

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS / WOMEN IN THE WORLD

AAUW-IL 2009 Reading List

AFRICA

FICTION. **Aidoo**, Ama Ata, ed. *African Love Stories: An Anthology* (2006) Written by women who are both new and well-established authors and who live, have lived or have a link to Africa, the stories focus women whose desires force them "to battle with supposed norms in terms of what they think, feel and want." Unrequited love and rivalry, familial love, love across color, religious and age lines and even same-sex love are among their concerns. See www.ayebia.co.uk/reviews_als.html

Sevcik, Kimberley. *Angels in Africa: Profiles of Seven Extraordinary Women* (2006) Documented are the efforts of women, each of whom is working to overcome a problem prevalent in her country, be it Mali, Kenya, Tanzania, Mozambique, Rwanda, South Africa or Senegal.

Maathai, Wangari. *Unbowed: A Memoir* (2006) The winner of the 2004 Nobel Peace Prize recounts her life as a political activist, feminist, and environmentalist in Kenya.

Halperin, Helena. *I Laugh So I Won't Cry: Kenya's Women Tell the Story of Their Lives [Illustrated]* (2005) A diversity of women—subsistence farmers, herders, beggars, hawkers, sex workers, secretaries, business executives—speak to the author about their views of love and marriage, child-rearing, work and getting by when there is no work, women's self-help groups, genital cutting, ethnic tensions, justice and the reforms promised by the new government.

FIC. **Macgoye**, Marjorie O. *The Present Moment* (2000) Like their country, the elderly Kenyan women in this novel are divided by ethnicity, language, class and religion. But as they interact, they uncover commonalities that connect them. Thus does an award-winning author skillfully trace more than 60 years of Kenya's turbulent history.

Hamlin, Catherine. *The Hospital by the River: A Story of Hope* (2001) Once nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize, the author is still doing at age 77 what she has done her entire adult life: practicing obstetrics among Ethiopia's rural poor, training doctors and midwives and raising money for the hospital she founded. Among the many experiences she recounts is how she and her husband perfected the technique of surgically repairing the damage caused by obstructed labor, thus greatly reducing infant mortality and ending incontinence in mothers who otherwise would have become outcasts and beggars.

Holloway, Kris. *Monique and the Mango Rains: Two Years of Life with a Midwife in Mali* (2006) Holloway blends her Peace Corps' experiences in an impoverished village in Mali from 1989 to 1991 with a glowing account of Monique Dembele, a midwife in her early twenties known for her delightful sense of humor and her willingness to defy tradition in order to better the lives of women and children "in a place where childbirth is a life-and-death matter and the work endless and backbreaking."

Erdman, Sarah. *Nine Hills to Nambonkaha: Two Years in the Heart of an African Village* (2003) A Peace Corps volunteer in a Cote d'Ivoire village writes of how she learned to deal with health care issues, such as AIDS, in ways that accommodated rather than countered the west African villagers' beliefs.

Greene, Melissa F. *There Is No Me Without You: One Woman's Odyssey to Rescue Africa's Children* (2006) Insight into the AIDS crisis in Africa is gained from the story of Haregowoin Teferra, an Ethiopian woman who turned her compound into a home for children with or orphaned by AIDS, some of whom are profiled. Covered is a wide range of topics, including how the country's history of colonization played a role in the crisis and the effect AIDS has had on Ethiopia's production and stability.

Adams, Anne V. and Esi Sutherland-Addy, eds. *The Legacy of Efuia Sutherland* (2008) Essays on an educator, publisher, writer and artist who died 12 years ago reflect on her pragmatic yet visionary approach to advancing education and promoting Ghanaian culture.

Lutge-Coullie, Judith, ed. *Closest of Strangers: South African Women's Life Writing [Illustrated]* (2006) Autobiographical excerpts by 20th century women from all walks of life—blacks, new migrants, activists, English and Afrikaner settlers—attest to their strength and spirit.

Magona, Sindiwe. *To My Children's Children* (1994) The South African author relives her first five color-blind years in her Xhosa village, then details how her life was transformed by apartheid.

FIC. **Sindiwe**, Magona. *Living, Loving, and Lying Awake at Night* (1998) Short stories about the difficulty of being a woman under apartheid

Lamb, Christina. *House of Stone: The True Story of a Family Divided in War-Torn Zimbabwe* (2007) Parallel accounts of two decent people—a poor black maid and a rich white farmer—tell the story of a country ravaged first by colonial settlers, then by civil war in the 1970s

Fuller, Alexandra. *Don't Let's Go to the Dogs Tonight: An African Childhood* (2001) Fuller's early childhood was spent in primarily in Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe), where life was anything but easy and not all her siblings survived. Her father was often away fighting against the black guerillas who eventually won the civil war, and her bookish mother drank. Yet as she relates her family's story through the eyes of the child she once was, she looks back at it with affection and often wry humor. "Hers was no ordinary childhood, but it is her extraordinary writing that makes it a riveting story." See www.nytimes.com/2002/01/27/books/review/27CLINGMT.html

FIC. **Atta**, S. *Everything Good Will Come* (2005) Born to a privileged Nigerian family, a young Yoruba girl has a friendship with a lower-class half-caste girl, one that continues into their adult lives, through tragedies, family strife and a war-torn country.

FIC. **Adichie**, Chimamanda N. *Half of a Yellow Sun* (2006) The author of *Purple Hibiscus* belies her mere 28 years with this

epic novel based loosely on the Igbo people's ill-fated attempt to cede from Nigeria and form the independent nation of Biafra. Though brimming with vivid characters, the main ones through which AdichI conveys how people lived, loved and suffered during this tumultuous time are a 13-year-old peasant houseboy who survives conscription into the raggedy Biafran army and twin sisters from a wealthy, well-connected family.

Ilibagiza, Immaculee. *Left to Tell: Discovering God Amidst the Rwandan Holocaust* (2007) Ilibagiza and seven other women spent 91 days hiding in the bathroom of a Hutu pastor's home while the Rwandan genocide raged outside and her family was murdered. She credits her strong Catholic faith for her ability to not only survive but also to forgive her family's killers.

Umutesi, Julia Emerson. *Surviving the Slaughter: The Ordeal of a Rwandan Refugee in Zaire* (2004) After fleeing Rwanda during the genocide, the author spent two years in refugee camps. Acts of kindness and heroism occurred, but overall, this is a painful account of malnutrition and famine, cholera and dysentery, panic, and further brutality. "I have been through Hell, have known horror, and now that I have escaped...I give testimony to what I have seen," begins her story.

Bashir, Halima and Damien Lewis. *Tears of the Desert: A Memoir of Survival in Darfur* (2008) Bashir tells of growing up in a loving family and, with the support of her father, becoming a doctor. A black African, she recalls being discriminated against by the ruling Arab Africans. That, however, paled in comparison to what she both witnessed and suffered after civil war broke out. Once in England, she worked relentlessly to call the world's attention to what was happening in Sudan.

FIC. Farah, Nuruddin. *Gifts*. (1999) The second volume of a highly praised trilogy about Somalia takes place before its civil war. The subtle nuances of giving and receiving on the personal and political level (via foreign aid to Third World countries) are skillfully interwoven with the story of a 36-year-old widowed Somali nurse struggling to raise her three children on her own.

Waris, Dirie and Cathleen Miller. *Desert Flower: The Extraordinary Journey of a Desert Nomad* (1998) As a special ambassador to the United Nations, Somali supermodel Dirie speaks out against genital mutilation, a "barbaric rite" that she underwent at age five. Born into a traditional Somali nomad family that also believed in arranged marriages between prepubescent girls and elderly men, Dirie tells of her life as camel herder there and of how she eventually became a supermodel and human rights' activist.

Kassindja, Fauziya and Layli Bashir. *Do They Hear You When You Cry?* (1998) With the death of her father, 17-year-old FK lost her protector and fled to the U.S. to escape the ritual genital circumcision ahead of her. Her story of the 16 nightmarish months she spent in U.S. prisons waiting for her request for political asylum to come before the courts is an eye-opener. That it finally was done was due in large part to LB, the 23-year-old law student who did hear FK's cries and championed her cause.

Hirsi Ali, Ayaan. *Infidel* (2007) From her traditional Muslim childhood in Somalia, Ethiopia and Saudi Arabia through her rebellion against a marriage arranged by her father to her election to parliament in the Netherlands, Ali details her life, the evolution of her beliefs about Islam and her fight against injustice done to women in the name of religion.

Gacemi, Baya. *I, Nadia, Wife of a Terrorist* (2006) Set amid the political turmoil of rural Algeria in the early 1990s, this is the story of how a naive teen became the submissive and even proud wife of an uneducated petty thief who had a religious conversion, joined the fundamentalist Armed Islamic Group and eventually rose through the ranks to become the local emir. Nadia's story—told to a journalist she met through a support group for women victimized by terror—reveals much about the psychology of civilians who become complicit in the rise of it.

FIC. Djebbar, Assia. *The Tongue's Blood Does Not Run Dry: Algerian Stories* (2006) Written by a woman many consider a candidate for the Nobel Prize for Literature, these stories focus on the effect of war on women's lives.

FIC. Djebbar, Assia. *Children of the New World: A Novel of the Algerian War* (1962) When a woman in a besieged town is killed by a bomb, relationships of all kinds are put to the test, and the differing views of how to react to it illuminate differences between men and women. Djebbar's third novel, written at age 26, partly reflects her involvement in the resistance movement against the French.

FIC. Benmalek, A. *The Lovers of Algeria* (2004) In the late 1990s, after the death of her second husband, a Swiss woman returns to Algeria to try to find out what happened to her first. And the country she returns to is no less treacherous than it was in the 1950s when an accusation by a member of the Algerian National Liberation Front led to their separation. Skillfully woven into the lives of this couple is the strife-torn post-colonial history of the country.

Baker, Alison. *Voices of Resistance: Oral History of Moroccan Women* (1998) Over a dozen women tell of the part they played in the struggle against French colonialism as well as of how their participation in the resistance affected Moroccan attitudes about women.

Oufkir, Malika. *Stolen Lives: Twenty Years in a Desert Jail* (2001) The story of how the author and her siblings survived the horror that befell their prominent family after their father was executed for attempting to assassinate Morocco's king in 1972 is a fascinating testament to their mother's strength.

