

Achebe, Chinua. *Things fall apart*. 181 pp.

A novel about Nigerian tribal life before and after the coming of colonialism. First published in 1958, just two years before Nigeria declared independence from Great Britain, the book eschews the obvious temptation of depicting pre-colonial life as a kind of Eden. Instead, Achebe sketches a world in which violence, war, and suffering exist, but are balanced by a strong sense of tradition, ritual, and social coherence.

CRC-Circulating Books PR9387.9.A3 T5 1992

Alexie, Sherman. *Reservation blues*. 306 pp.

A stranger arrives on the reservation carrying a magic guitar, which he's been given as part of his bargain with "the Gentleman" for blues immortality. Now he's trying to lose guitar, devil and deal. Taking the instrument off his hands, Thomas soon forms an all-Indian R&B band with Victor and Junior. The group, Coyote Springs, plays small clubs and bars and eventually goes on tour. They even attract their own groupies-white women Betty and Veronica and Indian sisters Chess and Checkers Warm Water. Will they succeed and, if they do, will they lose their souls?

CRC-Circulating Books PS3551.L35774 R74 1996

Briscoe, Connie. *A long way from home*. 400 pp.

A black woman's story, from slavery to freedom. She is Clara whose mother was a maid for President Madison. When he dies Clara is sold along with other chattels and the novel follows her ups and downs before and after the Civil War.

CRC-Circulating Books PS3552.R4894 L6 2000

Cao, Lan. *Monkey bridge*. 260 pp.

A memoir of a Vietnamese refugee. The narrator, Mai Nguyen, was 13 when a helicopter lifted her from Saigon. Scenes of war written in lyrical Oriental style alternate with reflections on America, such as the obsession with winning and the usurping of parental authority by teachers. By the author of *Everything You Need to Know about Asian Americans*.

CRC-Circulating Books PS3553.A5823 M6 1997

Chaudhuri, Amit. *Freedom song: three novels*. 433 pp.

Three novels by an Indian writer, featuring Indians at home and abroad. In the title novel, *Freedom Song*, the protagonist is a rebellious young man who has joined the communist party. In *Afternoon Raag*, he is an Indian student in Oxford. In *A Strange and Sublime Address*, he is a small boy visiting family in Calcutta.

CRC-Circulating Books PR9499.3.C4678 F74 1999

Chu, Louis. *Eat a bowl of tea*. 250 pp.

The first Chinese American novel set in the bachelor society of New York's Chinatown. The story revolves around the marriage of Ben Loy, a Chinese American sent to China to marry, and his arranged bride, Mei Oi, and the scandal and problems that arise from his inability to consummate the marriage.

CRC-Special Book Displa PS3553.H776 E3 1986

Danticat, Edwidge. *Breath, eyes, memory*. 234 pp.

The culture shock of Sophie Coco, a 12-year-old Haitian girl from the provinces, summoned to New York by her mother whom she hardly knows and who is toiling in a nursing home to provide for the family back home.

CRC-Circulating Books PS3554.A5815 B74 1994

Divakaruni, Chitra Banerjee. *The mistress of spices*. 338 pp.

A magic realism tale about Tilo, a woman from India, who is given immortality by the gods as long as she remains chaste. In her old age, Tilo ends up in California, running a spice shop and helping immigrants. One day enters Raven, a handsome American, and Tilo transforms herself into a beautiful woman for a night of love. Now she must pay the price.

CRC-Circulating Books PS3554.I86 M47 1998

Duong, Thu Huong. *Memories of a pure spring*. Translated from Vietnamese by Nina McPherson and Phan Huy Duong. 340 pp.

This novel tells the story of a singer and her composer husband and explores their relationships passionate growth in the midst of war. Huong vividly depicts the betrayal she and a generation of Vietnamese artists and writers experienced after the war: the conditions inside re-education prison camps, and the corruption at the heart of the new regime they brought to power.

CRC-Circulating Books PL4378.9 .D79 2000

Eugenides, Jeffrey. *Middlesex*. 529 pp.

Spanning three generations and two continents, the story winds from the small Greek village of Smyrna to the smoggy, crime-riddled streets of Detroit, past historical events, and through family secrets. The author's eloquent writing captures the essence of Cal, a hermaphrodite, who sets out to discover himself by tracing the story of his family back to his grandparents.

