



BUYING BOOKS, AMPLIFYING VOICES

The following books are written by or about authors identified by Amnesty International as individuals arrested, murdered, harassed, exiled, or executed for their published creative works (writing, photography, music, etc.). These texts are typically available in English from domestic and international book sellers.

Libraries and bookstores are encouraged to buy and make available books by or about authors and publishers who have been imprisoned, murdered, or harassed in light of their writing or publications. The act of purchasing and making available the words of such authors is a counterweight to the censorship of authoritarian regimes. Inclusion of such texts in a college or university library is likely to broaden the discussion of relevant global issues and help students and faculty understand the nature and effects of censorship.

BANNED BOOKS WEEK

Each year during *Banned Books Week*, Amnesty International draws attention to people around the world who have been imprisoned, threatened, or murdered because of what they wrote or published or because of their work in the publishing or media industries. In solidarity with the American Library Association (ALA) and organizations across the U.S. and around the world, Amnesty activists work to fight challenges to freedom of expression.

NOTE: Titles listed below, are not necessarily the cause of the author's persecution; rather, they represent the work of the author and the possible silencing of a voice. Book descriptions and cover art are drawn from Amazon.com or the publisher website unless otherwise noted. Information regarding cases is drawn from Amnesty International. Other writing by Banned Books Week authors and creators is available online; non-English print publications are generally not listed but may be available for purchase. Author lists are not exhaustive.

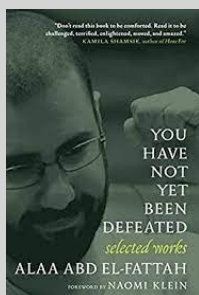
FEATURED TITLES IN 2025



ALAA ABD EL-FATTAH (Egypt) - Imprisoned; sentenced to 5 years; not released as expected

Alaa Abd el-Fattah, a prominent Egyptian-British writer, blogger, and activist known for his influential collection of essays, “You Have Not Yet Been Defeated,” was arrested in September 2019. In December 2021, he was convicted on bogus charges and sentenced to five years in prison, following a grossly unfair trial. Alaa completed the length of his unjust five-year prison sentence on September 29th, 2024.

As of August 2025, Alaa Abd el-Fattah remains imprisoned in Egypt, because Egyptian authorities have refused to recognize the more than two years he spent in pre-trial detention (from September 2019 to December 2021) as part of his five-year sentence. By their calculation, the sentence only began upon his conviction, pushing his release date to late 2026 or early 2027. Alaa Abd el-Fattah’s case continues to be a major focus for international advocacy, with Amnesty International persistently campaigning with partner organizations for his unconditional release, highlighting his status as a prisoner of conscience. In part of the international campaign, Fattah’s mother, Laila Soueif, has gone on a hunger strike and a daily one-hour vigil in London, UK, to encourage the international community to take strong action to bring about the release of her son.



EGYPT - You Have Not Yet Been Defeated: Selected Works 2011-2021 by Alaa Abd el-Fattah; Fitzcarraldo Editions and Seven Stories Press (2022); 978-1913097745 and 978-1644212455

You Have Not Yet Been Defeated is a collection of essays, tweets, letters, and personal reflections by Alaa Abd el-Fattah, many of which were smuggled out of Egyptian prisons. “Powerful ideas



(cont.) of protest and freedom of expression from the world-renowned Egyptian political prisoner and activist collected in English for the first time. With a foreword by Naomi Klein.”
“Alaa’s written voice came to symbolize much of what was fresh, inspiring and revolutionary about the uprisings that have defined the last decade. Collected here for the first time in English are a selection of his essays, social media posts and interviews from 2011 until the present. He has spent the majority of those years in prison.”



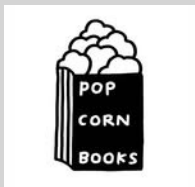
YASHAR - (China / Uyghur) - Songwriter sentenced to 3 years for lyrics and books in his possession

Yashar Shoret is a 27-year-old Uyghur songwriter and rap artist who was residing in Chengdu, Sichuan Province, when he was detained on August 11, 2023. Authorities charged him with “promoting extremism” and “illegally possessing extremist materials” reportedly for his music, which he published on the Internet, and his possession of Uyghur-language books. Yashar is serving a three-year prison sentence in Wusu Prison, Xinjiang. Convicted on 20 June 2024 of “promoting extremism” and “illegally possessing extremist materials,” Yashar endures unjust imprisonment for expressing his cultural identity.



CHINA - Under the Mulberry Tree: a Contemporary Uyghur Anthology published by Tarim Network (2023); 979-8218156909

The chapter “Ana Yurt” from the anthology Under the Mulberry Tree is an excerpt from the Uyghur literary classic by Zordun Sabir, an author whose work was reportedly in the possession of Yashar upon his arrest; the possession of this author likely contributed adversely to Yashar’s sentence. A Contemporary Uyghur Anthology is a collection of Uyghur reflections in diaspora. Weaving together memories of the homeland, experiences of displacement, and transitions of identities, this anthology is a creative reflection of the beauty and complexities of the Uyghur experience.



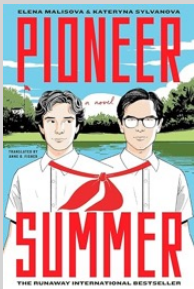
Book Publishers Arrested in Anti-LGBTI Campaign - (Russia) - Three People Charged & Face 12-Years in Prison

On 14 May, Russian security forces detained at least 10 individuals in Moscow as part of a criminal investigation



(cont.) into alleged “involvement in the activities of an extremist organization,” “participation in the activities” of such an organization, and “organizing its work using official position” (Article 282.2(1.1), (2), (3) of the Criminal Code) for publishing LGBTI-themed books. At least 10 individuals were taken in for questioning, including Anatoly Norovyatkin, distribution director at EKSMO, as well as Popcorn Books co-founder Dmitry Protopopov and former sales director Pavel Ivanov. On 15 May, three people were formally charged, their names are not yet disclosed. If convicted under these charges, they could face prison sentences of up to 12 years.

According to the lawyer, the case is based on the alleged distribution of over 900 copies of ten LGBTI-themed titles, none of which have been officially banned or labelled “extremist.” Among the books named in the case is *The Summer in a Pioneer Tie* (translated in English as *Pioneer Summer*), a bestselling novel by Elena Malisova and Katerina Silvanova depicting a same-sex romance between two Soviet teenagers. The authors were arbitrarily designated “foreign agents” by the Ministry of Justice in February 2024. Other titles include Alice Oseman’s *Heartstopper*, Benjamin Alire Sáenz’s *Aristotle and Dante Discover the Secrets of the Universe*, and Becky Albertalli’s *Leah on the Offbeat* and *Love, Creekwood* – all published by Popcorn Books between 2019 and 2022.



RUSSIA - *Pioneer Summer* by Elena Malisova and Katerina Silvanova; Popcorn Books (Russia) / Harry N. Abrams (English Translation) (2025); 978-1419773105

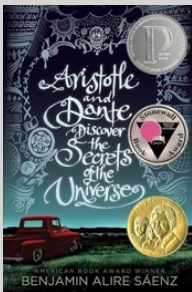
“This star-crossed gay romance is a #1 bestselling TikTok sensation that took readers by storm, made international news, and catalyzed one of Russia’s largest-ever crackdowns on LGBTQ representation.

Cowritten by a Ukrainian–Russian duo, *Pioneer Summer* reached such heights of popularity that Putin stepped in to ban it. Now this swoony romance will transport American readers to another place and time and introduce them to one of the most memorable relationships of their lives.”



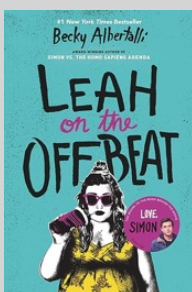
RUSSIA - Heartstopper by Alice Oseman; Popcorn Books (Russia) / Graphix (USA) (2023); 978-1338890563

Boy meets boy. Boys become friends. Boys fall in love. A sweet and charming coming-of-age story that explores friendship, love, and coming out. Shy and softhearted Charlie Spring sits next to rugby player Nick Nelson in class one morning. A warm and intimate friendship follows, and that soon develops into something more for Charlie, who doesn't think he has a chance. But Nick is struggling with feelings of his own, and as the two grow closer and take on the ups and downs of high school, they come to understand the surprising and delightful ways in which love works.



RUSSIA - Aristotle and Dante Discover the Secrets of the Universe by Benjamin Alire Sáenz; Popcorn Books (Russia) / Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers (USA) (2012); 978-1442408920

This Printz Honor Book is a “tender, honest exploration of identity” (Publishers Weekly) that distills lyrical truths about family and friendship. Aristotle is an angry teen with a brother in prison. Dante is a know-it-all who has an unusual way of looking at the world. When the two meet at the swimming pool, they seem to have nothing in common. But as the loners start spending time together, they discover that they share a special friendship—the kind that changes lives and lasts a lifetime. And it is through this friendship that Ari and Dante will learn the most important truths about themselves and the kind of people they want to be.



RUSSIA - Leah on the Offbeat by Becky Albertalli; Popcorn Books (Russia Translation) / HarperCollins (USA) (2019); 978-0062643810

#1 New York Times bestseller. In this sequel to the acclaimed Simon vs. the Homo Sapiens Agenda, we follow Simon's BFF Leah as she grapples with changing friendships, first love, and senior year angst. When it comes to drumming, Leah Burke is usually on beat—but real life isn't always so rhythmic. She's an anomaly in her friend group: the only child of a young, single mom, and her life is decidedly less privileged. She loves to draw but is too self-conscious to show it. And even though her mom knows she's bisexual, she hasn't mustered the courage to tell her friends—not even her openly gay BFF, Simon. So Leah really doesn't know what to do when her rock-solid friend group starts to fracture in unexpected ways.