FIC. Lalami, Laila. *Hope and Other Dangerous Pursuits* (2005) Moments away from Spain, the boat that four Moroccan men and women are in capsizes, and they are forced to swim for their lives and freedom. What follows is a revelation of the pasts that led to their desperate attempt to enter Spain illegally and the futures they have there.

Mernissi, Fatima. *Dreams of Trespass: Tales of a Harem Girlhood* (1995) The harems referred to in the title are the walled courtyards of extended families in 1940s Fez, courtyards from which women rarely ventured. Yet urged by her mother, the author found a delightful way to do so, one that also gives the reader much insight into women's roles in rural Morocco.

Eber-Holmes, Paula. *Daughters of Tunis: Women, Family and Networks in a Muslim City* (2002) An engaging, often humorous read that counters stereotypes of Muslim women.

Khazoom, Loolwa, ed. *The Flying Camel: Essays on Identity by Women of North African and Middle Eastern Jewish Heritage*

(2003) Arab women in countries from Morocco to Iran who are Jewish reveal their hidden worlds as well as how they have been discriminated against by the cultures in which they live as well as by the European-Jewish community.

THE MIDDLE EAST, including Egypt

Sabbagh, Suba, ed. *Arab Women: Between Defiance and Restraint* (1998) In most Arab countries, women face laws and social customs that hold them back from full participation in their societies. Some submit; others challenge. This anthology brings together distinguished Arab women and other experts to analyze the challenges that confront women in today's Arab societies and to discuss ways to meet them. The essays examine women's education and daily lives, views of Islam/Islamists, and the roles they have played in war and literature. Also included are interviews with female political leaders.

Sakr, Naomi, ed. *Women and Media in the Middle East: Power through Self-Expression* (2004) Covering a wide period, a broad region and diverse media forms, the essays in this collection examine the diverse experiences of Middle Eastern women working in the field as well as the extent to which they are influencing their societies. *Note: Use the Look Inside feature on Amazon to read the introduction to this book.*

FIG. Bagader, Abubaker, Ava Heinrichsdorff & Deborah Akers, eds. *Voices of Change: Short Stories by Saudi Arabian Women Writers* (1997) This anthology offers a representative selection from the past three decades of works by the best-known women writers in Saudi Arabia. The authors' stories of their patriarchal society afford rare insight into the traditional and changing roles, relationships, and expectations of modern Saudi women. The editors provide an introductory essay on modern Saudi culture as well as background on each of the major themes addressed in the stories.

Bin Laden, Carmen. *Inside the Kingdom: My Life in Saudi Arabia* (2005) Raised in Europe, half-Swiss, half-Persian Carmen fell in love with and married one of the wealthy Bin Ladens. She tells of how she spent the next nine years attempting to adjust to his upper-class, conservative clan and the repressive Saudi culture and of how, upon realizing the futility of it, she began to reclaim the individuality she once had.

FIG. Lindisfarne, Nancy. *Dancing in Damascus: Stories* (2000) Based on the author's anthropological fieldwork in Syria, her nine short stories exploring love and loss in contemporary Damascus shatter the stereotypes of Arab men and women.

FIG. Idlibi, Ulfat. *Sabriya: Damascus Bitter Sweet: A Novel* (1997) Written in the form of a journal, the lives of women in 1920s Syria are seen through the eyes of a woman revolutionary fighting against the French colonial regime.

LeBor, Adam. *City of Oranges: An Intimate History of Arabs and Jews in Jaffa* (2007) In this city, now part of Tel Aviv, Muslims, Jews and Christians once lived, worked and celebrated together. Via a wealth of historical details of six of the city's families, LeBor "gives a human face to his balanced account of the cataclysmic changes that have occurred because of the birth of Israel."

Tolan, Sandy. *The Lemon Tree: An Arab, A Jew, and the Heart of the Middle East* (2007) A compelling read that traces the history of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict through the lives of the families of the two who bring their history to light: Dalia, a Jewish woman whose family of Holocaust survivors emigrated from Bulgaria and Bashir, whose Palestinian family was forced out of the home that Dalia's family now occupies. *Note: Although their subject is the same, Tolan's and LeBor's books are quite different. I recommend reading both.*

Rosenthal, Donna. *The Israelis: Ordinary People in an Extraordinary Land* (2003) Although women are not the focus of this book, they appear on many of the pages as members of the astounding diversity of people who are citizens of one very small country. And via her vivid mosaic of anecdotal portraits of them, a journalist with years of experience in the Middle East shows Israel to be a country as complex as our own. *See All Editorial Reviews on Amazon to read an excerpt from this most enlightening book and <http://urj.org/Articles/index.cfm?id=4357> for a discussion guide on it.* *Note: Add Updated in 2008 for the 60th Anniversary of Israel to the title to get exactly what it promises.*

Rolin, Jean. *Christians in Palestine* (2005) A journalist's account of the lives of Arab Christians in a society governed by radicalized Islamic fundamentalists

Makdisi, Saree. *Palestine Inside Out: An Everyday Occupation* (2008) An acclaimed book about the daily lives of ordinary people since Israel's occupation of Palestinian territories

Gorkin, Michael. *Three Mothers, Three Daughters: Palestinian Women's Stories* (1996) Interviews with three Muslim mother-daughter pairs from three different Palestinian communities illuminate changes in attitudes toward education, employment, courtship and marriage. Views of family, politics, religion, and daily life are also expressed.

FIG. Badr, Liyana. *A Balcony Over the Fakihani* (2002) Two of the novellas about Palestinian life in exile focus on women; all three detail joy and despair. The title story is vivid account of Israeli air strikes during the 1982 invasion of Lebanon.

Victor, Barbara. *Army of Roses: Inside the World of Palestinian Women Suicide Bombers* (2003) Via interviews with the families of the six women of the Occupied Territories who have killed themselves in suicide attacks on Israel and with others who have tried but failed to sacrifice themselves for the Palestinian cause, Victor examines the forces that drove them to it.

Powers, Janet. *Blossoms on the Olive Tree: Israeli and Palestinian Women Working for Peace* (2006) Writing from women on both sides of the political divide explains what they are doing to reach out to each other to end the violence and hatred.

FIG. Liebrecht, Savyon. Foreword by Grace Paley. *Apples from the Desert* (1986) Liebrecht's short stories capture Israeli women's attitudes toward Arabs and the Holocaust generation.

Fuchs, Ester, ed. *Israeli Women's Studies: A Reader* (2005) Readings focus on Israeli women's lack of equality, status and power, the reasons for it and things that can be done to change it.

DRAMA. Ragen, Naomi. *Women's Minyan* (2006) A play based on the true story of a Haredi (ultra-Orthodox) Jewish woman and the struggles she faced when she tried to leave her husband, a rabbi

Westheimer, Ruth. *Shifting Sands: The Story of Bedouin Women at the Crossroads* (2009) Several decades ago, the Israeli government required the nomadic Bedouins to move to state-sanctioned townships. Westheimer details the effect this has had on their culture. **Note:** This was originally a documentary directed by Gil Sedan.

El Saadawi, Nawal. *Walking through Fire: A Life of Nawal El Saadawi* (2002) A doctor, novelist and militant writer on Arab women's problems, El Saadawi recalled her early years in *A Daughter of Isis*. In this sequel, she focuses on her experiences as a medical student and rural doctor, her attempts to set up women's organizations and publish magazines advocating women's rights and her four years in exile after her name appeared on an Islamic death list as well as on her marriages.

Ahmen, Leila. *A Border Passage: From Cairo to America—A Woman's Journey* (2000) An Egyptian woman's autobiography is a "richly insightful account of the inner conflicts of a generation of women who came of age during and after the collapse of European imperialism and the breakdown of Egypt's once multi-religious society in the 1940s and '50s."

Wikan, Unni. *Tomorrow, God Willing: Self-Made Destinies in Cairo* (1996) In a book that reads like a novel, Wikan tells the story of a woman she has known for 25 years and of her neighbors living in the back streets of Cairo. Their resourcefulness and resilience in the face of devastating poverty is mind-boggling.

FIG. Bakr, Salwa. *The Golden Chariot* (2008) From her prison cell in Cairo, the narrator decides to create a golden chariot to take her to heaven, where her dreams can be fulfilled. As she considers which of her fellow prisoners deserve to come with her, she relates their life stories. The result is a wry and cynical look at an unjust society where it is difficult to better one's life by honest means.

a combination of blogging, journaling and formal writing from a Carrie Bradshaw-esque narrator to express her views about virginity, dating, love, marriage, sex, divorce, religion, shame, taboos, and gender wars in the suffocating culture into which she was born. See <http://marwarakha.blogspot.com/2008/10/on-marital-fidelity-from-poison-tree.html> to read one of the pieces in this surprisingly insightful book.

TURKEY

Kinzer, Stephen. *Crescent and Star: Turkey Between Two Worlds, Revised Edition* (2008) Insightful and enjoyable to read, Kinzer's essays cover such topics as the founder of modern Turkey, the tenuous relationship between Islam and the secular military, the Armenian "massacre" and the Kurdish "problem" as well as vignettes about Turkish culture.

Ashman, Anastasia & Jennifer Eaton Gokmen, eds. *Tales from the Expat Harem: Foreign Women in Modern Turkey* (2006) Most of the 30 women featured have become members of Turkish families and have made an effort to adapt to the ways of the country. From them, one learns much about the complex nature of Turkish society.

Tekeli, Sirin, ed. *Women in Modern Turkish Society: A Reader* (1994) Though much is changing, much remains the same; thus the essays by female Turkish sociologists are still worth reading, especially those about education, power relationships within the family, labor in urban areas and gender hierarchy in carpet-weaving villages, and women's responses to Islam.

FIG. Livaneli, O.Z. *Bliss: A Novel* (2003) Both traditional and modern Turkish mindsets are conveyed by the story of a girl who is raped by her uncle, who then orders his son to kill her. **Note:** Be sure to get Livaneli's book, not Pina's with the same title.

