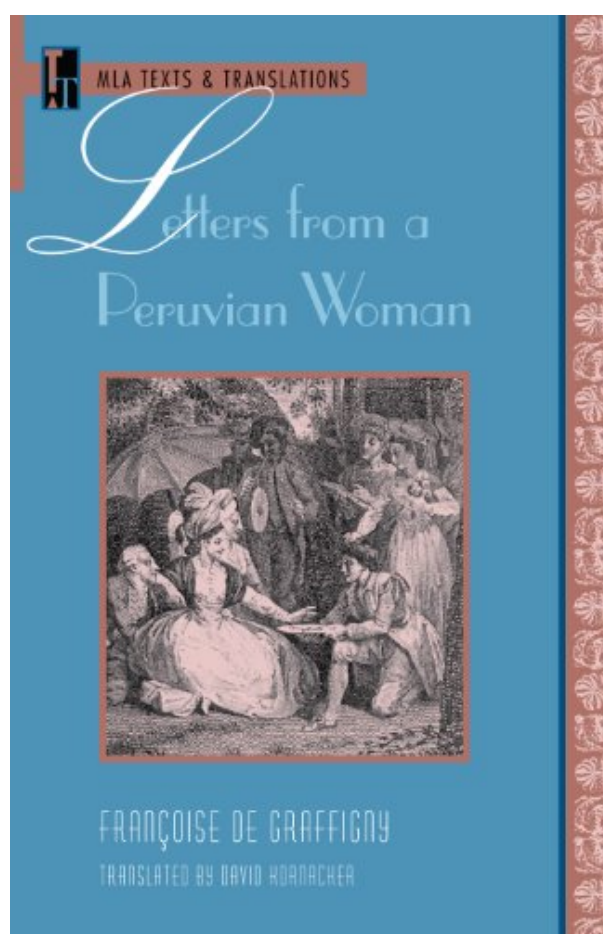
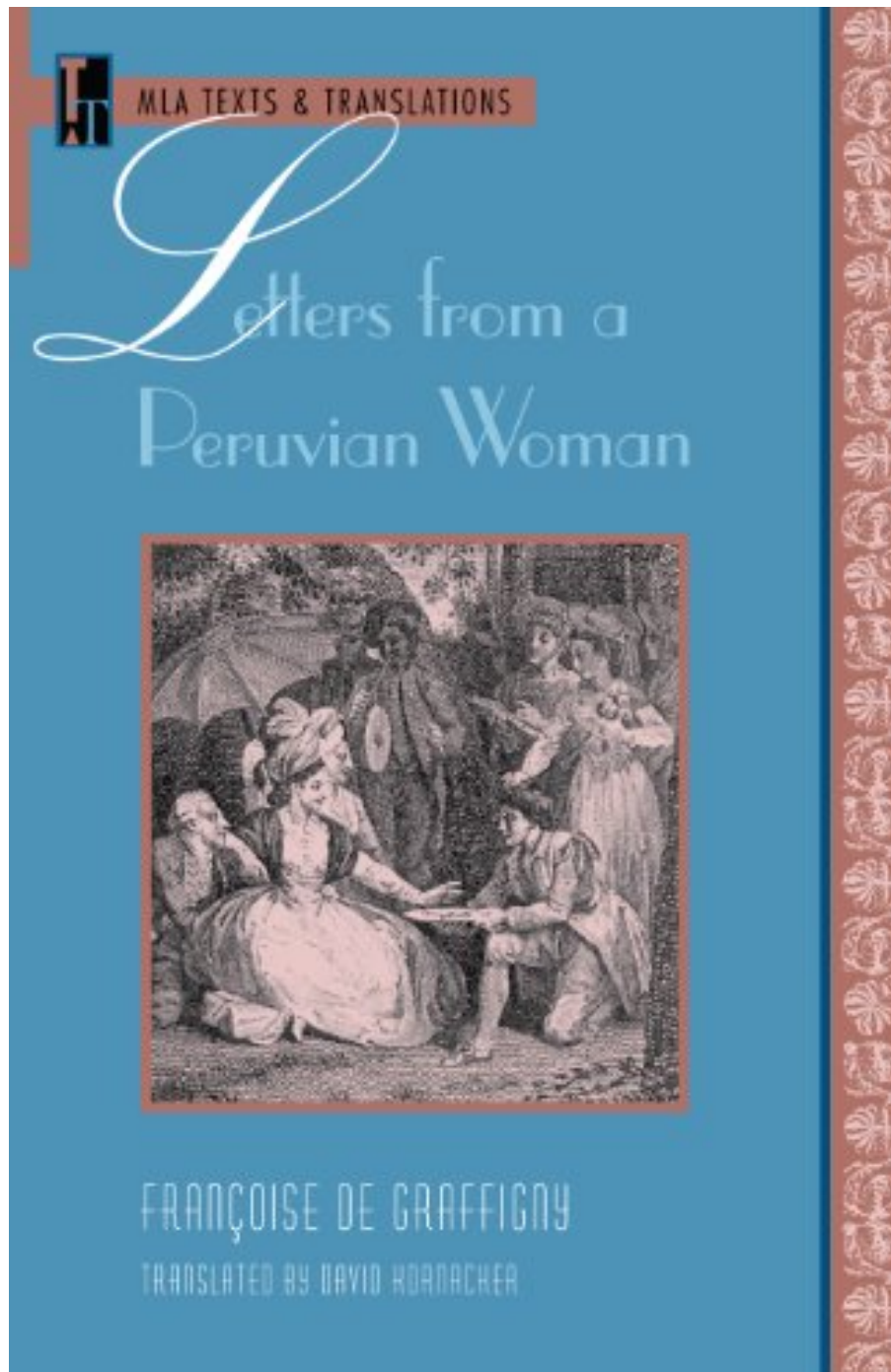


