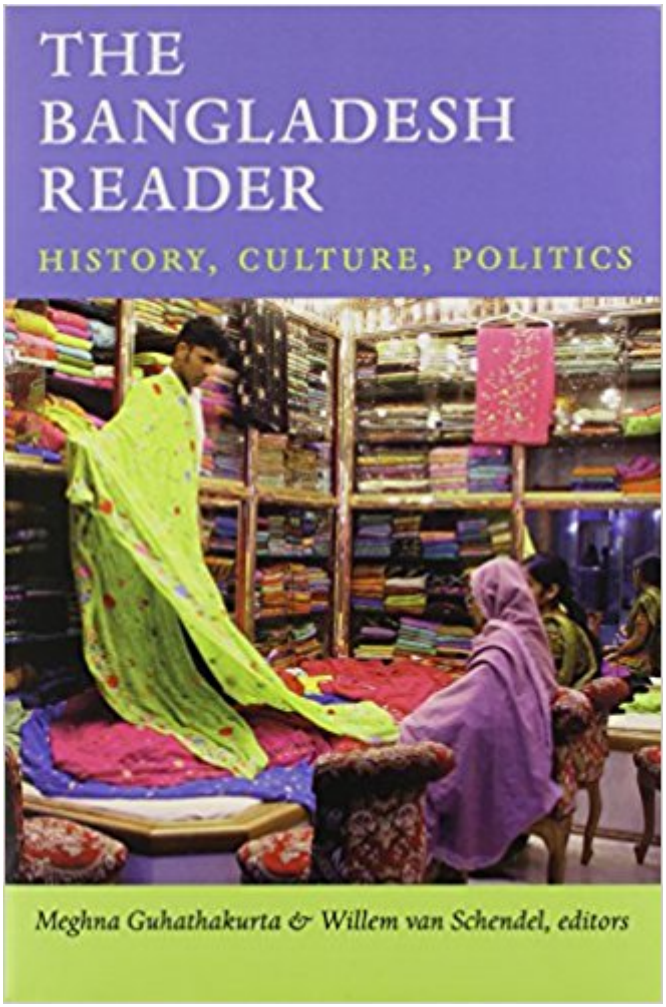
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The Bangladesh Reader: History, Culture, Politics (The World Readers)



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Synopsis

Bangladesh is the world’s eighth most populous country. It has more inhabitants than either Russia or Japan, and its national language, Bengali, ranks sixth in the world in terms of native speakers. Founded in 1971, Bangladesh is a relatively young nation, but the Bengal Delta region has been a major part of international life for more than 2,000 years, whether as an important location for trade or through its influence on Buddhist, Hindu, and Muslim life. Yet the country rarely figures in global affairs or media, except in stories about floods, poverty, or political turmoil. The Bangladesh Reader does what those portrayals do not: It illuminates the rich historical, cultural, and political permutations that have created contemporary Bangladesh, and it conveys a sense of the aspirations and daily lives of Bangladeshis.Intended for travelers, students, and scholars, the Reader encompasses first-person accounts, short stories, historical documents, speeches, treaties, essays, poems, songs, photographs, cartoons, paintings, posters, advertisements, maps, and a recipe. Classic selections familiar to many BangladeshisÃ¢â ¬â •and essential reading for those who want to know the countryÃ¢â ¬â •are juxtaposed with less-known pieces. The selections are translated from a dozen languages; many have not been available in English until now. Featuring eighty-three images, including seventeen in color, The Bangladesh Reader is an unprecedented, comprehensive introduction to the South Asian country’s turbulent past and dynamic present.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