FIG. Marcom, Micheline A. *Three Apples Fell from Heaven* (2001) Between 1915 and 1917, the Turkish government organized the systematic massacre of its Armenian population. Drawing on the experiences of her grandmother who survived, Marcom has created a collection of vignettes, short stories, prose poems and fables to present the many voices of the victims. See www.nytimes.com/books/01/04/22/reviews/010422.22liveset.html

FIG. Shafak, Elif. *The Bastard of Istanbul* (2007) The interactions between vividly drawn women of two extended families—one Turkish and living in Istanbul, the other Armenian and living in San Francisco—reflect the relations between the two groups since the 1915 Armenian genocide.

FIG. Croutier, Alev L. *Seven Houses* (2002) Written by the only Turkish woman to be widely published, this saga traces the lives of four generations of remarkable women through the turbulent 20th century by using their residences in Smyrna, Ankara, Istanbul, and finally the U.S. as a framework. "A lush, rich read, a satisfying weave of storytelling," declared a review in the *Washington Post*.

IRAQ

Howell, Georgina. *Gertrude Bell: Queen of the Desert, Shaper of Nations* (2007) What this biography adds to Janet Wallach's superb *Desert Queen: The Extraordinary Life of Gertrude Bell* (2005) is a number of extracts from Bell's journals. For this reason, it may be of interest to some. But for those who have read neither, to learn about the British woman was instrumental in determining the boundaries of modern Iraq, I'd give an edge to Wallach's as the better edited of the two books.

Al-Ali, Nadjie Sadiq. *Iraqi Women: Untold Stories from 1948 to the Present* (2007) The author includes personal narratives from a wide range of Iraqi women in order to establish the complex ways that their lives have been shaped by politics—from post-colonial independence through the emergence of a woman's movement in the 1950s, from Saddam Hussein's early policy of state feminism through the decade of sanctions. For a detailed account of the effects of the current US-British occupation, however, one must turn to the following book.

Al-Ali, Nadi and Nicola Pratt. *What Kind of Liberation? Women and the Occupation of Iraq* (2009) "Based on interviews

with Iraqi women's rights activists, international policy makers, and NGO workers, this is the first book to examine in depth how Iraqi women have fared since the U.S. invasion. While the overall picture is grim, Iraqi women activists continue to press to be a part of the political transition and the shaping of the new Iraq." Though not a quick read, it should be a book one has at least sampled.

POETRY: Mohammed, Sadek, et al., eds. *Flowers of Flame: The Unheard Voices of Iraq* (2008) The poems in this anthology date from the 2003 U.S. invasion and were written by Iraqis from all ethnicities, some still in the country, others exiled, some living, others now dead. Although specific incidents—such as the bombing of Baghdad, the fall of Saddam's statue and his trial—are addressed, the poems "mostly express the Iraqi soul under conditions of duress."

Salbi, Zainah and Laurie Becklund. *Between Two Worlds: Escape from Tyranny: Growing Up in the Shadow of Saddam* (2005) Aided by her mother's memories, the daughter of parents who were part of Hussein's elite circle tells not only of her charmed life as a child but also of her growing awareness of how Hussein "managed to make decent people like her parents complicit in their own oppression." For an understanding of how this happens, one need look no further than Salbi's book. She concludes with details about her escape to America via marriage and her subsequent life here.

Al-Askari. Sasson, Jean. *Mayada, Daughter of Iraq: One Woman's Survival Under Saddam Hussein* (2003) After Hussein came to power, Mayada, a member of one of Iraq's most distinguished families, was arrested on the charge that her business was printing anti-government flyers. This is her candid account of the month she spent crammed into a cell with 17 other women, who, to ease their suffering, shared their life stories, stories she relates to reveal the cruelties many suffered under Hussein.

FIC. Khedairi, Betool. *Absent* (2004) Narrated by a young Iraqi woman living with her aunt and uncle in a crowded Baghdad apartment building, the novel paints an often-wry portrait of how people coped with the crippling effect of the bombings and international sanctions that followed the first Gulf War.

Bird, Christiane. *A Thousand Sighs, A Thousand Revolts: Journeys in Kurdistan* (2004) As Bird travels throughout their lands, she describes the Kurd's culture, the revolts that have plagued them, and the difficulties ahead of them.

Sasson, Jean. *Love in a Torn Land: Joanna of Kurdistan: The True Story of a Freedom Fighter's Escape from Iraqi Vengeance* (2007) A woman's personal journey from her childhood in Baghdad to her fight for freedom, love and life

AFGHANISTAN

Doubleday, Veronica. *Three Women of Herat: A Memoir of Life, Love and Friendship in Afghanistan* (2006) By detailing her interactions with three very different women during the 1970s when she lived in Afghanistan, Doubleday paints a memorable picture of a lost world: women's lives in the cultural center of the country before invasions and civil war.

Lamb, Christina. *The Sewing Circles of Herat: A Personal Voyage Through Afghanistan* (2003) Lamb—a British journalist who was in Afghanistan during the Soviet occupation, then briefly during the rise of the Taliban and finally after 9/11—provides an in-depth look at the combined political, military and religious forces that have devastated the country. Interviews with combatants and non-combatants also clearly establish the human cost. *Note: Contrary to what her title suggests, only approximately 30 pages of her book deal with how educators, artists and writers subverted Taliban edicts.*

Pazira, Nelofer. *A Bed of Red Flowers: In Search of My Afghanistan* (2005) Though she recalls the less troubled country of her early years, the focus of the star of *Kandahar's* memoir is on life in Afghanistan during the time of the Soviet occupation (which her family eventually fled), the time of the Taliban via her correspondence with a friend, and after her return after 9/11 to search for that friend.

FIC. MacArthur, Kathleen. *Annisa-Daughter of Afghanistan* (2006) This story details a young girl's struggle to survive after the Soviet invasion in 1979, her harrowing escape to the U.S. and her eventual return to a war-torn, terrorist-inhabited, drug-smuggling Afghanistan further embroiled in bitter conflict about the role of its women.

FIC. Hosseini, Khaled. *A Thousand Splendid Suns* (2008) Spanning the past 30 years, the story of two very different Afghani women who are ultimately brought together by dire circumstances explores the nature of friendship as well as shows the repressive treatment of women in traditional Afghan life as well as under the Taliban.

Armstrong, Sally. *Veiled Threat: The Hidden Power of the Women of Afghanistan* (2002) In addition to reviewing the ebb and flow of women's rights, Armstrong uses stories of Afghani women to describe not only the hellish conditions of their lives under the Taliban's edicts but also their efforts to establish clandestine schools for girls and health clinics for women in defiance of them.

Brody, Anne. *With All Our Strength: The Revolutionary Association of the Women of Afghanistan* (2003) As Brody traces RAWA's evolution from an 11-member student group to the most powerful voice for Afghan women, she incorporates many interviews from the women involved in it.

Jones, Ann. *Kabul in Winter: Life Without Peace in Afghanistan* (2006) An aide worker in the country in 2003 details many aspects of Afghan society after the fall of the Taliban but pays special attention to the lives of the still far-from-liberated Muslim women.

Kiviat, Katherine & Scott Heidler. *Women of Courage: Intimate Stories from Afghanistan* (2007) Interviews with 40 women—ranging from an Olympic athlete to a fortune teller—reveal how they have tried to transform their lives since the 2001 fall of the Taliban.

Klraits, Alexander & Gulchin Gulmamadova-Kaits. *Love and War in Afghanistan* (2005) Afghans from all walks of life tell their love stories, many of which reflect on the burdens wars have placed on them over the years.

Ahmedi, Farah & Tammy Ansary. *The Other Side of the Sky: A Memoir* (2005) The autobiography of a girl who survived a

landmine explosion, was taken to Germany to recover, then sent back to Afghanistan and finally, after 9/11, came to the U.S. with her mother at a time Muslims were viewed with suspicion reveals a young lady many will admire.

Mortenson, Greg. *Three Cups of Tea: One Man's Mission to Promote Peace...One School at a Time* (2006) Those who have yet to read this stirring testament to what one person can do to change women's lives should run, not walk, to the nearest bookstore or library to get it. Also available is a middle-school version as well as a charmingly illustrated one for children.

IRAN

Kinzer, Stephen. *All the Shah's Men: An American Coup and the Roots of Middle East Terror* (2003) Read to understand why Iranians distrust the U.S. and Britain. See www.nytimes.com/2003/08/10/books/review/10BASS.html

Parsi, T. *Treacherous Alliance: The Secret Dealings of Israel, Iran, and the United States* (2008) In essence, this fascinating book establishes that geostrategy rather than ideology has been the prime mover of events between these three countries, something American political leaders would be well advised to realize. See www.atimes.com/atimes/Middle_East/115Ak01.html for a more detailed explanation of what Parsi covers and www.politicalreview.com/polrev/reviews/MEPO/R_1061_1924_155_1007687.asp for examples of some of the intriguing dealings he uses to support his argument.

FIC. Daneshvar, Simin. *Savushun: A Novel About Modern Iran* (1969) Iran's most renowned novelist details old Persian customs as she relates the story of the conflicts in an Iranian family during the Allied occupation during WWII. Although present are the forces that would lead to the overthrow of the Shah in 1979, this is above all a coming of age story of a young wife/mother.

Farmaian, Sattareh. *Daughter of Persia: A Woman's Journey from Her Father's Harem through the Islamic Revolution* (1992) Born in 1921 into a powerful, aristocratic family, Farmaian's life spans nearly a century of political changes, which she observes as she tells of her colorful childhood, her break with tradition to study in California, her return to Iran to found its School of Social work, her tireless fight against poverty, disease and overcrowding, and finally, of her narrow escape from death after the fall of the Shah. This is an autobiography resoundingly praised by both critics and readers.

Aryanpour, Azar. *Behind the Tall Walls* (1998) An autobiographical retrospective of one elite Iranian family's traumatic experiences—first at the hands of the Shah's henchmen in his waning days in power and then at the hands of the Islamic Republic's "holy" men—illuminates what happened to many.