CUMULATIVE BOOKLIST

SHAHIDUL ALAM (Bangladesh) - Photojournalist RELEASED after spending over 100 days in prison; charges dropped nearly 7 years later

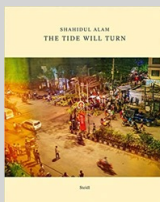
SHAHIDUL ALAM (Bangladesh) - Photojournalist RELEASED after spending over 100 days in prison; charges dropped nearly 7 years later

Shahidul Alam, photojournalist and outspoken social activist, was imprisoned for more than 100 days in 2018 for comments he made in an interview with Al-Jazeera English. In detention, he was ill-treated and subjected to prolonged detention. Though released on bail in November 2018 he continued to face up to 14 years in prison merely for peacefully exercising his right to freedom of expression. In August 2025, nearly 7 years after his arrest, Amnesty International noted that his case was dismissed. He was declared a Prisoner of Conscience in September 2018. Since his release, Alam continued to engage in activism, education, and photography. He received numerous awards including an International Press Freedom award from the Committee to Protect Journalists and Lucie Award for his photography.



BANGLADESH - Shahidul Alam: The Tide Will Turn by Arundhati Roy and Shahidul Alam; Steidl (2020); 978-3958296930

A New York Times critics' pick | Best Art Books 2020; A layered critique of autocracy in Bangladesh from leading photojournalist Shahidul Alam, with letters from Arundhati Roy – “On the night of 5 August, I did not know if I was going to live or die,” writes Alam, one of Bangladesh’s most respected photojournalists, essayists and social activists, remembering his arrest, torture and 101-day incarceration. Just a few hours before, he had given an interview criticizing the government’s brutal handling of student protests. Alam’s photos and texts with artwork by fellow inmates document his experiences, global support and ongoing fight for democracy.



BANGLADESH - Shahidul Alam: My Journey as a Witness by Shahidul Alam and Rosa M; Skira (2011); 978-8857209661



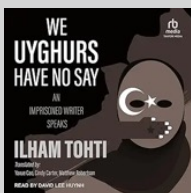
BANGLADESH - Shahidul Alam: My Journey as a Witness by Shahidul Alam and Rosa M; Skira (2011); 978-8857209661
An insight into the evolution of one of the most significant movements in contemporary photography, through the eyes and voice of the man who shaped it. An extraordinary artist, Shahidul Alam is a photographer, writer, activist, and social entrepreneur who used his art to chronicle the social and artistic struggles in a country known largely for poverty and disasters. This book includes over 100 photographs tracing Alam's artistic career, activism, and the founding of photography organizations. From early images shot in England to photos of the last two decades in Bangladesh, this is a journey from photojournalism into social justice.

ILHAM TOHTI (China / Uyghur) - Writer / Professor sentenced to LIFE in PRISON



Ilham Tohti, an economics professor at Central University for Nationalities in Beijing, the founder of “Uighur Online” website, and a well-known critic of China’s ethnic and religious policies in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region, was sentenced to life imprisonment on September 23, 2014. He was charged with “separatism,” an accusation that stems from his online writings. Ilham Tohti is serving his sentence in Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region No. 1 Prison in Urumqi. His family has not been provided information about his status or condition and they face intimidation within and outside China. He is Prisoner of Conscience.

CHINA - We Uyghurs Have No Say: An Imprisoned Writer Speaks by Ilham Tohti; Verso (2022); 978-1839764042



Here are Tohti's own words, a collection of his plain-spoken calls for justice, scholarly explanations of the history of Xinjiang, and poignant personal reflections. While his courage and outspokenness about the plight of China's Muslim minorities is extraordinary, these essays sound a measured insistence on peace and just treatment for the Uyghurs. Winner of the PEN/Goldsmith Freedom to Write Award and the Sakharov Prize for Freedom of Thought while imprisoned, this book is the only way to hear from a man who has been called “a Uyghur Mandela.”



CHINA - A Uyghur's Fight to Free Her Father by Jewher Ilham; University of New Orleans Press (2015); 978-1608011056; from Broken Silence series

When Jewher Ilham's father, Ilham Tohti, was detained at the Beijing airport in February 2013 on charges of "separatism," Jewher had two choices: she could stay in China or fly to America alone. Jewher boarded the plane for Indiana and began a new life apart from her family and was half a world away when her father was sentenced to life in prison..."



RAHILE DAWUT (China / Uyghur) - Writer / Ethnographer / Academic sentenced to LIFE in PRISON

Rahile Dawut is an acclaimed Uyghur ethnographer and academic who specialised in the study of Uyghur cultural traditions, including folklore and music. Her work on folklore traditions of the Uyghur people is believed to be a reason for her detention. Rahile's daughter lost contact with her mother in December 2017. Since then, she has not been able to contact her mother, a prominent Uyghur scholar.

Credible sources indicate that Rahile Dawut was charged with "endangering state security" in a secret trial in 2018 and given a life sentence. Her exact whereabouts is unknown.



CHINA - Music of Central Asia edited by Theodore Craig Levin et al.; Indiana University Press (2016); 978-0253017512

"Dastan Performance among the Uyghurs", the chapter co-written by Rahile Dawut, exemplifies the type of academic work that Dawut produces, offering a scholarly description of Uyghur music and culture. Sounds samples and video captured by Dawut are available in the ancillary online materials.



AI WEIWEI (China) - RELEASED - Artist previously detained

Ai Weiwei is an activist artist whose work often addresses Chinese government policies and actions and social conditions. In 2011, he was arrested on charges of tax evasion and jailed for 81 days. His passport was confiscated, and he was unable to travel outside China. In 2015 his passport was returned, and he moved to Berlin. In 2009, Ai suffered a cerebral hemorrhage after being punched in the head by Chengdu police when he attempted to

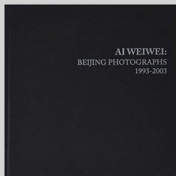


(cont.) testify on behalf of a friend investigating student deaths during the 2008 earthquake. As of 2023, Ai has lived in Portugal and continues to pursue a successful international art practice. An exhibition organized by the Seattle Art Museum Ai, Rebel: The Art and Activism of Ai Weiwei ended September 7, 2025.



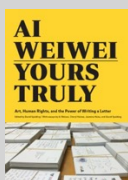
CHINA - Ai WeiWei's Blog by Ai Weiwei; The MIT Press (2011); 978-0262015219

“In 2006, even though he could barely type, China’s most famous artist started blogging. For more than three years, Ai Weiwei turned out a steady stream of scathing social commentary, criticism of government policy, thoughts on art and architecture, and autobiographical writings ... Then, on June 1, 2009, Chinese authorities shut down the blog.”



CHINA - Ai Weiwei: Beijing Photographs, 1993-2003; The MIT Press (2019); 978-0262015219

Ai Weiwei: Beijing Photographs 1993–2003 is an autobiography in pictures. This book, prohibited from publication in China, offers an intimate look at Ai Weiwei’s world in the years after his return from New York and preceding his imprisonment and global superstardom. The photographs capture Ai’s emergence as the uniquely provocative artist that he is today. The book contains more than 600 carefully sequenced images culled from an archive of more than 40,000 photographs taken by Ai: a narrative arc carefully shaped by an artist keenly aware of photography’s ability to tell stories.



CHINA - Yours Truly: Art, Human Rights, and the Power of Writing a Letter by Ai Weiwei; Chronicle Books (2018); 978-1452159294

“Five former prisoners and their loved ones reflect on the experience of receiving hundreds of postcards while imprisoned.”

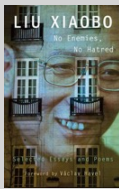
LIU XIAOBO (China) - DIED IN CUSTODY while serving 11 year sentence



Liu Xiabo was a literary critic, writer, professor and human rights activist. He was charged with “inciting subversion of state power” and given an 11-year prison term for his role in authoring a proposal for political and legal reform. In 2010 he was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize while in prison. Liu Xiabo died in prison of liver cancer at the age of 61. The Chinese authorities refused his request to travel abroad for treatment.

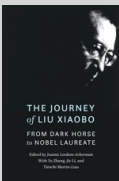
After Liu Xiaobo won the Nobel Peace Prize, his wife Liu Xia was placed under house arrest. Guards were placed outside her home and she was refused visitors. In 2014, she suffered a heart attack and initially was prevented from receiving treatment. These conditions led to psychological issues resulting from anxiety and depression. Liu Xia was finally allowed to leave China for Germany on July 10, 2018, after almost eight years of illegal house arrest.

CHINA - No Enemies, No Hatred by Liu Xiaobo; Belknap Press (2013); 978-0674072329



Collection of essays and poetry written by Nobel Peace Prize winning Liu Xiaobo -- a mix of politics and passions that provide “insight into all aspects of Chinese life ... chronic[ing] a leading dissident’s struggle against tyranny [and] enrich[ing] the record of universal longing for freedom and dignity.” (Harvard University Press)

CHINA - The Journey of Liu Xiaobo: From Dark Horse to Nobel Laureate edited by Joanne Leedom-Ackerman; Potomac Books (University of Nebraska Press) (2020); 978-1640122246



The Journey of Liu Xiaobo draws together essays and reflections on the “Nelson Mandela of China.” The Dalai Lama, Ai Weiwei, ... Marco Rubio, and Chris Smith illuminate Liu’s journey from his youth, through his activism, and to his defiant last days. The Journey of Liu Xiaobo combines memory with analysis to evaluate Liu’s impact on his era, nation, and the cause of human freedom.



CHINA - Steel Gate to Freedom: The Life of Liu Xiaobo by Yu Jie; Rowman & Littlefield Publishers (2015); 978-1442237131

Traces an extraordinary man’s odyssey, from growing up in Inner Mongolia during the Cultural Revolution, through his rise in Beijing’s intellectual circles and his pivotal role in the Tiananmen protests and subsequent imprisonments, to the founding of the controversial Independent Chinese PEN and groundbreaking Charter 08, his poignant relationship with wife Liu Xia, and winning the 2010 Nobel Peace Prize. It is also a love story between two poets who, though separated by three hundred miles and eleven years behind bars, are united in their persistence to speak truth to power, inspiring countless others.”