Pulitzer Prize, Fiction, 2003.

CRC-Circulating Books PS3555.U4 M53 2002

Fisher, Vardis. *Children of God: an American epic*. 769 pp.

A historical fiction of Joseph Smith and Brigham Young, the founders of the Latter Day Saints religion (Mormons), and their persecution from Missouri in the 1830's.

CRC-Circulating Books PS3511.I744 C47

Garden, Nancy. *The year they burned the books*. 247 pp.

While trying to come to terms with her own lesbian feelings, Jamie, a high-school senior and editor of the school newspaper, finds herself in the middle of a battle with a group of townspeople over the new health education curriculum.

CRC-Circulating Books PS3557 .A71124 Y43 1999

Glancy, Diane. *Pushing the bear: a novel of the Trail of Tears*. 241 pp.

The 900-mile march of Indians deported from their homes to resettlement territory in Oklahoma in 1838. It is told from many view points, including a woman who develops a relationship with a white soldier. Of the 13,000 marchers, a quarter died. A first novel by a writer of Cherokee and European ancestry.

CRC-Circulating Books PS3557.L294 P87 1996

Gurnah, Abdulrazak. *By the sea*. 245 pp.

When Saleh Omar arrives in England from Zanzibar as a refugee, he hopes that he can leave behind his old life, marred by prison, death, and ruin. Instead, he encounters Latif, whose family's feud with Saleh destroyed nearly everyone involved. The two men's stories unwind slowly and gracefully, bringing the reader into a darkened room with the two old foes as they call forth ghosts, only to discover that the truth is often harder to believe than lies.

CRC-Circulating Books PR9399.9.G87 B95 2001

Hagedorn, Jessica Tarahata. *Dogeaters*. 251 pp.

A montage of Filipino people during the Marcos era and the circumstances that define their motivations. It is a metaphoric album of raw snapshots: Joey Sands, the classic victim, son of a prostitute and an African-American soldier; the adolescent Rio Gonzaga, who reassesses the dynamics of her well-to-do family and concludes that she will be different; the military henchmen, the movie stars, the obscenely wealthy; and, of course, the sacrificial opposition leaders.

CRC-Circulating Books PS3558.A3228 D64 1991

Hardy, James Earl. *2nd time around*. 229 pp.

The impact on a black homosexual relationship when one partner becomes famous while the other discovers he is a father. Sequel to *B-boy blues*.

CRC-Circulating Books PS3558.A62375 A613 1996

Hosseini, Khaled. *The kite runner*. 324 pp.

Traces the unlikely friendship of a wealthy Afghan youth and a servant's son in a tale that spans the final days of Afghanistan's monarchy through the atrocities of the present day.

CRC-Circulating Books PS3608.O832 K58 2003

Jen, Gish. *Typical American*. 296 pp.

As foreign students in New York, Ralph Chang, "Older Sister" Teresa, and Ralph's future wife Helen become trapped in the United States when the Communists assume control of China in 1948. Banding together, the three of them innocently plan to achieve the American dream, while retaining their Chinese values. Inevitably, the family--the Chinese symbol of unity--suffers more than a few cracks along the way. This is truly "an American story"--a poignant and deftly told tale of immigrants coming to terms with the possibilities of America and with their own limitations, foibles, and the necessity of forgiveness.

CRC-Circulating Books PS3560.E474 T9 1992

Jin, Ha. *Waiting*. 308 pp.

The poignant dilemma of an ordinary man who misses the best opportunities in his life simply by trying to do his duty as defined first by his traditional Chinese parents and later by the Communist Party. Reflecting the changes in Chinese communism from the '60s to the '80s, the novel focuses on Lin Kong, a military doctor who agrees, as his mother is dying, to an arranged marriage. His bride, Shuyu, turns out to be a country woman who looks far older than her 26 years and who has, to Lin's great embarrassment, lotus (bound) feet. While Shuyu remains at Lin's family home in Goose Village, nursing first his mother and then his ailing father, and bearing Lin a daughter, Lin lives far away in an army hospital compound, visiting only once a year. Caught in a loveless marriage, Lin is attracted to a nurse, Manna Wu, an attachment forbidden by communist strictures. According to local Party rules, Lin cannot divorce his wife without her permission until they have been separated for 18 years.

National Book Award, 1999.