Ghahramani, Zarah. *My Life as a Traitor: A Story of Courage and Survival in Tehran's Brutal Evin Prison* (2008) Several days after participating in a student demonstration against the government in 2001, Zarah was arrested for showing her hair in public, or as the charge against her read, "for inciting crimes against the people of the Islamic Republic of Iran." The 30 days she subsequently spent in prison and how they changed her from the naïve 19 year old she had been are the focus of this book, but flashbacks to her life before her arrest reveal her rebellious streak. See www.nytimes.com/2008/01/09/books/09grimes.html

FIC. Moshiri, Farnoosh. *The Bathhouse* (2003) Set in the early days of the Islamic Revolution, the narrator is tossed into a make-shift jail because of her brother's liberal activities. There, she hears other women's stories, stories which reflect the courage and endurance needed when fundamentalists take control. See www.theminnesotareview.org/journal/ns68/singh.shml

FIC. Sofer, Dalia. *The Septembers of Shiraz* (2007) This is a semi-autobiographical account of a wealthy Jewish-Iranian family caught up in the repression that followed the overthrow of the Shah in 1979. That Sofer also gives the oppressors a voice adds to the nuances of this novel. "In this fickle literary world, it's impossible to predict whether Sofer's novel will become a classic, but it certainly stands a chance," begins the glowing review of it at www.nytimes.com/2008/01/09/books/09grimes.html

Hakakian, Roya. *Journey from the Land of "No": A Girlhood Caught Up in Revolutionary Iran* (2005) Now a documentary filmmaker, Hakakian relives her childhood in an intellectual household in the Jewish community in Tehran and vividly recalls the elation she, then 12, and many others felt when the Shah was overthrown. Just as vividly she recalls the next five years of growing disillusionment and repression, years that also saw her emerge as a writer.

Satrapi, Mariane. *Persepolis: The Story of a Childhood* (2003) Satrapi's at-times-slyly satirical, at-times-sobering memoir of growing up in Iran during years that saw the triumph of the Islamic Revolution and the devastating effects of the eight-year war with Iraq is told in graphic form. Also available is *The Complete Persepolis*, which adds the story of her years abroad from ages 14 to 18 and continues when homesick, she returns to Iran for college. See www.nytimes.com/2003/05/11/books/review/11EBERSTT.html

Ebadi, Shirin (Nobel Peace Prize) and **Azadeh Moaveni.** *Iran Awakening* (2006, with one subtitle, 2007 with another) This is a must-read memoir by a woman who, despite the challenges of raising a family, became the first female judge in Iran. Demoted to a courtroom clerk after the Islamic Revolution, she subsequently re-emerged as a human rights' lawyer who, despite political persecution, has been an outspoken and tireless advocate for women and children, including in politically charged cases that most lawyers were afraid to touch. See www.nytimes.com/2006/07/16/books/review/16secor.html **Note:** It was Ebadi who stepped forward in 1997 to represent writer Haleh Esfandiari.

Esfandiari, Haleh. *Reconstructed Lives: Women and Iran's Islamic Revolution.* (1997) Commentaries from 32 professional and working women in Iran tell of their varied responses to the overthrow of the Shah in 1979 and of their shock at the new government's executions and purges and crackdown on women and women's rights. They also tell of how their lives have been affected by the revolution, and some of the strategies by which they have tried to and sometimes succeeded in subverting the state's agenda. That their voices are not singing a single tune is perhaps one of the reasons Middle East analyst Robin Wright declared that this anthology offers "the most comprehensive and thoughtful treatment I have seen on the subject of women in Iran." **Note:** In 2007, Esfandiari, by then an American citizen, was arrested as a spy while visiting her mother in Iran and imprisoned for 110 days before being released after much international furor and diplomatic effort.

Howard, Jane. *Inside Iran: Women's Lives* (2002) While living in Iran from 1996-2000, Howard traveled throughout the country and interviewed women from all walks of life in order to get beyond the stereotypes and find out what their lives were really

like as well as how, if in any ways, they had changed. What she learned is well-worth reading.

Moaveni, Azadeh. *Honeymoon in Tehran: Two Years of Love and Danger in Iran* (2009) In contrast to the mixed reviews of her first book, *Lipstick Jihad*, critics are unanimous in their praise of this, her second, for in it, she gives a nuanced view of the Iranian government's contradictions and what she observed of people's reactions to them when she lived there from 2005 through 2007. See www.nytimes.com/2009/03/01/books/review/Bahadur-t.html

FIG. Dowlatabadi, Mahmoud. *Missing Soluch* (2007 reissued) Not only did this novel pioneer the use of the everyday language in literature; in its portrait of the life of an impoverished woman struggling to survive after the disappearance of her husband Dowlatabadi also revolutionized its subject matter. See www.rochester.edu/College/translation/threepercent/index.php?id=692

Zanganeh, Lila Azam, ed. *My Sister, Guard Your Veil; My Brother, Guard Your Eyes: Uncensored Iranian Voices* (2006) "The gap between the multi-faceted realities of Iranian political and cultural life and the simplified images Americans are often fed by politicians and mainstream media remain mind-boggling," writes Zanganeh, who, to close that gap, asked 15 of the country's most astute observers and commentators for their observations of life in Iraq. Covered in this short anthology are politics, sex, art, women's rights, racism, underground night life, Tehran's Jewish community, censorship, economic inequality and cross-cultural misunderstanding under a regime that is highly oppressive but continually subverted. See www.newsweek.com/id/47127

Nafisi, Azar. *Reading Lolita in Tehran: A Memoir in Books* (2003)

Keshavarz, Fatemah. *Jasmine and Stars: Reading More than Lolita in Tehran* (2009) The author challenges Nafisi's view of Iran as an oppressive, intellectually stagnant country for women. And she in part uses women's writing to buttress her case. Although many critics think Keshavarz is a mouthpiece for the government, they do concede that what she has to say about Iranian literature is worth reading.

FIG. Khorrami, Mohammad Mehdi and Shouleb Vatanabadi, eds. *A Feast in the Mirror: Stories by Contemporary Iranian Women* (2000) "This outstanding anthology offers not only polished prose and complex characterizations but also enlightening explorations of Iranian culture, politics and social change." Especially helpful are the editors' introduction to Iranian literature and their introductions to each story. See www.article-archives.com/humanities-social-science/literature-literature/330820.html

Farmanfarmaian, Monir Shahroudy. *A Mirror Garden* (2007) Widely praised for good reason, this is the autobiography of a woman who was born into a wealthy Persian family in 1924, left occupied Iran during WWII and made her mark in both art and fashion in New York, then returned to Iran and married a prince. Also a collector of Iranian folk art, throughout she conveys her appreciation for the culture and beauty of Iran. *Note: For an up-to-date account of her, now 85 and living/creating in Tehran, and of her mirrored mosaics which are rooted in Iranian culture, google, without quotes, Recollections: Monir Farmanfarmaian.*

INDIA / PAKISTAN / BANGLADESH

NOTE: The South Asian Women's website, www.sawnet.org/books offers lengthy lists of the works of these countries' female writers, often annotated and with reviews.

Wolpert, Stanley. *A New History of India, 8th Edition* (2008) Wolpert's is considered to be one of the two best one-volume histories of the country. Well-written, it is divided into sections about the environment, religion and philosophy, society, arts & sciences, politics and foreign policy.

TURBULENT TIMES

Butalia, Urvashi. *The Other Side of Silence: Voices from the Partition of India* (2000) "The partition of the subcontinent into two countries, India and Pakistan, caused one of the most massive human convulsions in history. Within two months in 1947, homes, villages, communities, families and relationships were destroyed. Through interviews conducted over a ten-year period and an examination of diaries, letters, memoirs and parliamentary documents, Butalia reveals how those on the margins of history—children, women, ordinary people, the lower castes, the untouchables—were affected. She also explores what community, caste and gender had to do with the violence that accompanied partition, what partition was meant to achieve and what it actually did, and how, in spite of unspeakable horrors, the survivors went on."

Menon, Ruth, ed. *No Woman's Land: Women from Pakistan, India & Bangladesh Write on the Partition of India* (2004) Unlike Butalia's book, Menon's also includes those who were affected in 1971 when the Bengalis won their war for independence from Pakistan. And unlike Butalia's, her contributors are all women. *For brief synopses of some of the pieces, see www.h-net.org/reviews/showrev.php?id=10126. To read the introduction and first chapter, google the complete title, then scroll down to the google.com entry.*

Butalia, Urvashi, ed. *Speaking Peace: Women's Voices from Kashmir* (2002) It was well worth the effort to find a copy of this book, for via testimony from women of all of Kashmir's major communities, it reveals the human costs of living in the region claimed by both Pakistan and India. *Note: In *Curfewed Nights* (2009), male journalist Basharat Peer conveys an excellent though grim account of growing up in Kashmir in the shadow of an occupying army pitted against a violent separatist movement.*

NOVELS SET IN THE TURBULENT TIMES

FIG. Baldwin, Shauna Singh. *What the Body Remembers* (2001) Commonwealth Writer's Prize. "A wealthy Sikh engineer takes a young village girl as a second wife because his first, a fierce, beautiful woman who oversees most of his properties has not given him children. The relationship between these three stretches from the final days of the British Raj through the bloody partition of India and, one suspects, into the next life." Although the relationship between the two wives and their husband is at the heart of

the novel, the relationship between the British and Indians, the culture of the Sikhs and the horrors that come with the Partition are skillfully woven in. This is a richly textured, memorable story. And Amazon's Look-Inside feature will establish that it is superbly written. *See sawnet.*

FIC. Kapur, Manju. *Difficult Daughters: A Novel* (1999) Paralleling India's struggle for independence and the results of getting it is the story of a woman who pursued education rather than marriage but ended up in a marriage quite scandalous. Seeking to learn about her life is her daughter, who begins by noting, "The one thing I had wanted was to not be like my mother."

FIC. Desai, Anita. *Clear Light of Day* (1980) As India verges on disintegrating, so, too, does the family that is the focus of this novel. Long separated by distance and life style, when one sister returns for a visit, old tensions with her sister resurface, as do fond memories. This is a story that you will be recommending before you have finished reading it.