CHINA - Empty Chairs: Selected Poems by Xia Liu; Graywolf Press; (2015); 978-1555977252

Presents the poetry of Liu Xia in English translation and Chinese. Selected from 30 years of her work, and including her haunting photography, this book creates a portrait of a life lived under duress, a voice in danger of being silenced, and a spirit that is shaken but indomitable. Poems are potent, acute moments of inquiry that peel back to expose the fraught complexity of an interior world. They are felt and insightful, colored through with political constraints even as they seep beyond those constraints and toward love.



BK16 - (India) - Artists, Poets, Academics & Writers - India - Detained for Human Rights Work

Bhima Koregaon-Elgar Parishad case (BK16) involves the arrest of 16 activists including poets, journalists, lawyers, professors, artists, and a Jesuit priest, who were charged under various provisions of the Indian Penal Code and draconian Unlawful Activities Prevention Act (UAPA), which has been abused to detain people for peacefully exercising their rights to freedom of expression, assembly, and association. Activists known as the BK16 have long worked to defend the rights of some of India’s poorest and most marginalized communities, including Dalits and Adivasis – India’s indigenous peoples.

Artists swept up in the BK16 arrests include: Varavara Roa, poet; Arun Ferreira, Cartoonist; Sudhir Dhawale, publisher and actor; and members of the Kabir Kala Manch cultural group: Ramesh Gaichor, Sagar Gorkhe, and Jyoti Jagtap.

(cont) Academics and researchers swept up in the BK16 arrests include: Anand Teltumbde whose books address the caste system; Shoma Sen, a professor and women's rights activist, has published articles that address Dalit feminism; Hany Babu, linguist and language activist published work that examines India's language policies that "pull towards unilingual identity"; and Vernon Gonsalves wrote extensively on Dalit, Adivasi, and prisoner's rights.

As of 5th August, 2025, six activists from the BK16 remain in jail. Their bail applications have been denied repeatedly.

Regarding authors included, below:

- Varavara Rao is a renowned poet who has been arrested before but always acquitted. He founded the Revolutionary Writers' Association. Arrested in August 2018 for allegedly "waging a war against the government of India", he was granted bail due to medical health. Charges are still pending.

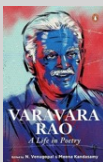
- Arun Ferreira was arrested in 2018 for "waging a war against the Government of India". He was granted bail under restrictive conditions. Charges are still pending. Ferreira is a human rights lawyer and political cartoonist. PEN America has highlighted his situation as a "writer at risk".

- Anand Teltumbde is an outspoken critic of the caste system and persecution of human rights defenders in India. His work as an intellectual focuses on the plight of the Dalits and other Indian minorities; he has been a scholar at the Goa Institute of Management. In 2020 he was arrested for "waging a war against the Government of India". He was granted bail in November 2022. Charges are still pending.

Other BK16 writers, artists, academics, and linguists remain in detention and/or continue to face charges. Amnesty International calls for the Indian authorities to drop all charges against the 16 activists, to immediately and unconditionally release the remaining BK16 members who remain in detention, and to repeal or substantially amend the draconian Unlawful Prevention Act.



INDIA - Varavara Rao: A Life in Poetry by Varavara Rao; Vintage Books (2023); 978-0143463160



Rao was a consistent comrade-in-letters to all the social movements from the 1960s to the 2010s; this volume is a capsule of momentous social history captured in his poetic imagination. The poems in the collection offer an artistic blend of tender response and thoughtful reaction to social realities, as well as an explosion of powerful emotions from a voice sought to be subdued. Rao's poetry is an offering of solidarity to the voiceless, the underdog and the oppressed.



INDIA - Colors of the Cage: A Memoir of an Indian Prison by Arun Ferreira; Common Notions Press (2021); 978-1942173137

In May 2007, Arun Ferreira, a democratic rights activist, was picked up at a railway station and condemned to prison for an expanding list of crimes: criminal conspiracy, murder, possession of arms, and rioting, among others added during his detention. In one of the most notorious prisons in India, Ferreira was abused and tortured. Over years, each of the ten cases against him fell apart. Ferreira was eventually acquitted of all charges. The book recounts the horrors he faced and the small consolations that kept hope alive.



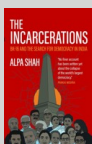
INDIA - Dalits: Past, Present and Future by Anand Teltumbde; Routledge (2020); 978-0367466701

A comprehensive introduction to Dalits. Despite provisions for affirmative action in the Indian Constitution, Dalits still suffer exclusion on various counts. This book traces changes that befell them through history: the germination of Dalit consciousness during the colonial period, flowering under the leadership of Ambedkar, and degeneration during post-Ambedkar period. New chapter provides an analysis of the rise of Hindutva under Narendra Modi, its fascist march obliterating the idea of India sketched by the Constitution.



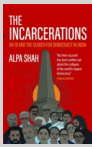
INDIA - MAHAD: The Making of the First Dalit Revolt by Anand Teltumbde; Routledge (2024); 978-1032364926

MAHAD has an iconic place in Dalit universe. Associated with legendary personality of Dr Ambedkar, the struggle of Dalits at Mahad for asserting their rights to access the public tank, the Chavadar tank, arguably ranks among the first civil rights struggles in history. This book provides a comprehensive account of the conferences in Mahad in 1927 that marked the beginning of the Dalit movement.



INDIA - The Incarcerations: BK16 and the Search for Democracy in India; OR Books (2024); 978-1682195185

Tells the remarkable and chilling story of the Bhima Koregaon case, in which 16 human rights defenders — professors, lawyers, journalists, poets — have been imprisoned, without credible



(cont.) evidence and without trial, as Maoist terrorists. Shah exposes some of the world's most shocking revelations of cyber warfare research. Through the life histories of the BK-16, Shah dives deep into the issues they fought for.



MICHELLE RECINOS (El Salvador) - Book removed from International Book Fair at Direction of El Salvadoran Government

Author Michelle Recinos, whose short story collection tells the story of abusive treatment by the El Salvadorian government, was scheduled for presentation at the 2023 Guatemalan International Book Fair. However, the Salvadoran government issued an ultimatum to the Book Fair organizers — remove her book from the program or El Salvador would cancel its participation in the gathering. In 2022, the government introduced a national “state of exception” in El Salvador that suspended certain civil liberties ... and it is causing a human rights crisis. This measure, allegedly enacted to counter gang violence, has suspended basic rights. As of 2023, over 60,000 people were detained unjustly, without due process.

EL SALVADOR - Sustancia de hígado by Michelle Recinos; Altamarea Edición de Libros SL (2023); 978-8419583413



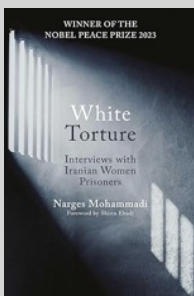
La violencia impregna las historias de «Sustancia de hígado» de la forma en que esta parece haberse asentado en el mundo actual, es decir, como un aparato sistemático, común, tan habitual que ya solo genera indiferencia. A veces es el Estado quien la ejerce, con mayor o menor brutalidad es el caso de este libro, censurado por el Gobierno de El Salvador en la Feria Internacional del Libro de Guatemala, y otras veces, simplemente, asoma entre la cotidianidad de unos personajes que han perdido la capacidad de reacción. Bebés comprados a madres pobres para convertirlos en reclamos publicitarios, empresas que se lucran del dolor de las víctimas de violación, chicas desaparecidas que salen en el diario como si fueran modelos. La miseria humana se ríe de los personajes de Recinos y la burla nos alcanza, nos envuelve y nos ahoga en esa sustancia amarga y viscosa en cuya familiar repugnancia nos reconocemos como individuos ilusos, rotos, dispuestos a todo y acostumbrados a sufrir.

NARGES MOHAMMADI (Iran) - Author / Human Rights Defender - Sentenced to 13 years in prison - RELEASED on medical furlough but may be returned to prison



Narges Mohammadi is a distinguished and passionate defender of human rights, who has been repeatedly arrested, mis-treated and imprisoned for lengthy periods of time, solely for her peaceful activism. She received multiple, cumulative prison sentences totalling over 13 years on charges including “spreading propaganda against the system” and “gathering and colluding to commit crimes against national security.” She was recognized with the award of the Nobel Peace Prize in October 2023. She was vice-president of the Center for Human Rights Defenders (CHRD) which reported on violations of human rights in Iran provided pro-bono legal representation to political prisoners and support to their families before it was forcibly closed by the Iranian authorities in December 2008. Her book *White Torture* is based on interviews with women prisoners of conscience about their experiences in detention. She suffers from a number of serious medical conditions, for which she was not receiving proper treatment. She was released on medical furlough in December 2024. Despite constant threats to her safety and the ever-present potential of being returned to prison to serve the remaining years of her sentence, Narges Mohammadi continues to speak out bravely about human rights in Iran.

IRAN - *White Torture* by Narges Mohammadi; Oneworld Publications (2024); 978-0861548767



Fourteen women testify to the shocking human rights abuses in Iranian prisons. The book explores women’s resistance against the policing of sexuality in Muslim societies. Many Muslim majority countries still use religious discourse to enforce stigmatization and repression of those who do not conform to sexual norms. In this context, Islam is often stigmatized in Western discourse for being intrinsically restrictive with respect to women’s rights and sexuality. This insightful collection shows that conservative Muslim discourse does not necessarily match practices and that women’s empowerment is facilitated where indigenous and culturally appropriate strategies are developed. None of the women have committed crimes – they are prisoners of conscience or held hostage as bargaining chips. Through torture, the Iranian state hopes to remake their souls. These interviews, carried out by Narges Mohammadi while each woman was in prison or facing charges, are astounding documents of resistance and integrity. WINNER OF THE NOBEL PEACE PRIZE 2023.

