



Making a Whore

By Vũ Trọng Phụng

Translated by Ren Ngoc Đinh (Mai)

Edited by Dương Mạnh Hùng, Alina Martin, and Samuel Tan

A raw and feminist account of desire and duty in 1930's Vietnam

Key Selling Points

- **First English translation** of controversial classic by one of Vietnam's most renowned 20th century authors
- **Formerly banned novel** that remains relevant today as when it first shocked readers nearly a century ago
- **Unflinching feminist exploration** of desire and agency in a patriarchal society, through a candid examination of sexuality, morality, and gender dynamics

About the Book

Heavily criticised upon publication and subsequently censored by the government, *Making a Whore* serves as a poignant defense for Huyễn, its protagonist, deemed tainted by debauchery. With his uniquely satirical and irreverent tone, Vũ Trọng Phụng sharply exposes societal norms.

This long-awaited translation introduces English-speaking readers to a bold and influential voice, offering a unique window into a tumultuous period of history.

Genre	Fiction
Thema	FBA, 1FMV
BISAC	FIC019000,
ISBN	9781917233026
Format	Flexibound 205 x 140mm
Extent	280 pages
Pub. Date	30th January 2025
RRP	£11.99 \$20.00

The novel follows the life of Huyễn, a young woman born into Hà Nội's upper-class, whose innocent interest in her mother's pregnancy is kept at arm's length: 'You'll find out when you get married', so they say. Lacking sexual education from her family, Huyễn turns to her peers for answers, opening up a world of childish whispers about physical pleasure.

As polite society demands Huyễn to remain virtuous, she enters into adulthood with both the will to know and the will to suppress a young woman's burning physical desires. The torments of her sexual frustration spiral Huyễn into a life of debauchery, one she might not ever want to turn back from.

Praise for *Making a Whore*

Making a Whore is an immediate and sharply observed modernist text.'

—Joshua Jones, author of *Small Fires*

'A classic work of Vietnamese literature. Heart-shattering, thought-provoking and unforgettable.'

—Nguyễn Phan Quế Mai, author of *Dust Child*



Vũ Trọng Phụng (1912-1939) is widely regarded as one of the most influential figures of 20th century Vietnamese literature. Despite his short lifespan, Phụng left behind an astonishing body of works across genres, many of which are considered masterpieces. Accused of 'cultural damage' due to the sexual content in his writings, he faced legal action, and his works were banned in the north of Vietnam, then nationally until the late 1980s.



Đinh Ngọc Mai (ren) is a non-binary writer of both academic and creative texts. Their research focuses on queer theory and queer Vietnamese and Asian American literature, tapping into the intellectual excitement and critical empathy that a queer Asian diaspora can enable and liberate.

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