"Bangladesh is a new nation but an old land. It comprises the world's largest delta and one of

the most densely populated areas. It has been home to diverse linguistic, religious, and cultural traditions. Yet its past strength and present achievements are often overshadowed by accounts of natural and man-made disasters. In this book, scholars from across the globe put together written and visual materials to provide facts about and perspectives on a vibrant Bangladesh." (Anisuzzaman, Professor Emeritus, University of Dhaka, Bangladesh)"There is nothing else like The Bangladesh Reader. The range of materials included is stunning, and the volume conveys the feeling of Bangladesh speaking for itself, in many voices. The Reader will definitely be a useful introduction for people who know little or nothing about the country. It also has much to offer people who know a great deal about it. I have studied Bangladesh for years, and I learned a lot reading through this volume." (David Ludden, author of Early Capitalism and Local History in South India)Ã¢â ¬Å“This revelatory volume brings alive BangladeshÃ¢â ¬â„¢s tormented history and vibrant culture through a selection of excerpts and illustrations from works of history, journalism, literature, and visual art.Ã¢â ¬Â• (Andrew J. Nathan Foreign Affairs)Ã¢â ¬Å“Here are the key reasons I found the volume very useful: (a) before this, the history of Bangladesh was a mere appendage to what happened in India and later Pakistan. Its politics was looked at as a mere response to the stimuli provided by India and Pakistan. This book is the first attempt on a grand scale to make the history and politics of Bangladesh stand on its own feet, (b) it is as wide as it is deep. It is wide in the sense that it covers the entire history of this nation from the ancient times until today.Ã¢â ¬Â• (Subhajyoti Ray Economic and Political Weekly)Ã¢â ¬Å“This is a unique, impressive and imaginative approach to compiling a volume of this nature. . . . Does The Bangladesh Reader fulfill and even exceed our expectations at times? Insofar as it is possible to compile a general text on the eighth most populous nation on earth, the answer is an emphatic yes.' (Ali Raza Dawn)Ã¢â ¬Å“The essays, stories, reports, documents, photographs and cartoons in this volume offer an escape from the stereotypes and a real encounter with the country and its people. The way the editors have ensured this is remarkably refreshing. The result is more rewarding than dry academic research or journalistic simplifications.Ã¢â ¬Â• (Ashishis Chakrabarti The Telegram (Calcutta))Ã¢â ¬Å“The latest addition to Duke University PressÃ¢â ¬â„¢ World Readers series is a gem. It offers both general readers and specialists an unprecedented and much-needed array of information, voices, images and perspectives on BangladeshÃ¢â ¬â„¢s history, politics and culture. . . . Overall, this is a hugely impressive feat of scholarship for which the two editors should be congratulated.Ã¢â ¬Â• (David Lewis Pacific Affairs)"The Reader is exceptional because of the eyes of the editors for details of everyday life and the pot-pourri nature of the entries. ...The two distinguished scholars compile the rich narratives with an eye for the ordinary. It is this subaltern

view that gives the Reader its distinctive character. While other compilers look for the contributions of the most scholarly and the well-known writers, the Reader provides voices to the voiceless, it gives them a rightful place, and they remain not in the margin, but in the mainstream. The weaving of the illustrations, reports, stories and scholarly pieces produce a compendium that should be a mandatory reading for anyone interested in understanding where and how Bangladesh came from. The innovative style of this compendium is of great value and the Reader sets a standard for inclusivity." (Habibul Haque Khondker Asian Journal of Social Science 2015-09-01)

Meghna Guhathakurta is Executive Director of Research Initiatives Bangladesh, a nonprofit organization that supports and promotes research on poverty alleviation in Bangladesh.Willem van Schendel is Professor of Modern Asian History at the University of Amsterdam and Head of the South Asia Department at the International Institute of Social History in Amsterdam.

I wanted more of a brief history and cultural guide for the person who will be there for Avery short time with a full agenda.

I thought this book was going to have more anecdotes about people’s stories about growing up/ living in Bangladesh and be more about the culture of the country. Not so much. Its a lot of history, which wasn’t what I was looking for. I won’t finish reading it.

This is a book to own and read every now and then depending on which time period one wants to focus on at the moment. Hundreds of incredible pieces make this collage a piece of art!

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