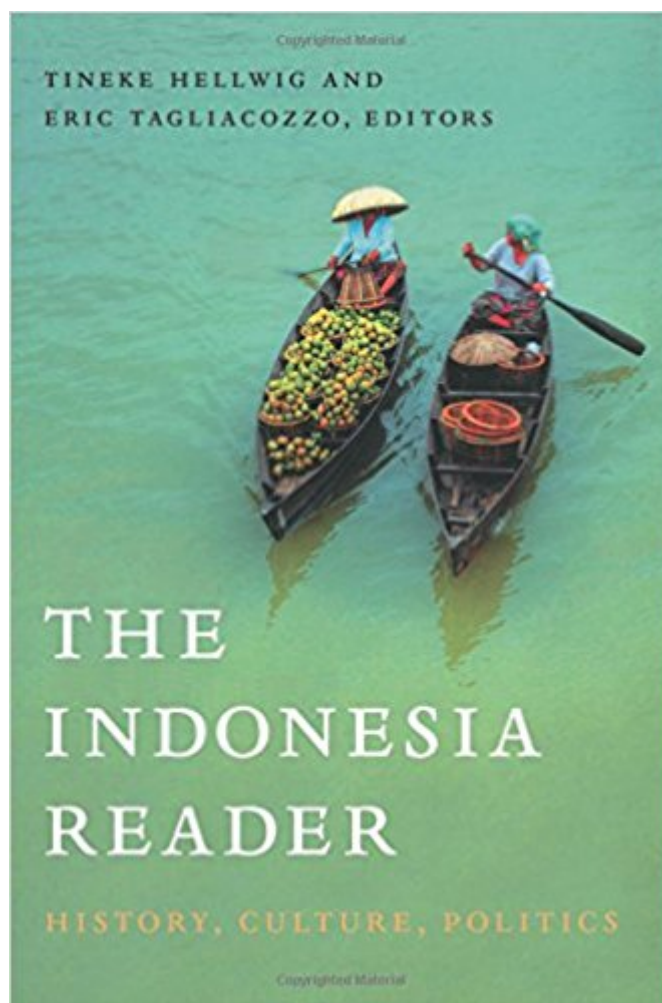


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# The Indonesia Reader: History, Culture, Politics (The World Readers)



## 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*

"Using narratives of history, culture and politics to approach Indonesia, *The Reader* provides a stimulating, challenging and provocative portrait presented through texts chosen on either because they pull apart the concept of Indonesia or because they strengthen it. . . . *The Indonesia Reader* is a vital text. It is not only accessible for a generalist audience, but may also provide some more seasoned professionals with new perspectives through the many alternatives to the nationalistic

interpretations of Indonesia that it presents. • - Andy Fuller, *Inside Indonesia* • “What a pleasure to find such an attractive new reader, a boon to anyone who teaches about Indonesia, and for the students and travellers for which it was designed!” • - David Reeve, *Asian Studies Review* • “This is an excellent debut in a new series of World Readers from Duke University Press. With more than 150 selections, two leading Indonesia scholars have put together an original introduction to Indonesian society, politics, and culture. It achieves variety, yet remains coherent through its thematic selections. The Indonesia Reader is a well-made book in every sense: the translations, about one-fourth of them prepared for this book, are excellent; the contextualization before each selection is sharp yet not overbearing; and the production value is high. . . . [T]his reader will make for rewarding reading. • - Andrew Goss, *Journal of World History* • “[I]t is of great value for instructors developing courses that include Indonesia in such fields as history, political science, or Asian studies. Those with a background in Indonesian studies should also enjoy the book, not least because it presents a wide range of viewpoints about the archipelago over time. . . . [T]he editors’ cogent introductions for each excerpt help set the materials in context. Summing Up: Recommended. All academic levels/libraries. • - S. Maxim, *Choice* • “Tineke Hellwig and Eric Tagliacozzo have woven together a variety of observations across time to help gain some insight into the astonishingly varied story of a fascinating nation. From reflections on the role of interoceanic trade, the flow of world religions, and the fight for independence and, ultimately, a just society, the book offers a key corpus of documents to debate and contextualize. • • Michael Laffan, *Princeton University* • “With selections including scholarly pieces, manifestoes, interviews, speeches, and inscriptions, this volume captures the long sweep of the Indonesian archipelago’s history while emphasizing its spectacular diversity. This is a Reader that deserves to be read. • • Rudof MrfÅžek, *University of Michigan* • “[A]n extraordinary cornucopia of sources that illustrate some of the pivotal and unique moments in Indonesia’s life. • (Laura Noszlopy *IIAS Newsletter*) • “[I]t is of great value for instructors developing courses that include Indonesia in such fields as history, political science, or Asian studies. Those with a background in Indonesian studies should also enjoy the book, not least because it presents a wide range of viewpoints about the archipelago over time. . . . [T]he editors’ cogent introductions for each excerpt help set the materials in context. Summing Up: Recommended. All academic levels/libraries. • (S. Maxim *Choice*) • “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*) • “This

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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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