HOMA HOODFAR (Iran) - Scholar / Researcher RELEASED after 3 months



Dr. Homa Hoodfar, a Canadian-Iranian professor of Anthropology and Sociology at Concordia University, was arrested on June 6, 2016, in Iran after months of interrogation by the Revolutionary Guards. She was held incommunicado in Evin Prison, denied access to medical care for her neurological condition, and faced charges related to her academic work on culture and gender, including her publications such as *Women’s Sport as Politics in Muslim Contexts* and *Sexuality in Muslim Contexts: Restrictions and Resistance*. The judicial authorities told her lawyer that she faced charges of “spreading propaganda against the system” and “collaborating with hostile governments.” On 24 June 2016, the Prosecutor General of Tehran stated that Homa Hoodfar’s “criminal” case was in connection with “her entry into fields concerning feminism and national security offences.” State media outlets also ran articles claiming that she was “the Iran agent of a feminist network building operation,” arguing that her work with the organization Women Living Under Muslim Laws to promote feminism and women’s equality in Muslim countries and enhance women’s bodily autonomy was aimed at “disrupting public order” and “prompting social-cultural changes that can ultimately pave the ground... for a soft overthrow” of the Iranian state.

Dr. Hoodfar was released in September 2016 on “humanitarian grounds” following international pressure and diplomatic efforts from Canada, Oman, Italy, and Switzerland. She made a bail payment of five billion rials (approximately US\$159,000). Dr. Hoodfar has since returned to Concordia University in Montréal.

IRAN - Sexuality in Muslim Contexts: Restrictions and Resistance by Anissa Hélie (Editor), Homa Hoodfar (Editor); Zed Books (October 11, 2012); 978-1780322858



The book explores women’s resistance against the policing of sexuality in Muslim societies. Many Muslim majority countries still use religious discourse to enforce stigmatization and repression of those who do not conform to sexual norms. In this context, Islam is often stigmatized in Western discourse for being intrinsically restrictive with respect to women’s rights and sexuality. This insightful collection shows that conservative Muslim discourse does not necessarily match practices and that women’s empowerment is facilitated where indigenous and culturally appropriate strategies are developed.

IRAN - Women's Sport as Politics in Muslim Contexts - Edited by Homa Hoodfar; Women Living Under Muslim Laws (2016); 978-1907024207

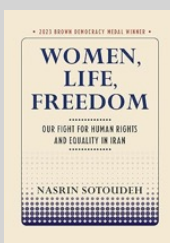


This book provides an urgently needed analysis of the bravery and creativity exhibited by Muslim women in the realm of sports, which has emerged as a major realm of contestation between proponents of women's rights and political Islamist forces in Muslim contexts. Through focused case studies, this volume tracks the many sophisticated, context-specific, and constantly evolving strategies of women's resistance to their exclusion in sport. Hoodfar and other contributors have provided a groundbreaking analysis of the landscape of gender and sports in diverse Muslim contexts.

NASRIN SOTOUDEH (Iran) - Scholar / Researcher - Sentenced to 38 years in prison, RELEASED on medical furlough but could be re-jailed; husband arrested

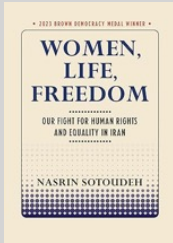


Prominent human rights lawyer Nasrin Sotoudeh was sentenced to more than 38 years in prison and 148 lashes after two grossly unfair trials in a Revolutionary Court in 2018. The charges against her stemmed from her peaceful human rights advocacy, including her defense of women's right to choose to wear Hijab and her outspoken opposition to the death penalty. She was released on a medical furlough in July 2021 but could be required to report back to prison to complete her sentence at any time. Her husband Reza Khandan, was sentenced to six years in prison by a Revolutionary Court in 2019 for his defense of women's rights. He was arrested in December 2024 and has been in prison since then. Nasrin Sotoudeh has continued to speak out about women's rights, including by writing pieces and giving interviews for Ms Magazine.



IRAN - Women, Life, Freedom: Our Fight for Human Rights and Equality in Iran by Nasrin Sotoudeh; Cornell University Press (2023); 978-1501776106

Nasrin Sotoudeh is an Iranian lawyer and human rights activist who has been called "Iran's Nelson Mandela." She is a

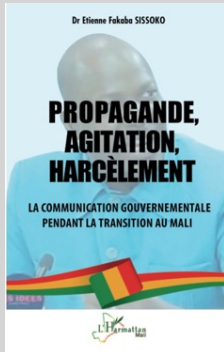


(cont.) longtime opponent of the death penalty, advocate of improving imprisonment health conditions, and an activist dedicated to fighting for the rights of women, children, religious and ethnic minorities, journalists and artists, and those facing execution. The Laurence and Lynne Brown Democracy Medal, presented by the McCourtney Institute for Democracy at Penn State, recognizes outstanding individuals, groups, and organizations that produce innovations to further democracy in the United States or around the world. For this important work, the 2023 Brown Democracy Medal from the McCourtney Institute for Democracy is presented to Sotude.

ETIENNE FAKABA SISSOKO (Mali) - Scholar and Author - Sentenced to 2 Years following Book Publication; RELEASED but Living in Exile for Security



Étienne Fakaba Sissoko, a prominent Malian economist, author, and academic, was arrested on March 25, 2024, in direct relation to his 2023 book, *Propagande, Agitation, Harcèlement: La communication gouvernementale pendant la transition au Mali*. He faced charges of “harming the reputation of the state,” “defamation,” and “dissemination of false news disturbing the public peace”. A court in Bamako convicted him and sentenced him to two years in jail—with one year suspended—and a fine of XOF 3 million (approximately 4,500 Euros). This was the first time in Mali’s history that a university professor was sentenced to prison for a scholarly book. Étienne Fakaba Sissoko was released from prison on March 27, 2025, after serving his one-year sentence. His release followed a sustained international advocacy campaign by human rights organizations such as Amnesty International, which he publicly acknowledged. He has recently spoken out about pervasive censorship in the country’s higher education institutions, saying “the university has become a space of surveillance and self-censorship.” Following his release, after he announced the publication of a series of books written in prison – including *Le Trône des illusions* (translated as “The Throne of Illusions”) – the surveillance, threats and pressure resumed in a more systematic and aggressive manner. He was forced to suspend his teaching. Today, for security reasons, Dr. Sissoko no longer resides permanently in Mali. He continues to “fully embrace [his] mission, even in exile [...] Malian universities will outlast dictatorships – if they keep their lights burning.”



MALI - Propagande, Agitation, Harcèlement : La communication gouvernementale pendant la transition au Mali by Etienne Fakaba Sissoko; Editions L'Harmattan (2023); 978-2336411347

Depuis le coup d'État du 18 août 2020 au Mali, la forte collaboration du gouvernement avec les activistes et « vidéomans » dans la mise en oeuvre de la stratégie de communication des gouvernements successifs de transition, a eu comme conséquence de décrédibiliser les spécialistes de la communication gouvernementale, mais aussi de la parole publique. En effet, cette communication gouvernementale hyper agressive s'est caractérisée par la diffusion de contenus aux caractères douteux. Aussi paradoxale que cela puisse paraître, la communication gouvernementale, malgré l'inexistence d'une stratégie formelle, a rencontré des succès intéressants. Elle permet, une forte adhésion de la population aux discours des gouvernants à travers les fronts ouverts avec la Communauté internationale notamment la France, la CEDEAO, etc. Cependant, malgré ce succès relatif, notre étude montre que de telles méthodes de communication, basées sur la propagande, l'agitation, la manipulation et même le mensonge souvent, ne peuvent tenir sur le long terme. La communication gouvernementale connaît déjà ses premiers revers, signes de son essoufflement.



MALI - Le dernier silence: Douze heures avant la lumière by Etienne Fakaba Sissoko; Editions L'Harmattan (2025); 978-2336552774

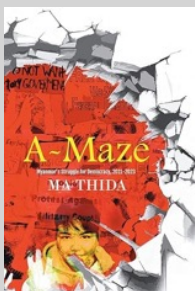
« Ce livre n'est pas un cri. C'est un silence traversé. » En mars 2025, Étienne Fakaba Sissoko sort de prison après douze mois d'enfermement pour avoir publié un livre jugé dérangeant : Propagande, Agitation, Harcèlement. Ce qu'il emporte avec lui n'est ni colère, ni revanche mais un carnet de veille. Écrit dans les dernières heures de sa captivité, ce récit intime et lucide nous plonge au cœur d'une nuit longue, lente, parfois violente, mais aussi profondément humaine. Dans sa cellule, entre prière muette, fraternité silencieuse et marche intérieure, l'auteur interroge l'injustice, l'attente, la foi, le pouvoir... et la liberté. Ce livre est une offrande. Une traversée spirituelle. Un hymne aux silences qui sauvent, et aux voix qu'on tente d'éteindre. À ceux qui doutent. À ceux qui tiennent. À ceux qui veillent.

MA THIDA (Myanmar) - Doctor / Author - Spent 6 years in prison following 20 year prison sentence



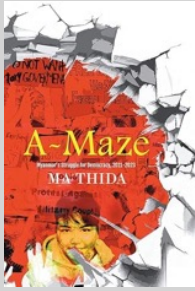
Ma Thida, a hospital doctor by profession and a well-known writer, was arrested in 1993 along with several others who were among the country's political opposition. Thida was sentenced to 20 years in prison in October 1993 and was later pardoned and released in February 1999 "on humanitarian grounds". Amnesty International adopted Thida as a prisoner of conscience in 1993. At the time of her arrest she was a well-known writer, best known for her short stories, but had also written several novels, none of which had been published. The authorities banned the last novel she wrote before her imprisonment although they had earlier given her official permission to publish. At times during her imprisonment, Thida was held in virtual solitary confinement, without access to reading materials.

