

# WORKSHOP: Imperial Feminism and Women's Memoirs of the Middle East

Saturday November 24, 2007

2-4pm

7th Floor, Seminar Room 162

OISE, University of Toronto

252 Bloor Street West

An emerging genre of Middle Eastern diasporic literature is memoirs written by women. These memoirs are beginning to make their way into course readings, book clubs, bookstore shelves, airport newsstands, and, even, popular culture and mass media. They cover a diverse range of experiences and are written by authors of different social and political backgrounds. In this workshop, Haifa Zangana, an Iraqi author with a well known memoir of her own, will walk us through the complexities associated with publishing this form of literature at a time when the Middle East is afflicted with war and occupation, and 'liberating' women is one of the justifications for invasion and 'regime change.' The question to be addressed in this workshop is how to engage with and act upon women's memoirs as a powerful form of their life history and experience? How to read them in the context of war and occupation? How to understand them in the context of growing colonialist and imperialist 'feminism'?

Participating Units: The Women and Gender Studies Institute, University of Toronto and the WGSi Community Knowledge Alliance.