CRC-Circulating Books PS3560.I6 W34 2000

Kim, Ronyoung. *Clay walls: a novel*. 301 pp.

A view of two generations of Korean-Americans in pre- and post-World War II Los Angeles. Born a yangban, or an aristocrat, Haesu is determined never to work for anyone else. Her husband, Chun, starts a successful produce business and eventually buys them a house, but Haesu always dreams of going home. Her hatred of anything Japanese is unwavering, especially after she visits Korea and sees that a permanent return is impossible as long as the Japanese are present. When Chun loses their savings and eventually leaves them, Haesu refuses charity and spends endless hours doing piecework embroidery at their table because a yangban would never work outside the home. Haesu's daughter, Faye, must find her place between her mother's world and the United States outside her front door.

CRC-Circulating Books PS3561.I4153 C55 1986

LaDuke, Winona. *Last Standing Woman*. 303 pp.

A novel on the Anishinaabe Indians, tracing their struggle to restore their culture and regain their land. From the Great Sioux Uprising of the 1860s, to the 1970s occupation by Indian militants of the Minnesota White Earth Reservation, to the present problems of alcoholism and sexual abuse. A first novel.

CRC-Circulating Books PS3562.A268 L37 1997

Le, Thi Diem Thuy. *The gangster we are all looking for*. 160 pp.

The narrator is only six when she and her father and four other Vietnamese men arrive in San Diego, after being sponsored by a well-meaning but condescending American family. Her mother, who was left behind in the confusion of their dangerous escape, finally joins them, but their lives remain unsettled, perplexing, even demoralizing in the face of undisguised prejudice and resentment. As le's narrator grows into adolescence, her perspective expands accordingly, illuminating not only her parents' passionate but violently troubled marriage, a much-objected-to union between a "Catholic schoolgirl from the South" and a "Buddhist gangster from the North," but also the many horrific and indelible psychic consequences of war.

CRC-Circulating Books PS3612.E2 G36 2003

Lee, Jayson. *Journey of the wild geese*.

A young couple embarks on a dangerous and lonely journey from Korea to Hawaii sugar plantations in 1903, from California farms to railroad construction sites and from coal mines in Wyoming to a small farming town in Utah. They journey through countless hurdles and ordeals: poverty, racism, the Great Depression and WWII. Their children, who were born in America, face their own problems: racism from mainstream America and their identity crisis. Even in the harshest times, the couple continues sowing fragile human hopes and dreams for themselves and their children. And they soar high through the thick clouds of human crisis and tragedy to look for sunny days.

CRC-Circulating Books PS3562 .E4 2006

Maalouf, Amin. *Leo Africanus*. Translated by Peter Sluglett. 360 pp.

Written in the form of a memoir, this historical novel explores the meeting of two worlds--Islam and Christendom--through the adventures of real-life Arab traveler and geographer Hassan al-Wazzan. Born in Spain just as the Moors were expelled in 1492, Hassan grows up in North Africa and as a young man crosses the Sahara to Timbuctu, eventually reaching Cairo on the eve of its conquest by the Ottomans. In the last of his sojourns, Hassan arrives in the Rome of Pope Leo X, who christens him Leo Africanus. Chronicling the loves and adventures of his wandering protagonist, the author deftly weaves into Hassan's account a score of the traveler's more famous contemporaries, including Columbus, the Medicis, Martin Luther, and Suleiman the Magnificent.

CRC-Circulating Books PQ3979.2.M28 L413 1989

Madden, Deirdre. *Hidden symptoms: a novel*. 142 pp.

After her brother's brutal murder, a twenty-two-year-old university student in Belfast is torn by her conflicting feelings of spirituality, as her religion tortures more than comforts her.

CRC-Circulating Books PR6063.A288 H5 1986

Makine, Andrei. *Dreams of my Russian summers*. Translated from the French by Geoffrey Strachan. 241 pp.

A coming-of-age story which describes young Andrei's summers with his French grandmother Charlotte in the remote Russian village of Saranza. She came to Russia as a Red Cross nurse during World War I and fell in love with a Russian lawyer who went off to the front and later died a premature death from his war wounds. Charlotte and Andrei spend many summer evenings sharing her memories of turn-of-the-century Paris. As the adolescent Andrei struggles with his identity--is he Russian or French?--he discovers that it was possible for Charlotte to live in such a foreign land and retain her "Frenchness" because of her love for her husband. Andrei finally reconciles these contrasting facets of his identity and eventually emigrates to France.

