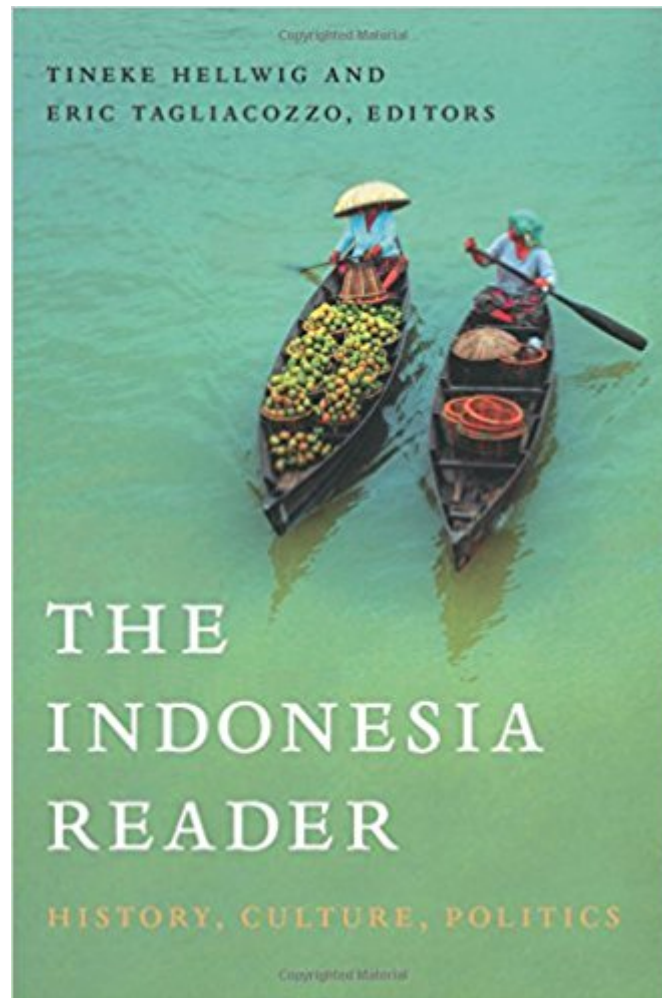




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The Indonesia Reader: History, Culture, Politics (The World Readers)



Synopsis

Indonesia is the world's largest archipelago, encompassing nearly eighteen thousand islands. The fourth-most populous nation in the world, it has a larger Muslim population than any other. The Indonesia Reader is a unique introduction to this extraordinary country. Assembled for the traveler, student, and expert alike, the Reader includes more than 150 selections: journalists' articles, explorers' chronicles, photographs, poetry, stories, cartoons, drawings, letters, speeches, and more. Many pieces are by Indonesians; some are translated into English for the first time. All have introductions by the volume's editors. Well-known figures such as Indonesia's acclaimed novelist Pramoedya Ananta Toer and the American anthropologist Clifford Geertz are featured alongside other artists and scholars, as well as politicians, revolutionaries, colonists, scientists, and activists. Organized chronologically, the volume addresses early Indonesian civilizations; contact with traders from India, China, and the Arab Middle East; and the European colonization of Indonesia, which culminated in centuries of Dutch rule. Selections offer insight into Japan's occupation (1942–45), the establishment of an independent Indonesia, and the post-independence era, from Sukarno's presidency (1945–67), through Suharto's dictatorial regime (1967–98), to the present Reformasi period. Themes of resistance and activism recur: in a book excerpt decrying the exploitation of Java's natural wealth by the Dutch; in the writing of Raden Ajeng Kartini (1879–1904), a Javanese princess considered the icon of Indonesian feminism; in a 1978 statement from East Timor objecting to annexation by Indonesia; and in an essay by the founder of Indonesia's first gay activist group. From fifth-century Sanskrit inscriptions in stone to selections related to the 2002 Bali bombings and the 2004 tsunami, The Indonesia Reader conveys the long history and the cultural, ethnic, and ecological diversity of this far-flung archipelago nation.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Editors Hellwig (Asian studies, Univ. of British Columbia; *In the Shadow of Change: Images of Women in Indonesian Literature*) and Tagliacozzo (history & Asian studies, Cornell Univ.; *Secret Trades, Porous Borders: Smuggling and States Along a Southeast Asian Frontier, 1865–1915*) here introduce the understudied nation of Indonesia. Reading their book is like exploring an eclectic, brightly colored museum and leaving with a multifaceted understanding of one nation's history and cultures. The book is chronologically organized into ten sections, each beginning with an introduction by the editors and then providing ten to 12 engaging pieces relating to the time period. The primary sources included here are the book's gems; they range from fifth-century stone pillars and writings by travelers throughout many centuries to fiction, newspaper articles, manifestos, and more in the 20th and 21st centuries. Unfortunately, there are a couple of minor drawbacks. First, the introductions do not always provide background on the applicable author's affiliations. Second, both Indonesian words and social science terms need definitions. Finally, future versions of this book would benefit from suggestions for additional reading. Recommended for all students of Asian studies. —Karen Sobel, Univ. of Denver Lib.

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--This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

"Hellwig and Tagliacozzo . . . have collected a rich, engaging and broad array of sources which reveal Indonesia's distant past and this makes *The Indonesia Reader* of immense value to historians of all kinds." —David Jansen, *Contemporary Southeast Asia*

"[A]n extraordinary cornucopia of sources that illustrate some of the pivotal and unique moments in Indonesia's life." —Laura Noszlopy, *IIAS Newsletter*

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Its not a history book; but a collections or snippits of informations, the average reader would get a very brief overview of Indonesia. Just a wetting of the tongue; and a shallow view. Read PRAMOEDYA ANANTA TOER (Buru Quartet - 4 books) and then this book.

A great place to get acquainted with Indonesian culture, history, politics, religion, economics, etc.

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