FIC. Badami, Anita Rau. *Can You Hear the Nightbird Call?* (2006) Through the "intertwined threads of memory and history that connect the grief of an old man, the betrayal of a sister and the tragedies of families, the narrative moves rapidly from India to Canada and back and across decades to tell the stories of three women as they try to survive, keep their families together and their dreams afloat amidst the turbulent tides of history." Skillfully interwoven are events such as the Komagatu Maru incident, the Partition riots, the Golden Temple incident and the riots following the assassination of Indira Gandhi." *See sawnet but be advised that its review has spoilers.*

FIC. Suri, Manil. *The Age of Shiva: A Novel* (2008) This novel is "an unflinchingly honest portrayal of a woman in post-independence India who marries an aspiring singer her family views as socially inferior. Her contentious marriage, her struggle to become educated and her eventual fulfillment as a mother are framed by India's political upheavals, increasing tensions between Hindus and Muslims, and the 1971 war for independence that led to the creation of Bangladesh. With its historical, religious (Hindu) and mythological lessons amid the surface soap opera of a life, it is a brilliantly told tale, filled with deeper meanings. It is, as writer Amy Tan said in comparing it to *Anna Karenina*, "both intimate and epic, a balance of sensual beauty and visceral reality." *See <http://contemporarylit.about.com/od/fiction/fr/theAgeOfShiva.htm>*

POVERTY / PROSPERITY

Sainath, P. *Everybody Loves a Good Drought: Stories from India's Poorest Districts* (2002) In this thoroughly researched study of India's poorest people, Sainath reveals how they manage, what sustains them, and the efforts, often ludicrous, to do something for them. *Note: Though his articles were written between 1993 and 1995, the themes around which they are organized—debt, health, education, displacement, irrigation—remain the biggest problems India still faces, with 77% of its population in 2008 living on less than 50 cents a day. For an excellent explanation of why Sainath's reporting is not only important but endangered, see www.entrepreneur.com/tradejournals/article/173677093.html*

Halder, Baby. *A Life Less Ordinary: A Memoir* (2007) When the author began working for a retired professor, her life changed dramatically, for with his help and encouragement, she wrote her life story, painful though it was. Thus illuminated is the poverty and subjugation of women in modern-day India. *See sawnet.*

FIC. Umrigar, Thrity. *The Space Between Us* (2005) Set in modern day India, "an intimate portrait of two women shows how the lives of the rich and poor are intricately connected yet vastly removed from each other as well as how the bonds of womanhood are pitted against the divisions of caste and culture." *See sawnet.*

Viramma. *Viramma: Life of an Untouchable* (1997) On Wellesley College's reading list for Literature and Politics of South Asia, this work reflects ten years of conversation with an illiterate woman from the Dalit (untouchable) caste. What is amazing is that the harshness of her life and the hypocrisies of caste, class and gender repression did not oppress her spirit or her sense of humor. *Note: Though the caste system was outlawed by India's constitution, much discrimination on the basis of caste still exists. Viramma's story also is relevant to the biography of Behenji.*

Bose, Ajoy. *Behenji: A Political Biography of Mayawati* (2008) A respected journalist who has covered Indian politics for over three decades, Bose examines the meteoric rise of the woman who will quite possibly become Prime Minister as a result of having negotiated within the system to create new alliances with lower, backward classes, Muslims and even upper-caste Brahmins. That she began as a Dalit school teacher with no political connections makes her story especially fascinating. *See sawnet.*

Yunis, Muhammad. *Banker to the Poor: Micro-Lending and the Battle Against World Poverty* (1999) Grameen Bank is now a \$2.5 billion bank enterprise in Bangladesh and the model for similar enterprises in more than 50 countries. This is Yunis' memoir of how it all began as well as his impassioned advocacy for micro-lending as a means to raise people out of poverty.

WOMEN MISUSED/ABUSED

FIC. Sidhwa, Bapsi. *Water: A Novel* (2006) After the death of her elderly husband, an 8-year-old child bride is abandoned at a widow's ashram, where she is expected to live in penitence until her death. She, however, refuses to accept the life tradition prescribes for her. *See sawnet. Note: This is an adaptation of the film Water, which was nominated in 2007 for an Academy Award for Best Foreign Language Film and is now on DVD.*

Sen, Mala. *Death by Fire: Sati, Dowry Death, and Female Infanticide in Modern India* (2002) Though outlawed in India in 1829, in September of 1987 a young woman dressed in her bridal finery was burned alive on her husband's funeral pyre. That women's lives are still endangered by sati as well as other practices is the focus of Sen's book.

Butalia, Subhadra. *The Gift of a Daughter* (2002) Alarmed by the increased danger to women because of India's growing materialism, at age 81 the author penned a memoir of how a dowry death she saw years ago compelled her to become one of the first women to take steps to make such deaths criminal. She recounts cases she encountered, her frustrations in dealing with the courts and corrupt bureaucracy and the unwillingness of victims' families to seek redress. *See sawnet as well as www.thehindu.in/thehindu/mag/2002/11/17/stories/2002111700630300.htm*

Mai, Mukhtar. *In the Name of Honor: A Memoir* (2007) The author is the lower-class **Pakistani** woman who in 2002—after being gang-raped by order of her tribal counsel in redress for an action committed by her younger brother—did not follow the traditional path of subsequently killing herself but rather went to court instead.

Brown, Louise. *The Dancing Girls of Lahore: Selling Love and Hoarding Dreams in Pakistan's Ancient Pleasure District* (2005) Though during the age of the Mughals they were courtesans renowned for their exquisite dancing, in Islamic Pakistan, these women are now considered unclean. Brown, a sociologist, spent four years studying the family life of Maha and her three girls, who, born into the "business" will not leave it. As Brown tells of their lives, she also details the grim economics of the sex trade.

Note: Though lauded in a NY Times' review, a more detailed one is at <http://readysteadybook.com/BookReview.aspx?isbn-0060740426>

WOMEN, MISC.

Silliman, Jael. *Jewish Portraits, Indian Frames: Women's Narratives from a Diaspora of Hope* (2002) This is a personal and well-researched social history of the four generations of the author's foremothers—engaging Baghdadi Jews—who lived most of their lives in a Jewish community in Calcutta. *See sawnet.*

Jaffrey, Madhur. *Climbing the Mango Trees: A Memoir of a Childhood in India* (2006) Though Jaffrey paints a vivid picture of growing up in an extended, well-to-do family in Delhi, the phrase "**and Food**" should have been added to the subtitle: "from the time that her grandmother placed honey on her tongue shortly after her birth, Jaffrey's life began to arrange itself around cooking and all that food represents in Hindu life." So, too, does her well-written, engaging memoir.

Devidayal, Namita. *The Music Room: A Memoir* (2009) That this memoir has been awarded India's most prestigious literary prize is not surprising, for from the moment the author's mother begins dragging her to a seamy Bombay neighborhood for classical singing lessons, one is compelled to read on—not only for brilliant descriptions of music and lessons about life/traditions but also for a reminder of the sacrifices many women must make. *See <http://us.macmillan.com/themusicroom-2> for critics' plaudits and a lengthy excerpt from the book.*

Jung, Anees. *Beyond the Courtyard: A Sequel to Unveiling India* (2003) In her 1985 book, one of India's best-known journalists explored what life was like for women of all classes. In this sequel, she reports on how life has changed for their daughters and on the mother-daughter bond that is now being strained. As before, she finds "suffering and fortitude, despair and hope."

Gulati, Leela and J. Bagchi, eds. *A Space of Her Own: The Personal Narratives of Twelve Women* (2005) Indian academics, teachers, principals, writers and performers discuss the position of women in **India's** patriarchal society. "Focusing more on women's relations with each other than on their subservient position to men, the authors reveal how they were able to create a sphere of autonomy for themselves and how their mothers, grandmothers and great-grandmothers paved the way for their independence."

Haeri, Shahla, ed. *No Shame for the Sun: Lives of Professional Pakistani Women* (2002) Six women in a Muslim society reveal how they persevered in difficult situations, often defying cultural norms. Included are a social organizer, a political activist, a well-known poet, a widowed government official, and a Sufi mystic. The editor also compares them to women in other countries to highlight similarities in the universal struggle for women's rights. *See sawnet.*

CREATIVE ACCOUNTS OF WOMEN'S LIVES

Malladi, Amulya. *A Breath of Fresh Air* (2002) After barely surviving the poisonous gas leak in Bhopal in 1984, the woman at the center of this novel divorced her dashing young husband and later remarried. As the story begins, she sees her ex-husband at a market. What follows is nothing as unoriginal as an affair, but rather attempts by all three main characters to deal with their emotions. Also illuminated is a divorcee's tenuous status in modern day India as well as what is truly love, atonement and forgiveness. This is not a story you will have read before, but so interesting is it that it is one you will reread, marveling that the author has degrees in electronics and communication engineering rather than in psychology. *See sawnet.*

FIG. Sundaresan, Indu. *In the Convent of Little Flowers: Stories* (2008) The stories in this collection "contain **India's** multitudes, all in relationships of opposition: men vs. women, traditional vs. new, haves vs. have-nots." Praised by critics for dealing with contemporary issues that Indian society is reluctant to acknowledge as well as for depth/nuances of character and compelling narratives, every story in this collection is memorable. *To see first-hand just how memorable, go to www.powells.com/biblio/1-9781416586098-0?search_avail=1 and read the excerpt, "Shelter of Rain," the only story in the collection that reflects on rather than is set in India.*

FIG. Dharmarajan, Geeta, ed. *Separate Journeys: Short Stories by Contemporary Indian Women* (2004) The 15 stories in this collection reveal the depth and variety of Indian literature across the subcontinent and reflect the diversity of women's lives in settings from urban to village to rural in India today. *To read the introduction, which previews the stories as well as discusses the range of Indian writers, see www.sc.edu/uscpres2004/3551_intro.pdf*

FIG. Asher, R.E. *Daughters of Kerala: Twenty-Five Short Stories by Award-Winning Authors* (2004) Kerala, located in the southwest corner of **India**, is a surprisingly diverse society. Published over a span of 70 years, the stories in this collection "convey situations which are both particular to the multi-ethnic culture and its tensions and reflective of the universality of a woman's struggles." Arranged thematically, they cover love, marriage, infidelity, jealousy, loneliness, cruelty, kindness, guilt, innocence, heartbreak, life, death, and the ever-present quandary about identity.

FIG. Mastur, Khadija *Cool, Sweet Water: Selected Stories* (1999) "Marked by a scathing, uncompromising realism, Mastur's stories reveal a deep concern for the lives of ordinary people, especially women. Her fiction also reflects her interest in the political under-currents that have shaped **Pakistan's** turbulent history and examines the issues of minorities, a subject rarely touched on" in this country's literature.