CRC-Circulating Books PQ2673.A38416 T4713 1998

Min, Anchee. *Becoming Madame Mao: a novel*. 337 pp.

CRC-Circulating Books PS3563.I4614 B43 2000

Miyakawa, Edward. *Tule Lake*. 328 pp.

Tule Lake is the first Japanese American novel to portray the passionate and at times desperate struggle for justice and freedom from within the confines of America's concentration camps by those who refused to cooperate with the internment of 120,000 of their fellow Americans of Japanese Ancestry.

CRC-Circulating Books PS3563.I89 T8

Morrison, Toni. *The bluest eye*. 215 pp.

It is the story of eleven-year-old Pecola Breedlove, a black girl in an America whose love for its blond, blue-eyed children can devastate all others. She's spat upon, ridiculed, and ultimately raped and impregnated by her own father. No wonder she yearns to be the very opposite of what she is--to be a white child, possessed of the blondest hair and the bluest eye, so that she will be beautiful, so that people will look at her, so that her world will be different.

Oprah's book club

CRC-Circulating Books PS3563.O8749 B55 2000

Nahai, Gina Barkhordar. *Cry of the peacock*. 341 pp.

Following a family of Jews through seven generations, from the 1780s in Persia to contemporary Iran, the story begins with Esther the Soothsayer. Versed in magic and witchcraft, Esther can foretell the future. She appears in the dreams and visions of her progeny, including her granddaughter, Peacock, born in the late 1860s, whose life spans well over a century. Nahai weaves together the brutal

history of Muslims, Jews, the shahs and colonial forces that played a part in transforming Persia into Iran, using fables and legends to give much of the novel an exotic, fairy-tale effect. But as the story reaches the 20th century, readers will encounter the exiled Pahlavi shah, Mossadeq and Khomeini, and recognize recent events.

CRC-Circulating Books PS3552.A6713 C79 2000

Ngugi wa Thiong'o. *Weep not, child*. 184 pp.

This is a simple and powerful tale of the effects of the Mau Mau war on individuals and families in Kenya. Two brothers must decide where their loyalties lie; Njoroge, the dreamer and accomplished student, finds it hard to give up schooling and is drawn relentlessly into turmoil.

CRC-Circulating Books PR9381.9.N45 W4 1971

Otsuka, Julie. *When the emperor was divine: a novel*. 143 pp.

After a woman whose husband was arrested on suspicion of conspiracy sees notices posted around her neighborhood in Berkeley instructing Japanese residents to evacuate, she moves with her son and daughter to an internment camp, abruptly severing her ties with her community. The next three years are spent in filthy, cramped and impersonal lodgings as the family is shuttled from one camp to another. They return to Berkeley after the war to a home that has been ravaged by vandals; it takes time for them to adjust to life outside the camps and to come to terms with the hostility they face. When the children's father re-enters the book, he is more of a symbol than a character, reduced to a husk by interrogation and abuse. Broken by circumstance and prejudice, they will continue to pay, in large and small ways, for the shape of their eyes.

CRC-Circulating Books PS3615.T88 W48 2003

Pamuk, Orhan. *My name is Red*. 417 pp.

In 16th-century Istanbul, master miniaturist and illuminator of books Enishte Effendi is commissioned to illustrate a book celebrating the sultan. Soon he lies dead at the bottom of a well, and how he got there is the crux of this novel. A number of narrators give testimony and stories accumulate and become more detailed as the novel progresses, giving the reader not only a nontraditional murder mystery but insight into the mores and customs of the time. In addition, this is both an examination of the way figurative art is viewed within Islam and a love story that demonstrates the tricky mechanics of marriage laws.

CRC-Circulating Books PL248.P34 B4613 2002

Senna, Danzy. *Caucasia*. 353 pp.

A novel on children of mixed marriages. The protagonists are two sisters in Boston, daughters of a black professor and a white woman. One daughter passes for black and attends black school while her sister passes for white and attends white school. But the classmates know and when it comes to bigotry, equality reigns among the races. A debut in fiction.

CRC-Circulating Books PS3569.E618 C3 1998

Roy, Arundhati. *The god of small things*. 321 pp.