Since her release she has monitored and written on events in Myanmar. She was a founding member of PEN International's Myanmar Centre and was elected chair of PEN International's Writers in Prison Committee on 14 September 2021. In 2016, Thida became the first recipient of the "Disturbing the Peace" award by the Vaclav Havel Library Foundation, which noted the unjust persecution she suffered because of her beliefs. (IFEX) Thida has received a PEN/Barbara Goldsmith Freedom to Write Award, a Reebok Human Rights Award, and an honorary award from the American Association of Arts and Sciences while she was in prison. She was named a Harvard Radcliffe fellow for 2009-2010. (Radcliffe / Harvard) In 2022, she moved to Germany as a fellow of the Martin Roth Initiative, and subsequently a fellow at the Writers-in-Exile program of PEN Germany. She continues to write poems, participate in podcast interviews, and participate in conferences to condemn the military regime and promote the citizen resistance and pro-democracy movement in her country. In May 2024, her book *A-Maze* was published, in which she tackles the post-coup situation and the prospect of the Spring Revolution. (IFEX)



MYANMAR - A-Maze: Myanmar's Struggle for Democracy, 2011-2023 by Ma Thida; Balestier Press (2024); 978-1780322858

What's happening after the 2021 military coup attempt in Myanmar? Since the coup, people have been deeply shocked by how the army has savagely undermined the pillars of democracy. Regarding the 2021 coup, there are two perspectives; while, on the one hand, Myanmar people have known all along that their struggles for the road to democracy (1988-2020) have not yet

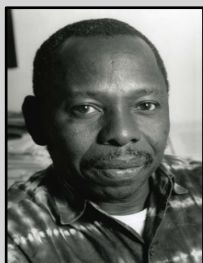


(cont.) made nowhere near to the finishing line, on the other hand, in the international community's perspective, the 2021 coup attempt has been considered as a shocking threat to democracy that has founded successfully in Myanmar since 2011, and as a complete U-turn to the military regime era. This book highlights that the decade-long quasi-civilian administration period (2011-2020) didn't bring Myanmar to reach its way toward democracy, getting the country lost in a tortuous maze crafted by the military leaders. This book consists of three different categorized titles: The Walls, The Corners, and The Passages of the amazing Maze (A-maze).



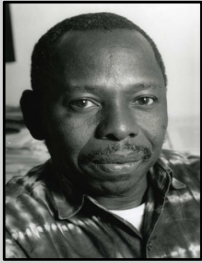
MYANMAR - Prisoner of Conscience: My Steps through Insein by Ma Thida; Silkworm Books (2017); 978-6162151231

From childhood, Ma Thida dreamed of helping others caring for the sick, sharing information despite censorship, and standing up for people's rights. To stand against the oppression that had been stifling Myanmar's progress for decades, she joined Aung San Suu Kyi and the many other activists in the National League for Democracy, campaigning steadfastly despite intimidation, harassment, and worse. Because of her efforts, the regime sent her to Insein Prison, where she faced serious illness and bleak conditions. However, it was in fighting the obstacles of her imprisonment and following the Buddha's teachings that Ma Thida found what it means to be truly free. In this memoir, readers join Ma Thida on her path through captivity and witness one remarkable woman's courageous quest for truth and dignity.



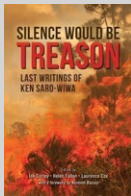
KEN SARO-WIWA (Nigeria) - Novelist, Screenwriter, Activist - EXECUTED

Ken Saro-Wiwa was a Nigerian writer and activist who co-founded the Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People (MOSOP) in 1990 to lead a non-violent campaign against environmental destruction in his homeland of Ogoniland. He was arrested in May 1994, charged with inciting the murders of four Ogoni leaders, and sentenced to death by a special military tribunal in what was widely regarded as a "sham trial". He was executed by hanging on November 10, 1995, for his peaceful activities. In response, Amnesty International launched a campaign to secure his full exoneration, and continues to argue that a pardon does not correct the historical injustice of his conviction. The struggle also continues in the form of legal battles against giant



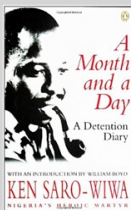
(cont.) corporate entities, including investigations into Anglo-Dutch oil giant Shell over its role in a swathe of horrific crimes committed by the Nigerian military government in the oil-producing Ogoniland region in the 1990s as well as advocacy for the environmental cleanup of the Niger Delta.

Ken Saro-Wiwa viewed his writing not merely as a craft but as a potent weapon for activism, believing “the power of the pen” to be an existential threat to the state and corporate interests that sought to silence him. His works include: *Basi and Company* (1987): A hugely popular satirical television series that reached an estimated 30 million Nigerians; *Genocide in Nigeria: The Ogoni Tragedy* (1992); the titles listed below, etc.



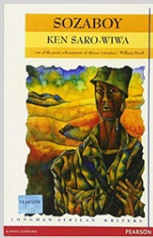
NIGERIA - Silence Would Be Treason: Last writings of Ken Saro-Wiwa; CODESRIA (2013); 978-2869785571

A unique collection of the last writings of Ken Saro-Wiwa that reveals the indomitable mind and spirit of the legendary campaigner for justice in the last months before his execution. Clear and direct, these letters and poems are the last expression of a voice the regime was determined to silence: a voice for indigenous rights, environmental survival and democracy, many of whose battles were won despite his death and whose voice comes alive today again in these letters.



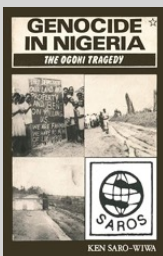
NIGERIA - A Month and a Day: A Detention Diary by Ken Saro-Wiwa; Penguin Books (1996); 978-0140259148

This is the extraordinary and moving account of Ken Saro-Wiwa’s period of detention in 1993, and is also a personal history of the man who gave voice to the campaign for basic human and political rights for the Ogoni people. It was fear of his success that made Saro-Wiwa the target of the despotic Nigerian military regime. Arrested on 21 June 1993, ostensibly for his part in election-day disturbances, he describes in harrowing detail the conditions under which he was held. He writes of his involvement with the Ogoni cause and his instrumental role in the setting up of the movement for the survival of the Ogoni people.



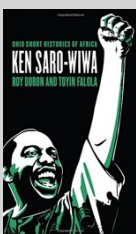
NIGERIA - Sozaboy: A Novel in Rotten English by Ken Saro-Wiwa; Pearson (1995); 978-0582236998

Written in what the author describes as “rotten English,” a mixture of Nigerian Standard English and pidgin English, the book re-creates the language of Nigeria’s poor and dispossessed. When the book was published in 1985, the country was struggling with the political fallout of the revolution and the environmental ravages brought on by extensive oil exploration and extraction. These crises resonate behind Saro-Wiwa’s portrait of the war. Ten years after the book’s publication, Saro-Wiwa’s crusade against governmental and corporate corruption led to his execution. The international outrage that accompanied his death has fueled interest in the novel and its depiction of a simple man’s attempt to survive in a society dominated by corruption, greed, and war.



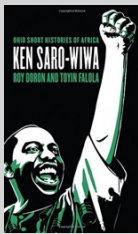
NIGERIA - Genocide in Nigeria: The Ogoni Tragedy by Ken Saro-Wiwa; Pearson Saros International Publishers (2000); 978-1870716222

This collection of newspaper columns and articles mostly written in the 1970s and 80s perhaps provides the best overview of Saro-Wiwa’s political and environmental concerns. The articles document his concerns about the fate of the Ogoni people and their mistreatment by multinational oil companies and collaborating Nigerian government. Saro-Wiwa argues that the Ogoni are a minority in Nigeria, exploited by the ruling ethnic majority, and that the Federal Government of Nigeria was threatening the Ogoni with genocide. This was a key publication in bringing the Ogoni tragedy to the attention of the international community. It is of relevance to present concerns about the actions of oil companies, indigenous and environmental rights in the Delta region.



NIGERIA - Ken Saro-Wiwa (Ohio Short Histories of Africa) by Roy Doron and Toyin Falola; Ohio University Press (2016); 978-0821422014

Named a Choice Outstanding Academic Title for 2017 – Hanged by the Nigerian government on November 10, 1995, Ken Saro-Wiwa became a martyr for the Ogoni people and human rights



(cont.) activists, and a symbol of modern Africans' struggle against military dictatorship, corporate power, and environmental exploitation. Though he is rightly known for his human rights and environmental activism, he wore many hats: writer, television producer, businessman, and civil servant, among others. While the book sheds light on his many legacies, it is above all about Saro-Wiwa the man, not just Saro-Wiwa the symbol.

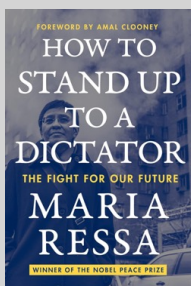


MARIA A. RESSA (Philippines) - Executive Editor of Online News Website & Journalist - Convicted of cyber-libel pending appeal and facing 6 years in prison

Maria Ressa, the co-founder and CEO of the news outlet Rappler, was subjected to a coordinated campaign of politically motivated legal charges, including cyber-libel, tax evasion, and corporate ownership violations, in response to her and Rappler's critical reporting on the Duterte administration. At one point, she was facing ten criminal charges that could have led to decades in prison. Ressa was acquitted of the tax evasion and anti-dummy cases in 2023 and 2025, respectively. Her 2022 book, *How to Stand Up to a Dictator*, tells the story of the challenges she faced and the principles that she brought to them; she both educates and inspires.

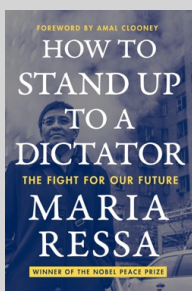
Ressa's June 2020 cyber-libel conviction remains on appeal before the Supreme Court, and she faces the threat of up to six years in prison. As a Nobel Peace Prize laureate, she continues her work as a journalist and human rights defender, using her global platform to advocate for a free and fact-based information ecosystem.

During her Nobel lecture in December 2021, Ressa said "Democracy has become a woman-to-woman, man-to-man defense of our values [...] We're at a sliding door moment, where we can continue down the path we're on and descend further into fascism, or we can each choose to fight for a better world. To do that, you have to ask yourself: what are you willing to sacrifice for the truth?"



