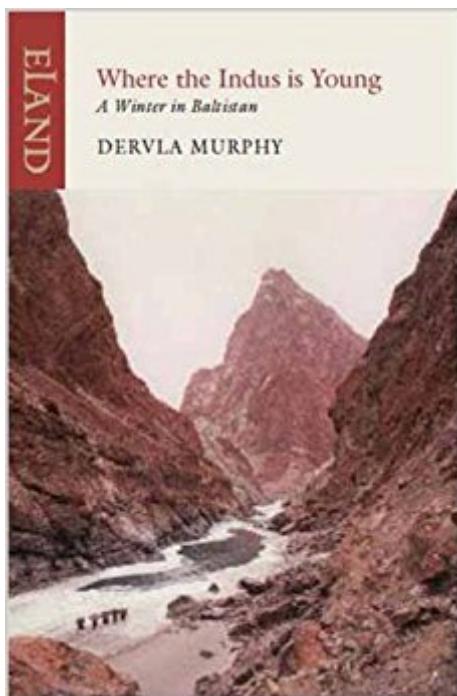


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# Where The Indus Is Young: A Winter In Baltistan



## Synopsis

One winter, Dervla Murphy, the four-footed Hallam and her six-year-old daughter Rachel explored 'Little Tibet' high up in the Karakoram Mountains in the frozen heart of the Western Himalayas - on the Pakistan side of the disputed border with Kashmir. For three months they traveled along the perilous Indus Gorge and into nearby valleys. Even when beset by crumbling tracks over bottomless chasms, an assault by a lascivious dashniri, the unnerving melancholy of the Balts - the heroic highland farmers who inhabit the area - and Rachel's continual probing questions, this formidable traveler retained her enthusiasm for her surroundings and her sense of humor. First published in 1977, *Where the Indus is Young* is pure Murphy.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

In her 1963 classic *Full Tilt*, Irish writer Murphy recounted her seven-month bike trek from Dublin to Delhi. A decade later, the seasoned traveler returned to Asia with her six-year-old daughter, Rachel, this time determined to winter in Baltistan, an isolated northern province in Pakistan's disputed Kashmir territory. In this memoir of that three-month journey, originally published in the UK in 1974, Murphy shares her and her daughter's adventures along the disintegrating trails of the Indus Gorge in the Karakoram Mountains. "The grandeur, weirdness, variety and ferocity of this region cannot be exaggerated," she writes of the sub-zero temperatures, harsh winds, whipping sand and the constant threat of tumbling rocks that they faced picking their way through passes on pony and foot. Her colorful journal entries weave together impressions of the Karakoram's "craggy, glistening peaks," reflections on the people who inhabit them and the romantic joys of daily

life: sipping tea, dining on chapittis (thin unleavened bread, translated in the glossary along with other local terms) and wandering through bazaars in search of goods and gossip. Despite a preface and prologue that situate her trip, any profound contextualization vis-Ã -vis recent tension in Kashmir or Pakistan's role in the war on terror is absent. Thus at times her experience feels surprisingly disconnected from the present, like when she bubbles with admiration for Pashtun culture or mentions her close friendship with Field Marshall Ayub Khan, a Pashtun and former military dictator of Pakistan. Her sumptuous descriptions of the mountain splendor and the obscure paths and cultures she explores, though, are appropriately timeless. Copyright Â© Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

"Altogether the most appallingly fascinating travel book I have ever read."

A run-of-the-mill narrative makes this book a must for only the most hardcore of travel adventure fanatics. However, a faithful representation of the mountains and its inhabitants as I remember them in my own travels there-- and --justifiably a favorable account of the Pashtun--a more admirable, hardy and magnificent people cannot be found on the surface of this planet--their subjugation of females notwithstanding. What makes this excursion an interesting novelty is that it was undertaken by a woman and her six year old daughter. Like many others, I question the wisdom of placing an innocent young child in such a precarious environment though admittedly it would help immeasurably in the sale of books. Having been a third-world vagabond for the past 25 years I can attest to the fact that when I first begin my travels to the remote ends of the earth women travelers were a rarity. Now they are common place--much to my admiration and delight. Six year old child travelers are another story--I've seen none--and for good reason--its dangerous out there. However, if this child survives her mothers' exploits she will grow up to be one hell of a woman--the kind I've been searching for my entire life. I salute--with some reservation--the exploits of Dervla and Rachel. Perhaps thirty years from now Rachel can repay the favor and take her elderly mother on perilous treks into the Karokorams. DH Koester--"And There I Was"Â AND THERE I WAS VOLUME III: A Backpacking Adventure In Pakistan and China

I read this book four months ago, and was so impressed I am now buying every Dervla Murphy book I can get my hands on. Why is this fabulous Irish travel writer not better known? She has the most unusual adventures and is diligent with her journal writing, which forms the basis of her books.

True, this was written in the early 1970s, but her books are timeless. Only an occasional reference to current events makes the reader aware that this occurred several years ago. It's amazing that a European woman would go trekking in the Baltistan region of Pakistan in the middle of winter, but the fact that she brought her precocious 6-year-old daughter along under such conditions is shocking! She does purchase a pony for little Rachel to ride, but a child that would endure the cold, hunger and hardships with scarcely a whimper may be the most astonishing aspect of all. One may question the advisability of exposing a child to such deplorable conditions, but I suspect Rachel evolved into an equally intrepid traveler as her Mum. Murphy is the ballsiest woman adventurer whose books I've had the pleasure to read. Perhaps the world was a more innocent place a few decades ago, but she has a faith in humanity that's richly rewarded. This book is clearly one of her best. I intend to read it again!

It is a very interesting book for me. I was happy to read about situation in Baltistan when I was born in this area. Things are changed very much in Baltistan compare to the time it was written. Really a nice book though

It was inspiring gripping and well written .a wonder adventure real story for women

While I can agree that Ms. Murphy is an intrepid traveler and a lyrical writer I found myself wanting to call child protective services, frequently. It is fine if she wants to put herself at risk, which she often does, dragging her daughter, Rachael, into the same dangers seems unconscionable to me. Given this Where the Indus is Young has adventure and beauty.

I did not receive this item even though I was billed for it. It did not appear in my I-pad. I am not sure what happened to it. I would still like to receive it and am awaiting its appearance.

I am an admitted Dervla Murphy fan, have read most of her books, and gamely suffer her occasional political rants for the greater good. Her books featuring travels in the company of her (at the time) young daughter, Rachel, are particularly harrowing: "Eight Feet in the Andes", "On a Shoestring to Coorg" and "Cameroon with Egbert" are fine examples, as is this book. Ms. Murphy goes where only the indigenous folks live, and, occasionally, where they are smart enough not to live, and, in this book, to the Northern Areas of Pakistan/India where it is now unlikely that a Westerner could venture, safely or not. Walking was her mode of travel along the Indus and, at the

outset, she and Rachel enjoyed fine accommodations, to wit: "...we have a cell with dirty bedding, no table or chair, a fifteen-watt bulb, no water for the reeking Western loo, and no heating. (A few moments ago I had to stop writing to sit on my hands for long enough to thaw them.)" But the sublime power of ice, rubble, thin air and the stark beauty of the mountains worked magic despite ritual victimization by government officials and guest house managers along the way. By the time they arrived back in Skardu, Dervla was already planning to return.

An incredible, heart-warming, sensitive, humorous and inspirational account. Dervla Murphy is at home with words as she is in the Karakoram mountains. Warmly recommended.

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