The story of an Indian family during the 1969 Communist disturbances in Kerala province. It is told through the eyes of a boy and his sister who are the children of a rich rubber planter. Politics, family drama, illicit love. A debut in fiction.

CRC-Circulating Books PR9499.3.R59 G63 1997

Rushdie, Salman. *Satanic Verses*. 552 pp.

Two actors from India, "prancing" Gibreel Farishta and "buttony, pursed" Saladin Chamcha, are flying across the English Channel when the first of many implausible events occurs: the jet explodes. As the two men plummet to the earth, "like titbits of tobacco from a broken old cigar," they argue, sing and are transformed. When they are found on an English beach, the only survivors of the blast, Gibreel has sprouted a halo while Saladin has developed hooves, hairy legs and the beginnings of what seem like horns. What follows is a series of allegorical tales that challenges assumptions about both human and divine nature.

CRC-Circulating Books PR9499.3.R8 S28 1989

Rutherford, Edward. *The princes of Ireland: the Dublin saga*. 776 pp.

A sweeping panorama steeped in the tragedy and glory that is Ireland, epitomizes the power and richness of Rutherford's storytelling magic. The saga begins in tribal, pre-Christian Ireland during the reign of the fierce and mighty High kings at Tara, with the fate of two lovers, the princely Conall and the ravishing Deirdre, whose travails cleverly echo the ancient Celtic legend of Cuchulainn.

CRC-Circulating Books PR6068.U88 P75 2004

Shaykh, Hanan. *Women of sand and myrrh*. Translated by Catherine Cobham. 280 pp.

Suha lives away from her home, war-torn Beirut, yet longs for the freedoms she had in Beirut: Why should she be confronted in the markets because she isn't covered? Why is she forbidden to drive? What part does her anger at this place and her overwhelming unhappiness with her husband play in her involvement in a lesbian relationship, or does it? Tamr, a native, sees the freedoms men have and wonders why those doors are closed to her. Even when she does succeed in opening a business, she is ever watchful for the self-appointed guards who will try to shut her down. Suzanne, from the United States, is excused for many of her actions because she is not an Arab. The unhappiness of her marriage is played out through a multitude of affairs. When her husband's job ends, will she be able to go back to the United States and be just another middle-aged woman? Wealthy, unhappy Nur wants only to be allowed to travel, but her husband has her passport. With all her money, she sits in a glass house and feels her dissatisfaction deepen.

CRC-Circulating Books PJ7862.H356 W66 1992

Tan, Amy. *The Joy Luck Club*. 288 pp.

Four mothers, four daughters, four families whose histories shift with the four winds depending on who's "saying" the stories. In 1949 four Chinese women, recent immigrants to San Francisco, begin meeting to eat dim sum, play mahjong, and talk. United in shared unspeakable loss and hope, they call themselves the Joy Luck Club. Forty years later, the stories and history continue as their daughters, born and raised in America, narrate their stories.

CRC-Circulating Books PS3570.A48 J6 1989

Walker, Alice. *The color purple*. 288 pp.

A beautiful, difficult, and moving story about a shy and abused Southern black woman's struggle to create an identity, a feeling of self-worth, and love. The novel was praised for the depth of its female characters and for its eloquent use of black English vernacular.

Pulitzer Prize in 1983

CRC-Circulating Books PS3573.A425 C6 2003

Wolverton, Terry. *Bailey's beads: a novel*. 185 pp.

A lesbian lies dying with her mother and her lover in attendance, but separately. The hostility of the two women is such they cannot be in the same room at once. Eventually, the pain of having to face their sorrow alone will force them together.

CRC-Circulating Books PS3573.O573 B35 1996

Yoshikawa, Eiji. *The Heike story*. Translated from the Japanese by Fuki Wooyenaka Utamatsu. 626 pp.

Kyoto in the twelfth century was a magnificent city, but crime, disorder, and lust were rampant. The people were abused by the nobility, while the armed Buddhist monks terrorized court and commoner alike. In despair, the Emperor called upon the Heike and Genji clans to quell civil disturbances. Although the clans succeeded, they quarreled over the spoils of war and plunged the country into a century of warfare. This novel describes the rise to power of Kiyomori of the Heike clan during this turbulent time.

CRC-Circulating Books PL842.O75 H4 E5