# LETTERS FROM A PERUVIAN WOMAN (TEXTS & TRANSLATIONS) BY FRANCOISE DE GRAFFIGNY



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From Publishers Weekly

This 18th-century novel turns the concept of "savage" on its head in a scathing--and feminist--critique of French society. It comes in the words of a Peruvian princess, Zilia, who has fallen into French hands after being captured by the Spanish. Zilia's letters of love and longing to Aza, the Inca prince she was to have married, shift focus as she is initiated into French language and culture by Deterville, a devoted young nobleman. She portrays the "barbaric" French nobility as effete hypocrites who value politeness and wealth over virtue and who raise their daughters to be ornaments ("It is based on their more or less painfully constricted bearing . . . that parents glory in having raised them well"). The questions of whether Zilia will be reunited with Aza and the fate of Deterville, who loves Zilia, sustain dramatic interest through this lengthy, if astute, portrait. In the end Graffigny portrays a woman of true nobility and courage who must recover her faith in life in the wake of exile and betrayal. Graffigny was a noblewoman who supported herself through her writing; her tale is a worthy restoration to the canon of women's literature.

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Review

"Long denied 'classic status' by the old pedagoguery, Graffigny's only novel, excellently translated by David Kornacker, has apparently benefited from the 'canon revision' of the new." --Times Literary Supplement

Language Notes

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Original Language: French

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One of the most popular works of the eighteenth century, *Lettres d'une Péruvienne* appeared in more than 130 editions, reprints, and translations during the hundred years following its publication in 1747. In the novel the Inca princess Zilia is kidnapped by Spanish conquerors, captured by the French after a battle at sea, and taken to Europe. Graffigny's brilliant novel offered a bold critique of French society, delivered one of the most vehement feminist protests in eighteenth-century literature, and announced--fourteen years before Rousseau's *Julie, or the New Eloise*--the Romantic tradition in French literature.

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- Published on: 1993-01-01
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- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 8.44" h x .45" w x 5.47" l, .54 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 174 pages

From Publishers Weekly

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Wonderful critique of Enlightenment France

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Graffigny has been neglected too long. Her fictional heroine's commentary is as effective a response to the marginalization of women as Olympe de Gouges' "Rights of Women and Citizen". Perhaps more importantly, it's an entertaining narrative of a young girl's journey towards independence and her own definition of autonomy.

4 of 15 people found the following review helpful.

dangerous liaisons

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I REALLY LIKED THIS BOOK. ALTHOUGH I FELT THAT ZILIA WAS A PITYFUL GIRL WHOM NEEDED TO TAKE CONTROL OVER HER SITUATION BUT SHE WAS A GOOD CHARACTER. I THINK SHE HAD A GREAT LIFE IN THE END. THE BOOK IS A QUICK READ AND ENJOYABLE. GREAT TO READ WHILE WATCHING THE MOVIE CRUEL INTENTIONS 1999. HOPE YOU LIKE IT TOO.

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