puroshkar (1997)**, **Ananda Purashkar (1998)**, **Bankim Purashkar (1998)**, **Katha Award (2003)** and **Sahitya Akademi Award (2010)**. A number of her stories have been adapted into films and TV serials.

## Translator



**Nandini Guha** is a retired Associate Professor of English at the College of Vocational Studies, University of Delhi. She received the Katha Award for translating *Kharap Chhele* (Dark Afternoons) by Bani Basu. Other remarkable translations from Bengali to English include Taslima Nasreen's autobiography *Utal Haa* (Wild Wind) and Anita Agnihotri's *Akal Bodhon* (Awakening). Guha has also contributed translated pieces to *Women in Concert*, *The Essential Tagore* and *Shades of Difference*.

*The novel has already been adapted into a National Award-winning movie, starring Aparna Sen.*

*One of the early texts to have talked about the agony, struggle and liberation of the Indian woman.*