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New and Notable Books

By Terry Hong, *Special to AsianWeek*, Aug 29, 2003



Wild Swans: Three Daughters of China

By Jung Chang (Touchstone / Simon & Schuster)

The re-release of the 10-million copy-strong best-selling memoir about three generations of Chinese women, opens with a brand-new introduction by the author. First published in 1991, Chang chronicles the lives of her concubine

grandmother, her Communist mother and her own life that began as a Red Guard.



Rules of the House

By Tsering Wangmo Dhompa (Apogee Press)

"It is not the accuracy of the story that concerns us," the author writes in the title's opening poem. "But who gets to tell it." Dhompa captures her fractured self through explorations of her Tibetan heritage, her immigrant coming of age and all the stories in

between in this elliptical collection.



Asian/Pacific Islander American Women: A Historical Anthology

Edited by Shirley Hune and Gail M. Nomura (NYU Press)

TOP STORIES

[Washington Journal: Dreams Past, Present and Future](#)

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[Still Shrimping](#)

By Irwin A. Tang, Aug 29, 2003

[Lead, Not Divide](#)

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[Economy and Direction Overshadow AAJA Convention](#)

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[Jury Selection Continues in Sikh American Shooting](#)

By Beth DeFalco, Aug 29, 2003

AsianWeek!



Make sure you get this one into your library - it's the very first collection of historical writings by and about APA women. It's about rethinking our collective past as immigrant wives and picture brides, recovering our history both oral and written, contesting gender roles, creating "hybrid" lives, reshaping our communities after war and negotiating ourselves in the brave new world of globalization, work and motherhood.

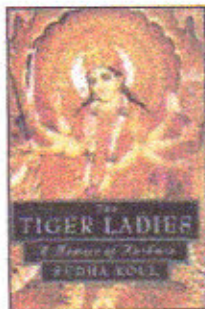
Out



By Natsuo Kirino, translated by Stephen Snyder (Kodansha International)

Forget your stereotypical visions of the meek and timid Japanese housewife who waits for her salaryman husband with slippers in hand and dinner on the table. Meet Masako and her fellow night-shift food processing plant co-workers who join forces to help the hapless Yayoi dispose of her worthless, abusive husband whom she strangles out of sheer frustration. The book is a heart-pounding, piercing look at the Japanese underworld, replete with badly-dressed yakuza, kept women and bumbling detectives.

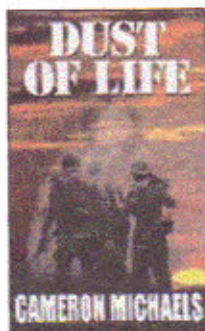
The Tiger Ladies: A Memoir of Kashmir



By Sudha Koul (Bluestreak / Beacon Press)

Koul captures the lives of four generations of women in her native Kashmir, a tiny country caught between India and Pakistan since the Partition of 1947, the year of her birth. She weaves a magical childhood filled with mouth-watering scents, folk tales and family celebrations together with the unresolved political and religious battles that threaten the very existence of a most fragile country.

Dust of Life



By Cameron Michaels (Bellwether Publishing)

The book, apparently "based 80-90 percent on real stories," is admittedly over-the-top in a Miss Saigon sort of way. But the Donna/Mai story is everything Hollywood is searching for - so no surprise that it's supposedly been optioned to be made into a major motion picture. Donna is the lovely American girl mourning

the loss of her father; Mai is Donna's former self, a tortured little girl desperately trying to survive the brutality of the Vietnam War as an unwanted, GI-fathered, hapa cast-off.



**Spam@ Cans, Rice Balls and Pearls:
Snippets of Memory from World
War II**

By Bruce Muench (TurnKey Press)

A rather quirky, earnest memoir of sorts - although Muench won't mind if you call it a novel because he admits that "there is some fiction to it."

Spam@ Cans follows a 17-year-old boy in the U.S. Navy during World War II and his unlikely relationship with a young Japanese man whom he meets by chance during a post-war trial.



**Culture and Resistance:
Conversations with Edward W. Said**

By Edward W. Said and David Barsamian (South End Press)

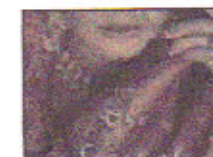
An intriguing collection of interviews with one of the most brilliant minds today. Originally broadcast on KGNU in Boulder, Colo., the interviews cover such topics as the so-called peace process, the 2000 Palestinian uprising and terrorism. Battling leukemia since the early 1990s, Said refuses to be silenced. Indeed, with such legacies as this book, his words will live on indefinitely.



Invisible Gardens

By Julie Shigekuni (Thomas Dunne Books / St. Martin's Press)

The follow-up to the award-winning *A Bridge Between Us*, Shigekuni's newest novel tells the haunting story of Lily Soto, a young Japanese American woman who appears to have the perfect life with her adoring husband, their two perfect children, a sympathetic next-door neighbor and a new professorship. But that perfection falls apart when a fellow Japanese American colleague challenges her very being, and she all-too-quickly enters into a desperate affair with him.



The Feast of Roses

By Indu Sundareshan (Atria Books / Simon & Schuster)

The woman who inspired the Taj Mahal had all but been lost to history until Sundaesan recreated her in her historical novel *The Twentieth Wife*, released earlier this year in paperback. Sundaesan continues the 17th-century Indian love story between the Emperor Jahangir and the woman who becomes his 20th and last wife, the only woman he marries for love at the ripe old age of 34. Living amidst vicious rivals for both power and attention, Mehrunnisa, who becomes Empress Nur Jahan, must survive great challenges to retain her position, even her life, all the while never losing sight of her husband's boundless love.

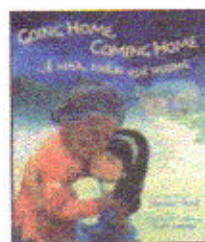
And for the kiddies...



Piggies in a Polka

By Kathi Appelt, illustrated by LeUyen Pham (Harcourt Children's Books)

A rootin', tootin', foot-stompin' porcine party to tickle your dancing feet.



Going Home, Coming Home

By Truong Tran, illustrated by Ann Phong (Children's Book Press)

A poignant, lovely tale about a little girl who visits her ancestral home in Vietnam and realizes that she can be both Vietnamese and American, with a home here and a home there: "Home is two different places," she realizes, "on the left and right sides of my heart."

New and Notable Books is published once a month.

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