FIG. Shamsie, Muneze, ed. *And the World Changed: Contemporary Stories by Pakistani Women* (2005) The 25 selections

in this anthology, by emerging as well as established writers, "reveal how Pakistani women, writing in English, challenge stereotypes that the patriarchal cultures in Pakistan and the diaspora have imposed on them. There is a mix of gentle, satirical and hard-hitting criticism of how social and cultural issues, ignorance and illiteracy and blatant prejudices work against women. That politics, too, clearly affects them is also revealed in some of the stories. *See sawnet.*

FIC. Azim, Firdous and Niaz Zaman, eds. *Galpa: Short Stories by Women from Bangladesh* (2006) Including both well-established and emerging writers, most of the stories are about issues that are relevant to women's lives. The 1971 war for independence, however, is not excluded, nor is the political corruption of contemporary Bangladesh.

SOUTHEAST ASIA

FIC. Ganeshanathan, V.V. *Love Marriage* (2008) Because there is so little fiction about **Sri Lanka** and because its civil war figures prominently in this novel, we are not saving it for our list of books about those who have left their native lands. At the heart of this story is a young woman whose Sri Lankan parents are Tamils who met in the U.S. and married for love. It is the appearance of her dying uncle, a former Tamil Tiger (guerilla faction) who violently opposed their marriage and countless other relatives that prompt her to delve deeper into her heritage and to consider the many different kinds of love and marriage. *See www.sawnet.org/books.*

Lynch, Caitrin. *Juki Girls, Good Girls: Gender and Cultural Politics in Sri Lanka's Global Garment Industry* (2007) In Sri Lanka, women's participation in factory labor is considered to be important to the country's development. Yet at the same time it is of great concern because it has already created the vulgar "Juki girls," urban garment workers who "do not embody the nation's highest ideals of femininity." "Weaving together images and rhetoric of national politics and popular culture as well as the words and daily lives of workers, parents, neighbors and factory managers," ethnographer Lynch offers an "engaging and nuanced portrait of the effects of globalization on women" and reports on rural women's determination to show that working does not make them "Juki girls." *See www.cornellpress.cornell.edu/cut_detail.taf?ti_id=4663*

FIC. Ghosh, Amitav. *The Glass Palace: A Novel* (2001) Ghosh so vividly and skillfully brings to life the history of **Burma and Malaya** over a century of momentous change that from the very first chapter, one is pulled into the story. The fascinating characters who people it—especially the women—and the varied ways they react to turmoil and hardship make the book difficult to put down. *Note: The paperback edition has a Reader's Guide.*

Fink, Christina. *Living Silence: Burma under Military Rule* (2001) Editor for BermaNet News, Fink presents detailed information about what life is like for a wide diversity of people in the country its dictators call Myanmar, information that those in the know have called "insightful." *Note: September 2009 is the publication date for her update: **Living Silence in Burma: Surviving Under Military Rule, Second Edition.***

Wintle, Justin. *Perfect Hostage* (2008) A biography of Daw Aung Sung San Suu Kyi, **Burma/Myanmar's** champion of democracy who has been under house arrest for over 20 years

Ung, Loung. *First They Killed My Father: A Daughter of Cambodia Remembers* (2001) National Book Award. Because Ung's father was a government agent and her family affluent, they were in great danger when the Khmer Rouge took control of the country. This is Ung's account of the harrowing four years they spent trying to survive.

Ung, Loung. *Lucky Child: A Daughter of Cambodia Reunites with the Sister She Left Behind* (2005) Ung juxtaposes her life in America after her escape from Cambodia at age 10 with the life of her sister, who remained there. *Note: The author has recently appeared on news programs commenting on the tribunal now underway in Cambodia.*

Coates, Karen J. *Cambodia Now: Life in the Wake of War* (2005) Coates details the struggles Cambodians from all walks of life have faced in trying to rebuild their war-torn country after over two decades of civil war.

Mam, Somaly. *The Road of Lost Innocence: As a Girl She Was Sold into Sexual Slavery, But Now She Rescues Others: The True Story of a Cambodian Heroine* (2008) Mam's autobiography details the horror and violence perpetrated on young girls to feed the sex trade industry and recounts her efforts to help prostitutes and exploited children.

FIC. Duong, Uyen Nicole. *Daughters of the River Huong: A Vietnamese Royal Concubine and Her Descendants* (2005) A much-praised novel of four generations of women uses flashbacks to relate Vietnam's tumultuous history and their stories of survival. That they trace their lineage back to "the conquered, the extinct" Chams, a Hindu minority of Central Vietnam that was annexed into the Viet kingdom in the 15th century and whose matriarch became the royal concubine of the last king of the Annam (Viet) monarchy makes it all the more fascinating. *To read the first 67 pages of this impossible-to-put-down book that is in the Yale curriculum for Vietnamese Studies, google the title + reviews, then scroll down to Book Results at the bottom of the first page. An interview with the author, the first Vietnamese to become a judge in the U.S., is at www.thewriterspost.net/V712_Interview.htm*

Dang Thuy Tram. *Last Night I Dreamed of Peace: The Diary of Dang Thuy Tram* (2007) Begun in 1968 and ending in 1970 when she was killed by an American soldier, the diary of a young **North Vietnamese** doctor who served on the front lines chronicled the physical and emotional damage that war was inflicting on her country.

FIC. Duong Thu Hong and Nina McPherson. *Paradise of the Blind: A Novel* (1993) This beautifully written story of a young girl growing to womanhood "captures not only the degradation and grim realities of Communist rule in **Vietnam** in the post-war period but also the beauty and sensory delights of the land. And when she is eventually sent to work in Russia, Duong describes that country with equal skill."--*Library Journal* In this richly detailed novel, "the author depicts the complexity of Vietnamese culture: the allegiance to family and ancestors, the symbolic value of food, class distinctions, and the sense of desperation mixed with pride. Hang, a young woman of the 1980s recalls Hanoi in the previous decade, but while there are subtle allusions to war and peacetime, the author's focus is on the shifting, uneasy relationships between Hang and her traditionalist mother, a food peddler; with

Hang's selfish, hypocritical uncle, a communist peasant; and with Hang's comparatively wealthy, unconditionally loving aunt. Contrasts between young and old, urban and rural, convey the full variety of Vietnamese life styles." --*Publishers Weekly*

FIC. Mangunwijaya, Y.B. *Durga/Umayi: A Novel* (1991) A political satire, this book follows the life of a poor Javanese village woman who eventually becomes a servant in the household of Indonesia's first president, Sukarno, where she observes and learns the fine art of accommodation. While she ultimately becomes quite successful, she does pay a price. Those who know little about Indonesia's politics will learn much from this well-written book.

FIC. Toer, Pramoedya. *The Girl from the Coast* (2002) Banned in **Indonesia**, Toer's internationally acclaimed books are about the injustices and glory of life in his country. Set in feudal Java, this is the story of a beautiful young woman from a poor fishing village who "marries" a Muslim aristocrat. Though the life she is then compelled to lead is far from desirable, her spirit and her musings about life make this a compelling story.

CHINA

Khetsun, Tubten. *Memories of Life in Lhasa Under Chinese Rule* (2007) Though told by a man, this is an excellent account of what Tibetans have undergone during and following China's takeover of their country.

Adhe, Ama. *The Voice That Remembers: A Tibetan Woman's Inspiring Story of Survival* (1997) Adhe's account of the Chinese invasion of Tibet and her 27-year imprisonment for organizing a women's resistance movement is both disturbing and inspiring. As the title suggests, Adhe weaves her personal story in with stories of fellow prisoners who did not survive.

FIC. Xinran, Xue. *Sky Burial: An Epic Love Story of Tibet* (2006) Based on a brief interview she had with a Chinese doctor who had spent 30 years wandering in Tibet trying to learn the truth about her husband's death, Xinran recreates her journey, the grandeur of Tibet and the arduous yet spiritual lives of Tibebans.

Fallows, James. *Postcards from Tomorrow Square: Reports from China* (2008) Fallows described the essays he wrote while living in China as "an unfolding report" on the economic, political and cultural changes/challenges he observed in the country from 2006 through 2008 as well as on the world's reaction to them. Fallows is a skilled reporter who not only observes but explains and analyzes and does so via stories of things most interesting, things such as the popularity of the reality-based TV show based on Trump's "Apprentice" and the AI-Core-loving, airline-owning, air-conditioning entrepreneur who built a replica of Versailles. Eerily prescient is his "\$1.4 Trillion Question," which focuses on China's heavy investment in U.S. securities at the expense of its own people. See www.nytimes.com/2009/03/08/books/review/Spence-t.html where there is also a link to the first chapter.

Hessler, Peter. *Oracle Bones: A Journey through Time in China* (2007) The changes in Chinese society since Deng Xiaoping's Reform and Opening are shown through the lives of an eclectic group of men and women in this widely praised book by the Beijing correspondent for *New Yorker* magazine. See www.reviews-of-books.com/oracle_bones for links to major reviews. **Note:** The hardback of the previous year has a different subtitle.

Johnson, Ian. *Wild Grass: Three Portraits of Change in Modern China* (2005) An investigative reporter's profiles of three who protested government actions is a sobering reminder that the more things change, the more they stay the same. Although Philip Pan also makes the same point, one of Johnson's profiles is a must-read one of a persistent grandmother who tried to convince the government that the Falun Gong was not an "evil cult."

Pan, Philip. *Out of Mao's Shadow: The Struggle for the Soul of a New China* (2008) In addition to covering one of the men detailed in *Wild Grasses*, another renowned investigative reporter introduces other ordinary people who dared. But he goes beyond Johnson in that he adds a portrait of a capitalist woman to show why economic freedom is unlikely to be followed by political freedom. See the *Washington Post* review on Amazon and www.seattletimes.nwsource.com/html/books/2008007142_mao20.html

Chen, Guidi and Wu Chunato. *Will the Boat Sink the Water?: The Life of China's Peasants* (2006) That this 2003 expose' done by a Chinese couple from rural China was almost immediately banned is not surprising, for it details the wide-spread exploitation of rural peasants by local party chiefs. That almost 10 million pirated copies have since been sold in China attests to the fact that it spoke truth to power. "Yet while some things have since changed, notably the lessening of the tax burden on farmers, the basic problems the Chens illuminated remain." See www.danwei.org/books/will_the_boat_sink_the_water_a.php

Chang, Leslie. *Factory Girls: From Village to City in a Changing China* (2008) "Chang spent two years in a gritty boomtown to put human faces on the workers who are fueling China's economic growth. The painstaking time she spent with the girls, drawing out their stories, is evident, as is the genuine affection she has for them and their spirit." That this book received plaudits from many major papers and authors such as Lisa See is not surprising, for it is a terrific read.