PHILIPPINES - How to Stand Up to a Dictator: The Fight for Our Future by Maria Ressa; Harper Perennial (2023); 978-0063257528

From the recipient of the 2021 Nobel Peace Prize comes a powerful memoir that chronicles her career fighting fascism, filled with insights and advice for standing against authoritarian bullies and confronting disinformation and lies. It includes an

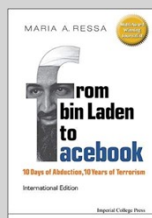


(cont.) introduction by Amal Clooney. Democracy is fragile. How to Stand Up to a Dictator is an urgent cry for Western readers to recognize and understand the dangers to our freedoms before it is too late. It is a book for anyone who might take democracy for granted, written by someone who never would. And in telling her dramatic and turbulent and courageous story, Ressa forces readers to ask themselves the same question she and her colleagues ask every day: What are you willing to sacrifice for the truth?



PHILIPPINES - A Thousand Cuts - a documentary film by Romona S. Diaz (2020) about Maria Ressa and suppression of journalism in the Philippines. <http://www.athousandcuts.film/>

“Nowhere is the worldwide erosion of democracy, fueled by social media disinformation campaigns, more starkly evident than in the authoritarian regime of Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte. Journalist Maria Ressa places the tools of the free press—and her freedom—on the line in defense of truth and democracy.”



PHILIPPINES - From Bin Laden to Facebook: 10 Days of Abduction, 10 Years of Terrorism by Maria A. Ressa; World Scientific Pub Co Inc (2013); 978-1908979537

“The two most wanted terrorists in Southeast Asia -- a Malaysian and a Singaporean -- are on the run in the Philippines, but they manage to keep their friends and family updated on Facebook. ... The book forms the powerful narrative that glues together the social networks -- both physical and virtual -- which spread the jihadi virus from bin Laden to Facebook.”

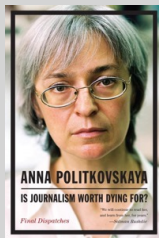


ANNA POLITKOVSKAYA (Russia) - Journalist MURDERED with impunity

Anna Politkovskaya was a celebrated Russian journalist and human rights activist who was shot and killed in a contract killing on October 7, 2006, in direct retaliation for her unflinching reporting on human rights abuses and corruption during the Second Chechen War.

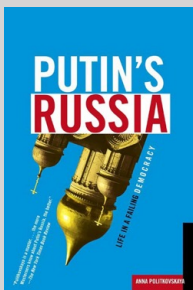
After a flawed legal process, five men were eventually convicted for her murder in 2014, but the person who ordered the killing was never identified or prosecuted. One of the convicted men was

(cont.) later pardoned by President Vladimir Putin. The persistent failure to achieve full justice underscores a climate of impunity for crimes against journalists in Russia. Her legacy endures through the Anna Politkovskaya Award, which honors other courageous women fighting for human rights.



RUSSIA - Is Journalism Worth Dying For? Final Dispatches by Anna Politkovskaya; Melville House (2011); 978-1935554400

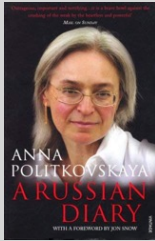
A collection of final dispatches by the famed journalist, including the first translation of the work that may have led to her murder – Anna Politkovskaya won international fame for her courageous reporting. *Is Journalism Worth Dying For?* is a long-awaited collection of her final writing. From deeply personal statements about the nature of journalism, to horrendous reports from Chechnya, to sensitive pieces of memoir, to, finally, the first translation of the series of investigative reports that Politkovskaya was working on at the time of her murder—pieces many believe led to her assassination.



RUSSIA - Putin's Russia by Anna Politkovskaya; Metropolitan Books : Henry Holt and Company (2007); 978-0805082500

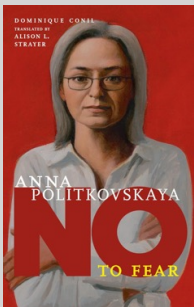
A searing portrait of a country in disarray and of the man at its helm, from “the bravest of Russian journalists” (The New York Times) - Hailed as “a lone voice crying out in a moral wilderness” (New Statesman), Anna Politkovskaya made her name with her fearless reporting on the war in Chechnya. Here, she turned her steely gaze on the multiple threats to Russian stability, among them Vladimir Putin himself. Rich with characters and poignant accounts, *Putin's Russia* depicts a far-reaching state of decay. Politkovskaya describes an army in which soldiers die from malnutrition, parents must pay bribes to recover their dead sons' bodies, and conscripts are even hired out as slaves. She exposes rampant corruption in business, government, and the judiciary, where everything is for sale. And she offers a scathing condemnation of the war in Chechnya, where kidnappings, extra-judicial killings, rape, and torture beget terrorism rather than fighting it. Finally, Politkovskaya denounces both Putin, for stifling civil liberties as he pushes the country back to a Soviet-style dictatorship, and the West, for its embrace of the Russian leader.

RUSSIA - Putin's Russia by Anna Politkovskaya; Random House (2008); 978-1400066827



Anna Politkovskaya, one of Russia's most fearless journalists, was gunned down in a contract killing in Moscow in the fall of 2006. Just before her death, Politkovskaya completed this searing, intimate record of life in Russia from the parliamentary elections of December 2003 to the grim summer of 2005, when the nation was still reeling from the horrors of the Beslan school siege. In *A Russian Diary*, Politkovskaya dares to tell the truth about the devastation of Russia under Vladimir Putin—a truth all the more urgent since her tragic death. Writing with unflinching clarity, Politkovskaya depicts a society strangled by cynicism and corruption.

RUSSIA - Anna Politkovskaya: No to Fear (Series: They Said No) by Dominique Conil; Triangle Square Books for Young Readers / Seven Stories Press (2022); 978-1644211304

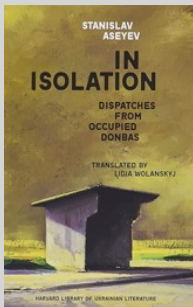


FOR YOUNG READERS - The deeply researched and partly imagined story of the fearless, internationally recognized journalist who was assassinated for believing that 'words can save lives.' - *Say No to Fear*, part of the *They Said No* series of histories, tells the story of Anna Politkovskaya's courageous life narrated from the perspective of her longtime mentor and friend. From their first meeting when she was a young literature student to her rise as an internationally recognized journalist, through Vassily we see Anna develop from junior reporter, to covering social issues after the fall of the Soviet Union, to becoming a fearless defender of human rights. Throughout the author brings the history to life by including key conversations that might have happened between them at pivotal moments in Politkovskaya's life. A scathing critic of the second Chechen war, Politkovskaya published most of her political work while working at the *Novaya Gazeta*, a newspaper at the forefront of the fight for free expression in Russia. For their outspokenness several members of its staff were murdered, presumably silenced by Russia's Vladimir Putin and Chechen leader Ramzan Kadyrov. Even after a poisoning attack and a mock execution, Politkovskaya persisted, adamant in her fight for her children's and grandchildren's world, critiquing the situation in Chechnya and Putin until her assassination in 2006. The narrator, Pachoutinsev, explains how her legacy lives on, inspiring those in pursuit of justice and the truth both in Russia and abroad.



STANISLAV ASEYEV (Russia/Ukraine) - Journalist / Writer - Sentenced to 15 Years; RELEASED after 2.5 Years

Stanislav Aseyev is Ukrainian journalist and writer who was arbitrarily detained by Russian-backed separatists in the Donbas region on June 2, 2017. He was charged with “espionage” and “extremism” based on his work as an independent reporter from occupied Donetsk, and was sentenced to 15 years in a penal colony. He was held incommunicado for over two years in the notorious Izolyatsia prison, where he was subjected to psychological and physical abuse. Aseyev was released on December 29, 2019, as part of a prisoner exchange. Following his release, Aseyev became a human rights advocate, founded the “Justice Initiative Fund” to expose Russian war crimes, and in 2021, helped investigators locate and arrest Denys Kulykovskyy, the former commandant of the Izolyatsia camp. Aseyev continues his activism; he was the first Ukrainian journalist to visit the Sednaya prison & death camp in Syria after the fall of Bashar al-Assad’s regime in 2024.



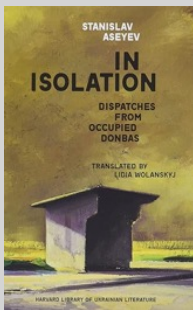
RUSSIA / UKRAINE - In Isolation: Dispatches from Occupied Donbas by Stanislav Aseyev; Harvard Ukrainian Research Institute (2022) Harvard Library of Ukrainian Literature 978-0674268791

In this exceptional collection of dispatches from occupied Donbas, writer and journalist Stanislav Aseyev details the internal and external changes observed in the cities of Makiivka and Donetsk in eastern Ukraine. Aseyev scrutinizes his immediate environment and questions himself in an attempt to understand the reasons behind the success of Russian propaganda among the working-class residents of the industrial region of Donbas. In this work of documentary prose, Aseyev focuses on the early period of the Russian-sponsored military aggression in Ukraine’s east, the period of 2015–2017. The author’s testimony ends with his arrest for publishing his dispatches and his subsequent imprisonment and torture in a modern-day concentration camp on the outskirts of Donetsk run by lawless mercenaries and local militants with the tacit approval and support of Moscow. For the first time, an inside account presents the toll on real human lives and civic freedoms that the citizens of Europe’s largest country continue to suffer in Russia’s hybrid war on its territory.



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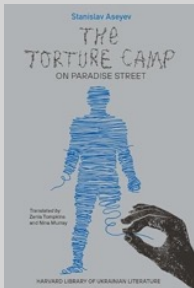


RUSSIA / UKRAINE - The Torture Camp on Paradise Street by Stanislav Aseyev; Harvard Ukrainian Research Institute (2023) Harvard Library of Ukrainian Literature 978-0674291072

Finalist, 2024 PEN Translation Prize – In *The Torture Camp on Paradise Street*, Ukrainian journalist and writer Stanislav Aseyev details his experience as a prisoner from 2015 to 2017 in a modern-day concentration camp overseen by the Federal Security Bureau of the Russian Federation (FSB) in the Russian-controlled city of Donetsk. This memoir recounts an endless ordeal of psychological and physical abuse, including torture and rape, inflicted upon the author and his fellow inmates over the course of nearly three years of illegal incarceration spent largely in the prison called Izoliatsiia (Isolation). Aseyev also reflects on how a human can survive such atrocities and reenter the world to share his story.

