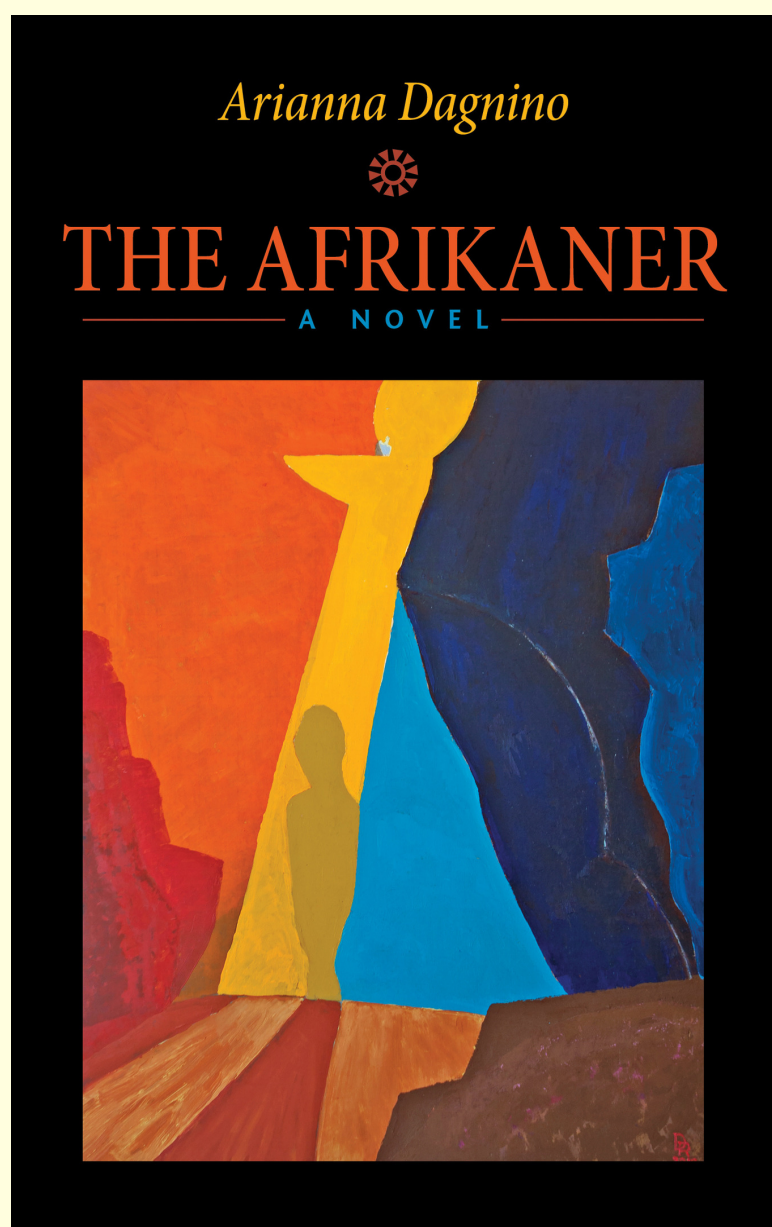




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# *The Afrikaner*

A NOVEL BY

**Arianna Dagnino**



***Guilt, hate, love and redemption under African skies.***

Zoe Du Plessis's story unfolds against the backdrop of 1996 South Africa, caught in the turmoil of the transition from the Apartheid regime to the first democratically elected black government. A paleoanthropologist at Witwatersrand University in Johannesburg, her world collapses when her lover and colleague, Dario Oldani, is killed during a fatal carjacking.

Clinging to her late companion's memory, Zoe sets off to the merciless Kalahari Desert to continue his fieldwork. It's the beginning of an inner journey during which she gets to come to terms with a rising sense of guilt as a privileged white Afrikaner while also confronting a secret that has hung over her family for generations. During a brief visit back home, Zoe meets an unlikely lover in Kurt, a legendary South African writer with a troubled past. The conclusion spirals the reader into a new perspective, where atonement seems to be inextricably linked to an act of creative imagination.