Zhang, Lijia. "Socialism Is Great!" A Worker's Memoir of the New China (2008) The author limits her memoir to the years between 16—when she had to leave high school and begin work in a long-range missile factory—and 26, when she was arrested for organizing her fellow workers to demonstrate in support of the 1989 Tiananmen Square protests. How/what she learned about politics and love in those years as well as her determination to get further education is as much her focus as is factory life.

Xinran. *The Good Women of China: Hidden Voices* (2002) The author relates the stories she heard from ordinary women who called in to talk about their problems on the radio show she hosted in 1989. This is one of those books that makes one's own problems seem trivial.

Min, Anchee. *Red Azalea* (1994) Those who have not read Min's now-classic story of her emotional and political education in the last years of the Cultural Revolution should dip into it at a library or bookstore rather than read excerpts online, for once started, it is difficult to put down.

FIC. Feng Zong-Pu. *The Everlasting Rock: A Novel* (1988) Although the suffering people endured during the Cultural

Revolution is much present, at the heart of the story is the love that develops between an ostracized 40-ish literature professor and a non-political doctor. *Note: In Elgin's public library, this distinguished Chinese author's novel is catalogued under the name Tsung.*

FIC. Bai, Hua. *The Remote Country of Women (Fiction from Modern China) (1994)* Bai juxtaposes the life of a young girl in a rural matrilineal community almost untouched by the Cultural Revolution with the story of a Red Guard who is becoming increasingly disillusioned with it. Especially revealing is the relationship that develops between them when they finally meet.

Namu, Yang Erche and Cristina Mathieu. *Leaving Mother Lake: A Girlhood at the Edge of the World (2004)* Namu's account of growing up in a truly matrilineal society in China's remote Himalayan foothills during the late 1960s and early '70s is fascinating. And her account of leaving to audition for a place in the Shanghai Music Conservatory at age 16 quite remarkable. Because Mathieu undoubtedly knew that any who read this book would want to know even more about a society in which men are used only for procreation, she includes her ethnographic study of it in an appendix. See www.sawnet.org/books.

FIC. Min, Anchee. *Becoming Madame Mao (2000)* A fascinating recreation of the life of Jiang Chang, wife to Mao and a political power in her own right by the author of *Red Azalea*

Chang, Jung. *Wild Swans: Three Daughters of China (1991)* Tracing the lives of three generations of women in 20th century China, this biography was resoundingly praised by the countless number of women and men who read it when it first appeared.

FIC. Chang, Lan S. *Inheritance: A Novel (2004)* Chang has written a complex story of three generations of a matriarchal family that mirrors the story of the China, a country that is embittered and divided. Although narrated by her daughter, Junan and the triangular relationship between herself, her husband and her sister are at center stage. Enriching the novel are "a Russian novel's worth of intriguing minor characters."

FIC. Epstein, Jennifer C. *The Painter from Shanghai (2008)* Beginning in early 20th century China, this novel recreates the long life of Pan Yuliang, a talented Chinese artist who was known for her provocative nude self-portraits. The focus of the first half is on her life as prostitute, the rest on her relationship with the the government official who buys her freedom and on her development as an artist. Also detailed is the reaction to her art at the beginning of the Cultural Revolution.

FIC. Tsukiyama, Gail. *Women of the Silk (1991)* Set in the early 1900s, the story covers 20 years in the life of a girl whose parents consigned her to work in a silk factory, where women formed close bonds.

FIC. Tsukiyama, Gail. *The Language of Threads (2000)* The sequel to *Women...*, *Language* begins when at age 27, the main character leaves the silk factory with a girl she is determined to care for. Simultaneously the Japanese are invading Hong Kong.

FIC. See, Lisa. *Snow Flower and the Secret Fan: A Novel (2006)* Are there any AAUW members who have yet to read this fascinating story about a complex friendship in 19th century China which details the secret language women in their remote area used to communicate and the horrific practice of footbinding?

JAPAN

Mackie, Vera. *Feminism in Modern Japan: Citizenship, Embodiment and Sexuality (2003)* Spanning from 1870 to the present, that this is "likely to be the standard text on the history of Japanese feminism for years" is not surprising, for there are few others that cover so much and none that do so as lucidly. For a superb 3-page review of it, see www.h-net.org/reviews/showpdf.php?id=11523. For more detail about the pivotal women in the pre-war period, see <http://dic.academic.ru/dic.nsf/enwiki/2610298>.

Birnbaum, Phyllis. *Modern Girls, Shining Stars, the Skies of Tokyo (1998)* "The five artists profiled in Birnbaum's biographical essays—two actresses, two writers and a painter—were noted not for any political involvement but rather for their talents, their beauty and their love affairs. Nevertheless, through the fearlessness of their art and their private lives, they, too, challenged the status quo in the early 20th century. Drawing on interviews, memoirs, newspaper reports, and these women's own creative works, Birnbaum has allowed them to shine forth in all of their contradictory brilliance: generous and petulant, daring and timid, prudent and foolish." —*NY Times Book Review*.

Iwao, Sumiko. *Japanese Women (1998)* Originally subtitled "Traditional Image and Changing Reality,"

Tanaka, Yukiko. *Contemporary Portraits of Japanese Women (1995)* A "look inside" each of these books' table of contents and indexes on Amazon will establish that both cover in depth the same topic: the changes that have occurred in women's lives since WWII vis-a-vis marriage, motherhood, employment, independence, old age and women's movements. A "look inside" each will also quickly establish the difference between them, which is that Iwao's prose is more academic. Both authors, however, have done extensive research.

Chambers, Veronica. *Kickboxing Geishas: How Modern Japanese Women Are Changing Their Nation (2007)* In spite of Chambers' failure to edit out personal asides irrelevant to her subject, her tendency to write as though she were speaking to teen buddies, and her misleading title, this is a book worth dipping into. A skilled interviewer, Chambers "teased out" revealing information from the many women (mostly young) that she interviewed and drew interesting conclusions from it. That she was interested in the same subjects considered by Iwao and Tanaka also illuminates that some changes that have occurred since they wrote.

FIC. Kirino, Natsuo. *Grotesque (2007)* The brutal murders of two Tokyo prostitutes leave a wake of unanswered questions about who they were, who their murderer is, and how their lives came to such an end, questions that are answered in an ingeniously layered narrative. This is not a lurid "who-done-it," however. Rather it is an indictment of a society that demands conformity to the extent that a beautiful girl is ostracized. But it is Kirino's psychological investigation into the female psyche, especially that of a sister still living, that put the book on this list.

FIC. Tsushima, Yuko. *The Shooting Gallery: & Other Stories* (1997) Unlike much contemporary Japanese fiction, this collection from a famous feminist writer is well-grounded in reality. Is it by some miracle also upbeat? No, nor is 99% of this country's fiction that focuses on women. Readers, however, would be making a mistake to pass on this selection because it deals with women less than content. To see first-hand just how nuanced and compelling this writer is, google the title, scroll down to Book Results at the bottom of the page. Clicking on the title there will bring up the first story and part of the second. But read the first in its entirety.

FIC. Tanizaki, Jun'ichiro. *A Cat, A Man, and Two Women* (1990) The title story of this slim collection of three is a must-read, even for those who don't like cats. Although it is one of this 20th century's Japanese literary greats' shortest works, "it is not short of complexities of relationships." And as those who have read Tanizaki's novels *Some Prefer Nettles* and *Quicksand* know, he understands women as well as men. Unlike those two novels, however, this short story is **amusing rather than somber**. See the *Look Inside* feature on Amazon to get hooked.

Iwasaki, Mineko. *Geisha of Gion: The Memoir of Mineko Iwasaki* (2002) Much in this memoir of the woman who was renowned for her artistry in the 1960s and '70s yet retired when she was but 25 will be familiar, for Golden based *Memoirs of a Geisha* on her. Yet it quickly becomes apparent that her personality is far different from that of Golden's main character. Different, too, are key aspects of geishas' lives, as is attested to by the fact that Iwasaki won her lawsuit against him for slander and defamation.

FIC. Fumiko, Enchi. *The Waiting Years* (2002) Awarded Japan's highest literary honor, this novel revolves around a woman who is "a paragon of wifely submission, who suffers because it is her duty to suffer," her philandering husband who is "a paragon of selfish arrogance," and his mistresses, who, like his wife, are waiting for their lives to change. What makes the story such a riveting read is the psychological interplay between the characters. That the ending is immensely satisfying is but icing on the cake. See www.incurablegophilia.wordpress.com/2008/09/23/enchi-fumiko-the-waiting-years

FIC. Lebra, Joyce. *The Scent of Sake* (2009) Set in the first half of the 19th century, this well-researched novel offers a glimpse into life in feudal Japan. At the heart of the story, however, is a girl from one of the sake-brewing dynasties with the mindset of a woman from the 10th century: rather than being submissive, "with courage, cunning, brilliance and skill" she rises to become the head of her family's sake-brewing dynasty at a time it was believed that if a woman even approached a brewery, she would pollute the liquor.

FIC. Vance-Watkins, Lequita & Aratani Mariko, eds. *White Flash, Black Rain: Women of Japan Relive the Bomb* (1995) A powerful collection of prose and poetry doing just what the subtitle says

Nasu, Masamoto. *Children of the Paper Crane: The Story of Sadako Sasaki and Her Struggle with the A-Bomb Disease* (1991) At 232 pages, this book covers much more than how the legend of the paper crane led Sadako to try to fold a thousand. Detailed are the devastating effects of radiation sickness that she (and many others) suffered, the effects of the bomb on her family and the inspiring story of how her fate affected the nation and eventually led to the development of the Children's Movement for Peace and a statue of her in Hiroshima's Peace Park.