Since February 2022, numerous cases of illegal detainment and extreme mistreatment have been reported in the Ukrainian towns and villages occupied by Russian forces during the full-scale invasion. These and other war crimes committed by Russian troops speak to the horrors wreaked upon Ukrainians forced to live in Russian-occupied zones. It is important to remember, however, that the torture and killing of Ukrainians by Russian security and military forces began long before 2022. Rendered deftly into English, Aseyev’s compelling account offers a critical insight into the operations of Russian forces in the occupied territories of Ukraine.

**RUSSIA / UKRAINE - The Torture Camp on Paradise Street by
Stanislav Aseyev; Harvard Ukrainian Research Institute (2023)
Harvard Library of Ukrainian Literature 978-0674291072**



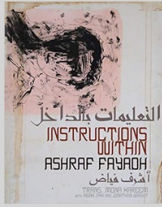
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ASHRAF FAYADH (Saudi Arabia) - Poet sentenced to 8 years & 800 lashes



Ashraf Fayadh is a Palestinian poet and artist, living in Saudi Arabia. He was first arrested on August 6, 2013, released the next day, but then rearrested on January 1, 2014 and charged with apostasy due to his supposed questioning of religion and spreading atheist thought via his poetry. On February 2, 2016 he was sentenced to eight years in prison and 800 lashes. He was released in August 2022.



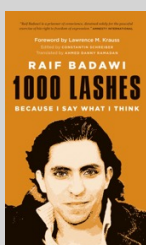
SAUDI ARABIA - Instructions Within (bilingual) by Ashraf Fayadh; The Operating System (2016); 978-0986050572

Longlisted for the Best Translated Book Award for poetry; Originally published by Beirut-based Dar al-Farabi in 2008. Instructions Within is the first Arabic-English translation of the poetry of Ashraf Fayadh first published by the Beirut-based Dar al-Farabi in 2008 and later banned from distribution in Saudi Arabia. Special edition includes two paintings by Ashraf Fayadh on its front and back covers, and is right-bound, asking the reader to consider their estrangement from Arabic language, literature, and life, inviting a new relationship to begin to form.



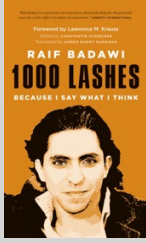
RAIF BADAWI (Saudi Arabia) - Blogger sentenced to 10 years and 1000 lashes; RELEASED conditionally after 8 years

Prominent Saudi Arabian activist Raif Badawi, who founded an online forum for political and social debate, was arrested on June 17, 2012, and was detained in a prison in the coastal city of Jeddah. He was charged with violating Saudi Arabia's information technology law and insulting Islamic religious figures by creating and managing an online forum. The charges against Badawi related to a number of articles he had written, including one in which he was accused of ridiculing Saudi Arabia's Commission on the Promotion of Virtue and Prevention of Vice, also known as the religious police. Amnesty International believes these charges were bogus and are part of a decade-long Saudi campaign of repression in the name of security. After a series of trials, on May 7, 2014, the Saudi Criminal Court sentenced Raif Badawi to 10 years in prison, 1,000 lashes and a fine of 1 million Saudi Riyal (about US\$266,600). He was conditionally released in March 2022, but he remains under a 10-year travel ban, preventing him from leaving Saudi Arabia or reuniting with his wife and three children, who reside in Canada. He is also banned from participating in the media once he has completed his prison sentence.



SAUDI ARABIA - 1000 Lashes: Because I Say What I Think by Raif Badawi; Greystone Books (2015); 978-1771642095

Raif Badawi, a Saudi Arabian blogger, shared his thoughts on politics, religion, and liberalism online. He was sentenced to 1,000 lashes, ten years in prison, and a fine of 1 million Saudi



(cont.) Riyal, over a quarter of a million U.S. dollars. This politically topical polemic gathers together Badawi's pivotal texts. He expresses his opinions on life in an autocratic-Islamic state under the Sharia and his perception of freedom of expression, human and civil rights, tolerance and the necessary separation of state and religion.



SAUDI ARABIA - Raif Badawi, The Voice of Freedom: My Husband, Our Story by Ensaf Haidar (Author), Andrea Claudia Hoffmann (Author); Other Press (2016); 978-1590518014

Ensaf Haidar's unforgettable account of her marriage to imprisoned Saudi blogger Raif Badawi tells the story of the survival of their love against all odds, and of her courageous fight for her husband's freedom. ... This profoundly moving memoir is both a love story and an inspiring account of the making of not one but two heroic human rights activists.



LOUJAIN AL-HATHLOUL (Saudi Arabia) - 2019 Amnesty International Banned Books Week case; Released conditionally on probation in February 2021 after nearly 3 years behind bars

Loujain al-Hathloul, a women's rights activist and human rights defender is well-known for her campaigning against the driving ban and the campaign to end the male guardianship system. In 2014, she was detained for 73 days after she attempted to drive into Saudi Arabia from the United Arab Emirates. Loujain al-Hathloul also went on to stand for election in Saudi Arabia in November 2015 – the first time women were allowed to both vote and stand in elections in the state. However, despite finally being recognized as a candidate, her name was never added to the ballot.

In 2018, Saudi Arabia arbitrarily arrested 13 women's rights activists for exercising their right to freedom of expression, association and assembly, including Loujain al-Hathloul. She was charged with "spying with foreign parties" and "conspiring against the kingdom" for promoting women's rights and calling for the end of the male guardianship system in Saudi Arabia. On December 28, 2020, she was sentenced to five years and eight months in prison – partially suspended by two years and ten months – by the Specialized Criminal Court. She was conditionally released in February 2021, but she continues to live under a travel ban. Her activism inspired the book "Loujain Dreams of Sunflowers", co-written by her sister Lina.

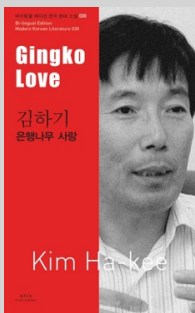


SAUDI ARABIA- Loujain Dreams of Sunflowers by Uma Mishra-Newbery (Author), Lina Al-Hathloul (Author), Rebecca Green (Illustrator); mineditionUS (2022); 978-1662650642

“A courageous girl follows her dream of learning to fly in this ‘clever narrative’ filled with ‘extraordinary spirit... gorgeous colors... a magical quality’ (New York Times). Inspired by formerly imprisoned human rights activist Loujain AlHathloul, this sparkling fantasy story is perfect for fans of Malala’s Magic Pencil and the Rebel Girls series.”

KIM HA-KI (South Korea) - Writer / Novelist - Sentenced to 3.5 Years in Prison; RELEASED

South Korean novelist Kim Ha-ki was arrested in 1997 after an unauthorized visit to North Korea, an act that drew on his past as a political prisoner. He was charged under the National Security Law for an “unauthorized visit,” “praising” North Korea, and “divulging state secrets.” Amnesty International argued his persecution was politically motivated and linked to the content of his publications about the plight of long-term political prisoners. He was sentenced to three-and-a-half years in prison for his actions. Kim Ha-ki wrote several books about the lives of long-term political prisoners. These books, Complete Encounter and Living Tombs, have been reprinted several times in South Korea and have also been used for theatre production. After his release, he continued to publicly advocate for human rights through his work, which has been challenged by the state’s censorship and repression of free expression. Since 2015, Kim has devoted himself to politics.



SOUTH KOREA - Ginkgo Love by Kim Ha-ki; ASIA Publishers (2013); 978-8994006888

Bi-lingual Edition Modern Korean Literature (set 2). “Ginkgo Love” by Kim Ha-kee. ASIA Publishers presents some of the very best modern Korean literature to readers worldwide through its new Korean literature series . We are proud and happy to offer it in the most authoritative translation by renowned translators of Korean literature. We hope that this series helps to build solid bridges between citizens of the world and Koreans through a rich



(cont.) in-depth understanding of Korea. “The purest kind of love is that of our comrades, which cannot but be twisted because of the division of our fatherland. Mr. Cho, did you know that ginkgoes are either male or female, unlike most trees, which are both? But the male and female ginkgoes rarely stand side-by-side. They grow old alone for hundreds of years near village pavilions, knowing that hundreds of kilometers away is their partner. They always think of and yearn for each other. They cannot even take a step towards each other, but they communicate their affection through scent and colors. In a sense, we are all like ginkgoes in this divided land. Far away from each other, we have grown old and gnarled, but we are still joined at heart. Ah, Mr. Yang has made me sentimental.”



CAN DÜNDAR (Turkey) - Journalist - Sentenced to 28 Years; Forced Exile

Can Dündar, a prominent Turkish journalist and former editor-in-chief of *Cumhuriyet* newspaper, was arrested in November 2015 in relation to his work. He faced charges of espionage and aiding a terrorist organization for publishing a report that alleged the Turkish state was shipping weapons to Syria. After being released from pretrial detention and surviving an assassination attempt, Dündar fled to Germany in June 2016. He was later sentenced in absentia to nearly 28 years in prison. Dündar continues to advocate for human rights and press freedom from exile, having founded an online news outlet and a publishing house for books banned in Turkey.

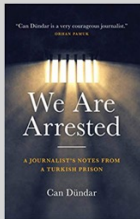
Dündar has lived in Berlin since he fled Turkey in 2016. He currently works as an editor-in-chief of the bilingual journalistic platform Özgürüz. He is also a columnist for the German newspaper *Die Zeit* and a member of the European Press Prize jury. Additionally, he is a patron of the Human Rights Film Festival 2024 and continues to work as an investigative journalist and filmmaker.



TURKEY - Mischief Festival: WE ARE ARRESTED & DAY OF THE LIVING (Oberon Modern Playwrights) by Can Dündar; Oberon Books (2018); 978-1786825575

We Are Arrested: When a journalist receives a flash-drive containing critical evidence of illegal government activity, he is duty-bound to publish the story. But with the nation destabilised and divided, a sinister power is eroding the rule of law, and he soon finds himself risking everything for his profession. This play

is the true story of a journalist's commitment and personal risks and a tribute to the bravery of journalists under threat. Note: Day of the Living, included in this collection, is a presentation of the 2014 disappearance of 43 students in Mexico.