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## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

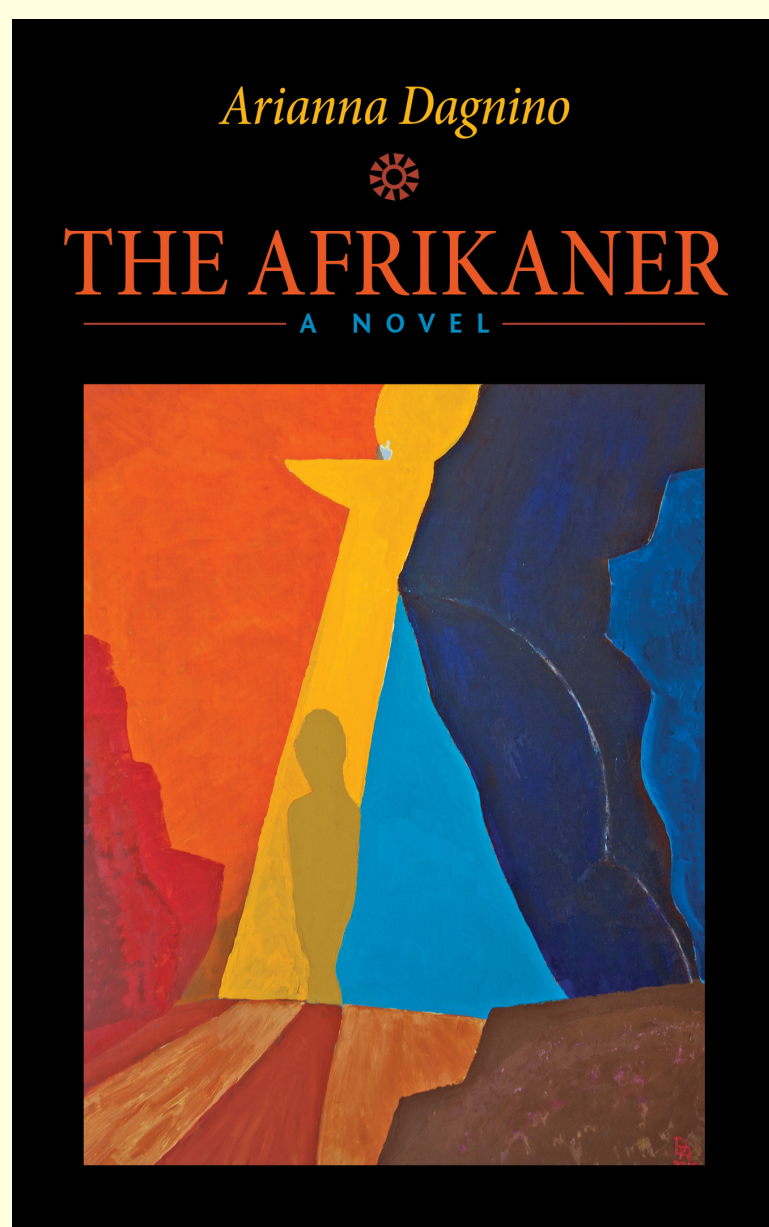
In her career as an international reporter, literary translator and academic researcher, **Arianna Dagnino** has lived in many countries, including a five-year stint in South Africa. The author of several books on the impact of global mobility, science and new technologies, she holds a PhD from the University of South Australia and currently teaches at the University of British Columbia.





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## FROM THE AFRIKANER

Daniel keeps pressing him: “I was told the 32nd didn’t follow apartheid rules; is that so?”

“True. Breytenbach was a soldier, a great soldier. He knew that in battle one needs to trust his comrades and commanders blindly. Our commanders were all white, but we ate our rations at the same table, used the same latrines, slept in the same barracks. Pretoria didn’t like it, and hard pressed the Colonel to change all that. He never budged, not an inch.”

While the smoke of the dagga slowly rises into the night, the rhythm of the women’s clapping begins to accelerate. Zoe sees the two men listening intently to that far-away call. Tongues of fire light up their rapt faces, throwing hallucinatory shadows against the bush curtain.

After a while Sam resumes his story in a deeper, grimmer tone: “The fear of death morphs you into a different being, you know. All sense of morality goes down the drain.”



*A clever, **fresh** and widely resonating novel whose international, globalizing streak rescues us from stale and overly provincial atmospheres.*

**Dr. Carlo Testa, The University of British Columbia.**