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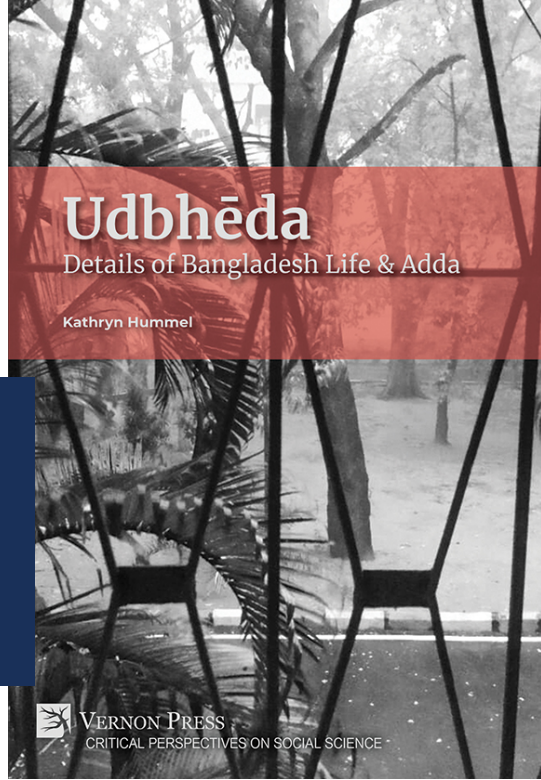
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Kathryn Hummel

Udbhēda

Details of Bangladesh Life & Adda

CRITICAL PERSPECTIVES ON SOCIAL SCIENCE



About the author

Dr Kathryn Hummel (she/her) is a writer, editor, interdisciplinary researcher and multi-media artist. She holds undergraduate degrees in English and Gender Studies from the University of Adelaide and a PhD in Social Sciences from the University of South Australia. Researching at the intersection of cross-cultural ethnography, gender, sexuality, cultural studies, and the creative arts has led Kathryn to universities, literary festivals and art spaces throughout Australasia, Europe and South Asia. She first travelled to Bangladesh as a development volunteer in 2007 and subsequently resided there as a PhD researcher and artist-in-residence. Uncollected, Kathryn's digital media/poetry, non-fiction, scholarly research and short fiction has been published, performed, translated and anthologised around the world. Kathryn has authored six books of poems: 'Poems from Here' (Hobart: Walleah Press, 2014), 'The Bangalore Set' (Bangalore: Kena, 2016), 'splashback' (Sydney: Stale Objects dePress, 2017; Bristol: Prote(s)xt Books, 2019), 'The Body That Holds' (Adelaide: Little Windows Press, 2017), 'A Few Franks for Dearest Dominic' [Bristol: Prote(s)xt Books, 2019] and 'Lamentville' (Singapore: Math Paper Press, 2019). Recipient of the NEC/'Meanjin' Essay Writing Competition prize, the Melbourne Lord Mayor's Dorothy Porter Award and Copyright Agency's Best Poetry Prize, Kathryn's writing has also been nominated for the Pushcart Prize, among others.

Summary

'Udbhēda: Details of Bangladesh Life & Adda' recounts the lived experiences of three diverse individuals—Sampurna, Afreen and Nusrat—as related in conversation with the author. Framed by the methodology and methods of narrative ethnography, 'Udbhēda' describes the details that comment on or even challenge broad definitions and portrayals of Bangladesh and its people, particularly women and hijra. Beneath these narratives runs the author's subjective account as a researcher, writer, cisgender woman and foreign visitor to Bangladesh.

Evoking the everchanging scenes and moods of Dhaka, this multi-genre work combines prose, prose poetry and critical reflection to explore themes including gender, sexuality, class, family, education, work and postcolonial identity. This innovative approach to ethnographic writing embraces the cultural practice of adda—unbounded, often revelatory conversation—as both subject and method. 'Udbhēda' employs a considered, intersectional approach, relating perspectives frequently marginalised in discipline- and industry-specific discourse on Bangladesh, adding depth to the exploration of culture and identity beyond binaries.

Balancing vivid storytelling with contemplative academic analysis, this book offers valuable insights for anthropologists, gender studies scholars and development practitioners. Hummel's self-reflexive stance and exploration of the 'illegitimate' side of ethnography, in the tradition of Ruth Behar's 'Translated Woman', make 'Udbhēda' an exemplary text for teaching qualitative research methods. The accompanying exegesis provides a transparent account of the author's research process, engaging with crucial concepts in postcolonial theory, feminist ethnography and ethnographic representation.

Accessible to both academic and general readers interested in innovative approaches to cross-cultural research and writing, 'Udbhēda: Details of Bangladesh Life & Adda' offers a layered interpretation of the testimonies of three remarkable people. It is a vital text for anyone seeking to look deeper at the complexities of gender, identity, culture and everyday life in contemporary Bangladesh.

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