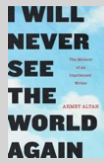
TURKEY - We Are Arrested: A Journalist's Notes from a Turkish Prison by Can Dündar and Juliet Gilkes Romero; Biteback Publishing (2016); 978-1785901386

The title of We Are Arrested is taken from Can Dündar's tweet on the day he was detained. The book is his account of the discovery, the decision to publish it, and the events that unfolded after that decision. Dündar and the newspaper faced police barricades, would-be suicide bombers and assassination attempts, and fierce attacks from pro-government media. While incarcerated Dündar decided to write down his experiences.



AHMET ALTAN (Turkey) - Novelist / Journalist - Life Sentence then 10.5 Year Sentence; RELEASED after 4 Years

Ahmet Altan, a prominent Turkish novelist and former editor-in-chief of the newspaper Taraf, was arrested on September 10, 2016, as part of a post-coup crackdown on journalists and writers. He was initially accused of “sending subliminal messages” and “attempting to overthrow the constitutional order” in relation to his writings and public commentary, and was sentenced to an aggravated life term. Altan was released in November 2019, around the time his memoir I Will Never See The World Again was released in North America. He wrote the memoir in prison on pieces of paper, which he gave one by one to his lawyer. However, Altan was re-arrested and thrown back into prison one week after his release, on a lesser charge of “aiding a terrorist organization” and sentenced to 10.5 years. After serving more than four years in prison, Altan was released on April 14, 2021, following a landmark ruling by the European Court of Human Rights which found his detention violated his rights. He remains free, but continues to face legal challenges, including a three-year, four-month prison sentence from March 2022 for “revealing state secrets” from a 2010 article, which is currently pending appeal.



TURKEY - I Will Never See the World Again: The Memoir of an Imprisoned Writer by Ahmet Altan; Other Press (2019); 978-1590519929

“A resilient Turkish writer’s inspiring account of his imprisonment that provides crucial insight into political censorship amidst the global rise of authoritarianism.”



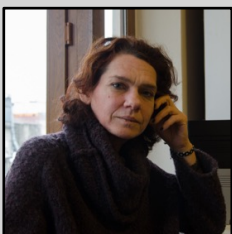
TURKEY - Endgame by Ahmet Altan; Europa Editions (2017); (April 2017); 978-1609453770

“Ahmet Altan bravely crafts a novel about the ways in which corruption envelops contemporary Turkish life ... An atmospheric and enigmatic literary noir, in which an unnamed writer visits a small town and finds himself involved in a mystery with existentialist implications.” Washington Post 50 Notable Books of 2017.



TURKEY - Like a Sword Wound by Ahmet Altan; Europa Editions (2018); 978-1609454746

“Here is a Turkish saga reminiscent of War and Peace, written in lively, contemporary prose that traces not only the social currents of the time but also the erotic and emotional lives of its characters.”



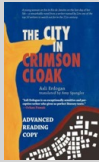
ASLI ERDOGAN (Turkey) - Journalist - Faced Life in Prison; RELEASED after 5 months; Forced Exile, Charges Pending

Aslı Erdoğan is a celebrated Turkish novelist, journalist, and human rights activist who was arrested on August 16, 2016, and charged with terrorism offenses due to her role as a columnist and literary adviser for the pro-Kurdish newspaper Özgür Gündem. The charges, which included “undermining national unity” and “membership in a terrorist organization,” initially carried a potential aggravated life sentence. After 136 days in pre-trial detention, she was conditionally released but remained under a travel ban and still faced terrorism charges.

Erdogan was finally acquitted of all charges on February 14, 2020, but a public prosecutor appealed the acquittal, prolonging her legal battle and forcing her into exile. In November 2022, her



(cont.) book of essays, *Not Even the Silence Belongs to You Anymore*, was confiscated from Turkish prisons. The ban was upheld by a high court, which cited that the book allegedly “defamed the Turkish state, military, and police” and “spread terror propaganda”. She has been living in Graz, Austria, remaining an advocate for human rights & freedom of expression.



TURKEY - *The City in Crimson Cloak* by Asli Erdogan; Soft Skull Press (2007); 978-1933368740

Özgür is poor, hungry, and on the verge of a mental breakdown, with only one weapon against Rio: to write the city that has robbed her of everything. Reading the bits and pieces of Özgür’s unfinished eponymous novel, with its autobiographical protagonist named Ö, Özgür’s story begins to emerge. As Özgür follows Ö through the shanty towns, Condomble rituals, and the violence and sexuality of the streets to her own death, the narrator searches for a way to make peace with life..



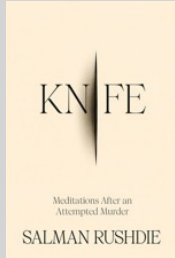
TURKEY - *The Stone Building and Other Places* by Asli Erdogan; City Lights Publishers (2018); 978-0872867505 - Finalist for the 2019 PEN Translation Prize

Three interconnected stories feature women whose lives have been interrupted by forces beyond their control. Exile, serious illness, or the imprisonment of one’s beloved are each met with versions of strength and daring, while there is no undoing what fate has wrought. These atmospheric, introspective tales culminate in an experimental, multi-voiced novella, whose “stone building” is a metaphor for the various oppressive institutions—prisons, police headquarters, hospitals, and psychiatric asylums.

Salman Rushdie (Global) - Novelist - Assaulted at Speaking Event in 2022; Fatwa threatening Death

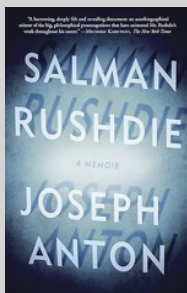
On 14 February 1989 Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, the then leader of the Islamic Republic of Iran, issued a fatwa (religious decree) declaring that the British author, Salman Rushdie, should be executed for having insulted Islam in his novel “*The Satanic Verses*”. ... Some of those associated with his work have been the victims of arbitrary attacks. Rushdie was the victim of a brutal stabbing attack while preparing to speak at an arts conference in 2022.

Knife: Meditations after an Attempted Murder by Salman Rushdie; Random House (2023); 978-0593730249



On the morning of August 12, 2022, Salman Rushdie was standing onstage, preparing to give a lecture on the importance of keeping writers safe from harm, when a man in black rushed down the aisle toward him, wielding a knife. His first thought: So it's you. Here you are. What followed was a horrific act of violence that shook the literary world and beyond. Now Rushdie relives the traumatic events of that day and its aftermath, as well as his journey toward physical recovery and the healing that was made possible by the love and support of his wife, Eliza, his family, his army of doctors and physical therapists, and his community of readers worldwide. *Knife* is Rushdie at the peak of his powers, writing with urgency, with gravity, with unflinching honesty. It is also a deeply moving reminder of literature's capacity to make sense of the unthinkable, an intimate and life-affirming meditation on life, loss, love, art—and finding the strength to stand up again.

Joseph Anton: A Memoir by Salman Rushdie; Random House (2013); 978-0812982602



On February 14, 1989, Salman Rushdie was telephoned by a BBC journalist and told that he had been “sentenced to death” by the Ayatollah Khomeini. For the first time he heard the word fatwa. His crime? To have written a novel called *The Satanic Verses*, which was accused of being “against Islam, the Prophet and the Quran.”

So begins the extraordinary story of how a writer was forced underground, moving from house to house, with the constant presence of an armed police protection team. He was asked to choose an alias that the police could call him by. He thought of writers he loved and combinations of their names; then it came to him: Conrad and Chekhov—Joseph Anton.

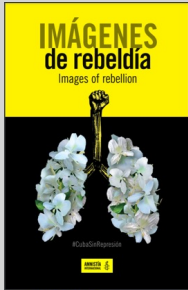
In this remarkable memoir Rushdie tells that story for the first time; the story of one of the crucial battles, in our time, for freedom of speech. He talks about the sometimes grim, sometimes comic realities of living with armed policemen, and of the close bonds he formed with his protectors; of his struggle for support and understanding from governments, intelligence chiefs, publishers, journalists, and fellow writers; and of how he regained his freedom. It is a book of vital importance. Because what happened to Salman Rushdie was the first act of a drama that is still unfolding somewhere in the world every day.

Luis Manuel Otero Alcántara (Cuba) - Artist - Sentenced to Five Years in Prison



Luis Manuel Otero Alcántara is an artist and member of the San Isidro Movement. The San Isidro Movement was formed by artists, journalists, and academics in response to Decree 349, a law seeking to silence critical artists. On July 11, 2021, Luis was detained by state agents shortly after posting a video declaring his intention to join the protests. On August 19, 2021, Amnesty International named Luis a prisoner of conscience, along with other Cubans detained in the context of the protests of July 11, 2021 and called for all charges to be dropped and that they be immediately and unconditionally released.

CUBA - Imágenes de Rebeldía / Images of Rebellion : Amnistía Internacional [2024]



Amnesty International has published the book Images of Rebellion, an extraordinary visual compilation that chronicles and celebrates the defiant spirit of civil resistance in Cuba. The book contains a poignant selection of the more than 21,000 letters and drawings sent to Luis Manuel Otero Alcántara, Cuban artist and prisoner of conscience, in a global outpouring of support. Available as free online download at: <https://www.amnesty.org/es/documents/amr25/7904/2024/es/>

Other works published by Banned Books Week creators are available on the internet.

2025 Banned Books Week Bookmarks Available Now!
Order your 2025 Amnesty International bookmarks at:

amnestyusa.org/campaigns/banned-books/order-your-bookmarks

**AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL
BANNED BOOKS WEEK 2025**



Art by Mary Wolters
2024 First Place
Freedom Pages Art & Literature Competition



-Article 19
Universal Declaration
of Human Rights

EVERYONE HAS
THE RIGHT TO

freedom of opinion
and expression

this right includes
freedom to

hold opinions
without interference

to seek, receive and
impart information

END OF
STORY.

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