FIC. Bock, Dennis. *The Ash Garden* (2001) Set 50 years after the atomic bomb was dropped on Hiroshima, this novel explores the legacy of it through the lives of three characters: a physicist who left Germany for better job opportunities and became one of the scientists who developed the bomb; a Jewish woman who fled Europe, ended up in a Canadian refugee camp and in 1943 married the physicist; a Japanese documentary film maker who, at age 6, was at Ground Zero and lost not only her entire family but half her face. Each has in some way been scarred by war, but only the Japanese is well aware of it. Although the film maker and physicist meet early in the book, their pasts that brought them to the present are related in different sections. It is, however, their relationship in the present that is the most thought-provoking part of the novel. That the author has the soul of a poet but further enhances the read. See www.lancetter.com/Archives_Books_fiction_Ashgarden.htm and www.seattleweekly.com/2001-12-12/food/nuclear-family.

FIC. Talarigo, Jeff. *The Pearl Diver* (2005) In 1948, a 19-year-old pearl diver's life takes an unbelievably tragic turn when she is discovered to have leprosy and is subsequently banished to a leper colony for the rest of her life. "Why would one even begin such a downer?" one might ask. For the answer, turn to the *Look Inside* feature on Amazon and begin reading. Not only is Talarigo's prose compelling; such is the pearl diver's strength that one just knows she will not be defeated by the hand dealt her. **Note:** *Those who finish this novel wanting to know just how true to life it was can turn to John Taymen's *Colony: The Harrowing True Story of the Exiles of Molokai* (2006).*

THE KOREAS

FIC. Talarigo, Jeff. *The Ginseng Hunter* (2008) Set in the present along the border with China, North Korea's political oppression is given a human face via the tales a young North Korean refugee tells a Chinese ginseng hunter.

FIC. Yun, Mia. *House of the Winds (Emerging Voices. NIF)* (1998) Via a series of vignettes, Yun writes of her childhood in South Korea in the '50s and '60s. Central it was her mother.

Annotations for the remainder of the titles on this list will be done at a later date.

RUSSIA / CENTRAL ASIA

Seierstad, A. *The Angels of Grozny: Orphans of a Forgotten War* (2008) essays about Chechnya

Drakulic, S. *How We Survived Communism & Even Laughed* (1999)

Walton, C. *Little Tenement on the Volga* (2001) post-Soviet Russia

FIC. Ulitskaya, L. *Sonechka: A Novella and Stories* (2005) post-Soviet Russia

Zarina, L. *The Red Fog: A Memoir of Life in the Soviet Union* (2006) Latvia during/after WWII

Bek, A. *Life of a Russian Woman Doctor: A Siberian Memoir, 1869-1954* (2004)

FIC. Birdsell, S. *Katya* (2004) Mennonite community in Czarist & Revolutionary Russia

Thubron, C. *The Lost Heart of Asia* (1994) post-Soviet Central Asia

Bibish. *The Dancer from Khiva: One Muslim Woman's Quest for Freedom* (2008) contemporary Uzbekistan

FIC. Said, K. *Ali and Nino: A Love Story* (2000) Central Asia during WWI & Russian Revolution

EUROPE

Zassenhaus, H. *Walls: Resisting the Third Reich* (1974) autobiography of a German nominated for the Nobel Prize

Nolden & Malino, eds. *Voices of the Diaspora: Jewish Women Writing in Contemporary Europe* (2005)

FIC. Bajc-Poderegin, M. *The Dawning: A Novel (Emerging Voices)* (1998) multi-generational Serbian saga

DRAMA. Enslar, E. *Necessary Targets: A Story of Women and War* (2001) Bosnia

Hunt, S. *This Was Not Our War: Bosnian Women Reclaiming the Peace* (2005)

FIC. McCann, C. *Zoli* (2007) Slovakia under Communism; loosely based on the life of a Roma poetess

Penn, S. *Solidarity's Secret: The Women Who Defeated Communism in Poland* (2005)

LATIN AMERICA / CARIBBEAN

Chasteen, J. *Americanos: Latin America's Struggle for Independence* (2008)

Ruiz, V. *Latina Legacies: Identity, Biography and Community* (2005) profiles of 15 exemplary Latinas

Kellogg, S. *Weaving the Past: A History of Latin America's Indigenous Women* (2005)

Gonzales, & Kampworth, eds. *Radical Women in Latin America: Left and Right* (2001)

Baldez, L. *Why Women Protest: Women's Movements in Chile* (2002)

FIC. Richards, C. *Sweet Country* (1986) during Chile's 1973 coup d'état

Partnoy, A. *The Little School: Tales of Disappearance and Survival in Argentina* (1986)

FIC. Thorton, L. *Imagining Argentina* (1991) imagining the "disappeared"

Gates, E. *Colombian Women: The Struggle Out of Silence* (2008)

Betancourt, I. *Until Death Do Us Part: My Struggle to Reclaim Colombia* (2008)

FIC. Tuck, L. *News from Paraguay* (2004) Nat. Book Award. Highly recommended as historically accurate by Donna Sproston, who has studied the country's tumultuous history because of her daughter's work there

FIC. Benner & Leonard, eds. *Fire from the Andes: Short Fiction by Women from Bolivia, Ecuador & Peru* (1998)

FIC. Zapata, C., ed. Intro, I. Allende. *Short Stories by Latin American Women: The Magic and the Real* (2003)

Tala, M. *Hear My Testimony: Maria Teresa Tala Human Rights Activist of El Salvador* (1999)

FIC. Benitez, S. *Bitter Grounds* (1997) El Salvador

Gorkin, Pineda & Leal. *From Grandmother to Granddaughter: Salvadoran Women's Stories* (2000)

Sanford, V. *Buried Secrets: Truth and Human Rights in Guatemala* (2003)

FIC. Urrea, L. *The Hummingbird's Daughter* (2005) late 19th century, pre-revolutionary Mexico

FIC. Esquivel, L. *Like Water for Chocolate* (1995) Mexico, early 20th century

FIC. Villasenor, V. *Wild Steps of Heaven* (1996) Mexico, early 20th century

FIC. Castellanos, R. *The Book of Lamentations* (1962) Chiapas region of Mexico, 1930s

FIC. Nunez, E., ed. *Stories from Blue Latitudes: Caribbean Women Writers at Home and Abroad* (2005)

FIC. Alvarez, J. *In the Time of Butterflies* (1994) Dominican Repub. during Trujillo dictatorship

FIC. Danticat, E. *Krick! Krack!* (2004) short stories, Haiti during Duvalier's dictatorship

FIC. Nunez, E. *Bruised Hibiscus* (2002) Trinidad

FIC. Lovelace, E. *A Brief Conversation and Other Stories* (2003) Trinidad

FIC. Cezair-Thompson, M. *The True Story of Paradise: A Novel* (1999) Jamaica

FIC. Cliff, M. *Abeng* (1984) Jamaica

FIC. Berg, M., ed. *Open Your Eyes and Soar: Cuban Women Writing Now* (2003)

MISCELLANEOUS

Pilkington, D. *Rabbit-Proof Fence* (2002) Australian Aboriginals, 1930s

Haines. *Cold River Spirits: The Legacy of an Athabaskan-Irish Family from Alaska's Yukon River* (2000)

THE WORLD

Seager, J. *The Penguin Atlas of Women in the World: Fourth Ed.* (2008)

Stiehm, J. *Champions for Peace: Women Winners of the Nobel Peace Prize* (2006)

Liswood, L. *Women World Leaders: Fifteen Great Politicians Tell their Stories.* (2007 updated)

Plumez, J. *Mother Power: Discover the Difference that Women Have Made All Over the World* (2002)

Esterling, M. *They Changed Their Worlds: Nine Women of Asia* (1987)

Goldman, P., ed. *Imagining Ourselves: Global Voices from a New Generation of Women* (2006)

Ahmed, L. *Women and Gender in Islam* (1999)

Simone, F. N, ed. *On Shifting Ground: Muslim Women in the Global Era* (2005)

Rieff, D. *A Bed for the Night: Humanitarianism in Crises* (2003)

Moorhead, C. *Human Cargo: A Journey Among Refugees* (2006)

Afkhami, M. *Women in Exile* (1994) refugees in the U.S.

Parrott & Cummings. *Sexual Enslavement of Girls and Women Worldwide* (2009)

McIntosh, E. *Sisterhood of Spies: The Women of OSS* (1998)

Anstee, M. *Never Learn to Type: A Woman at the United Nations* (2004)

Jablonski, R. *Queen of the Oil Club: The Intrepid Wanda Jablonski and the Power of Information* (2008)

Polk & Tiegreen. *Women of Discovery: A Celebration of Intrepid Women Who Explored the World* (2001)

WORLD TODAY SERIES (Stryker-Post Publications)

Updated and published in August of each year, each volume in this series provides an introduction to a section of the world.

Included for each country are reports on its history, current government, politics, culture, and economic problems/prospects as well as a map of its geographical setting. Native travel guides to whom I've handed photocopied sections have proclaimed the information about their countries accurate and the analysis excellent.

Currently, *World Today* sections the globe as follows:

Western Europe; Nordic, Central and Eastern Europe; Russia and the Commonwealth of Independent States; Africa; The Middle East and South Asia; East and Southeast Asia; Latin America; Canada; USA and the World.

To find the most current edition online is eWhen searching online, the entry must read, for example, as follows: *Latin America 2008 (World Today Series Latin America)*.

Note: This list is possible due to extensive research/reading by Barbara Evans of the Elgin Area Branch, who also did the annotations. Additional titles were suggested by Jan DeYoung and Donna Sproston of the Monmouth Branch and Carol Dotseth of the Cedar Falls, Iowa, book group.

While Barbara has read a respectable number of the books she listed and has skimmed many others, there are more than a few that she only was able to read extensively about. Though included from the latter category were only those that were highly recommended, it is likely that some titles should probably be omitted when the list is updated. If you read one that you think should be or if you have additional titles to recommend, please so inform **Barbara Evans** via **evanselgin@yahoo.com**. Do keep in mind that the focus of those you recommend should be on **women** in other countries, people who have worked to better these women's lives and/or American women who have had a significant impact on the world.

Because there were so many books focusing on the lives of women who had left their countries and were faced with adjusting to live in new

ones, we decided to do a separate listing of them for next year's state convention.