

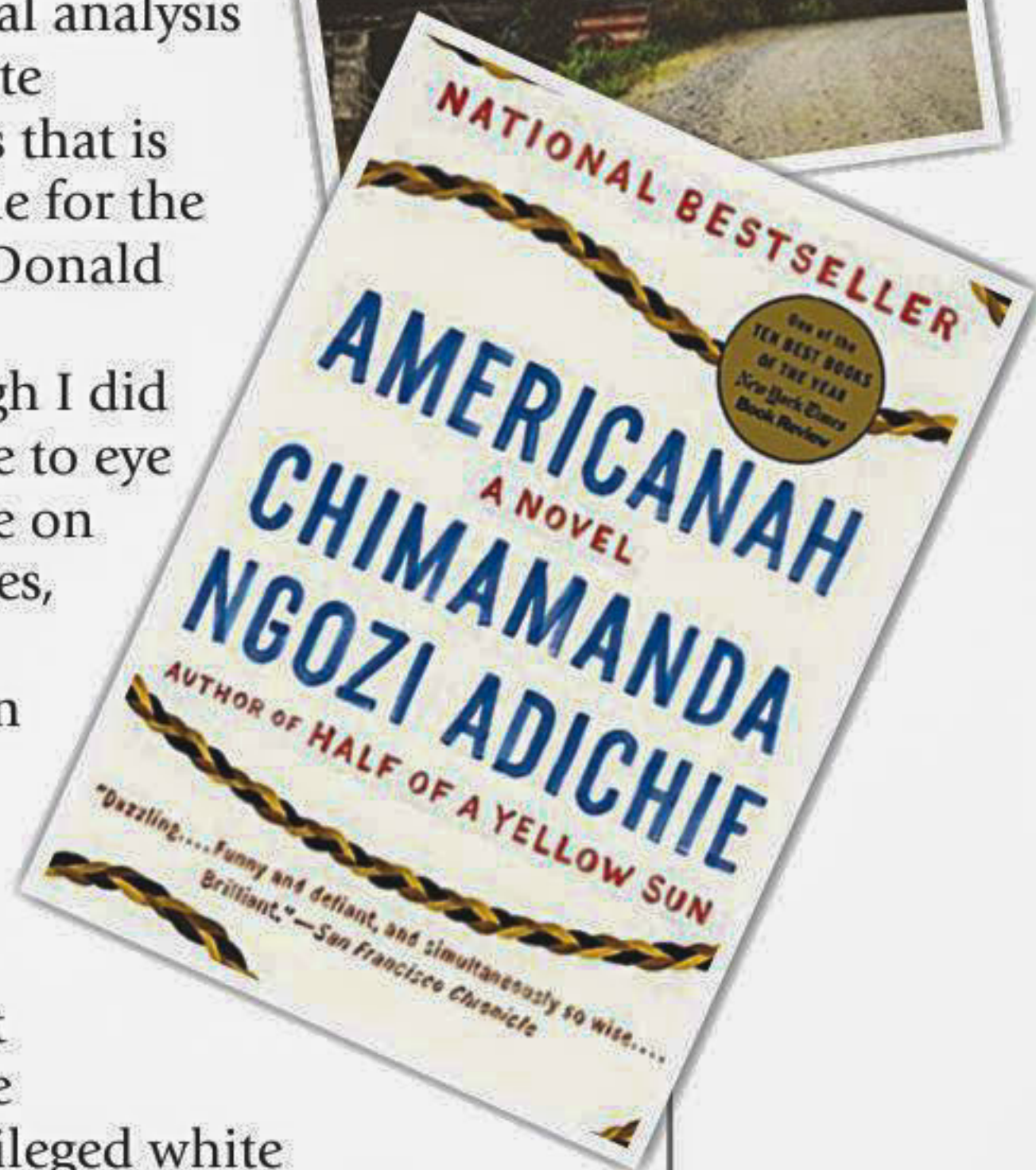
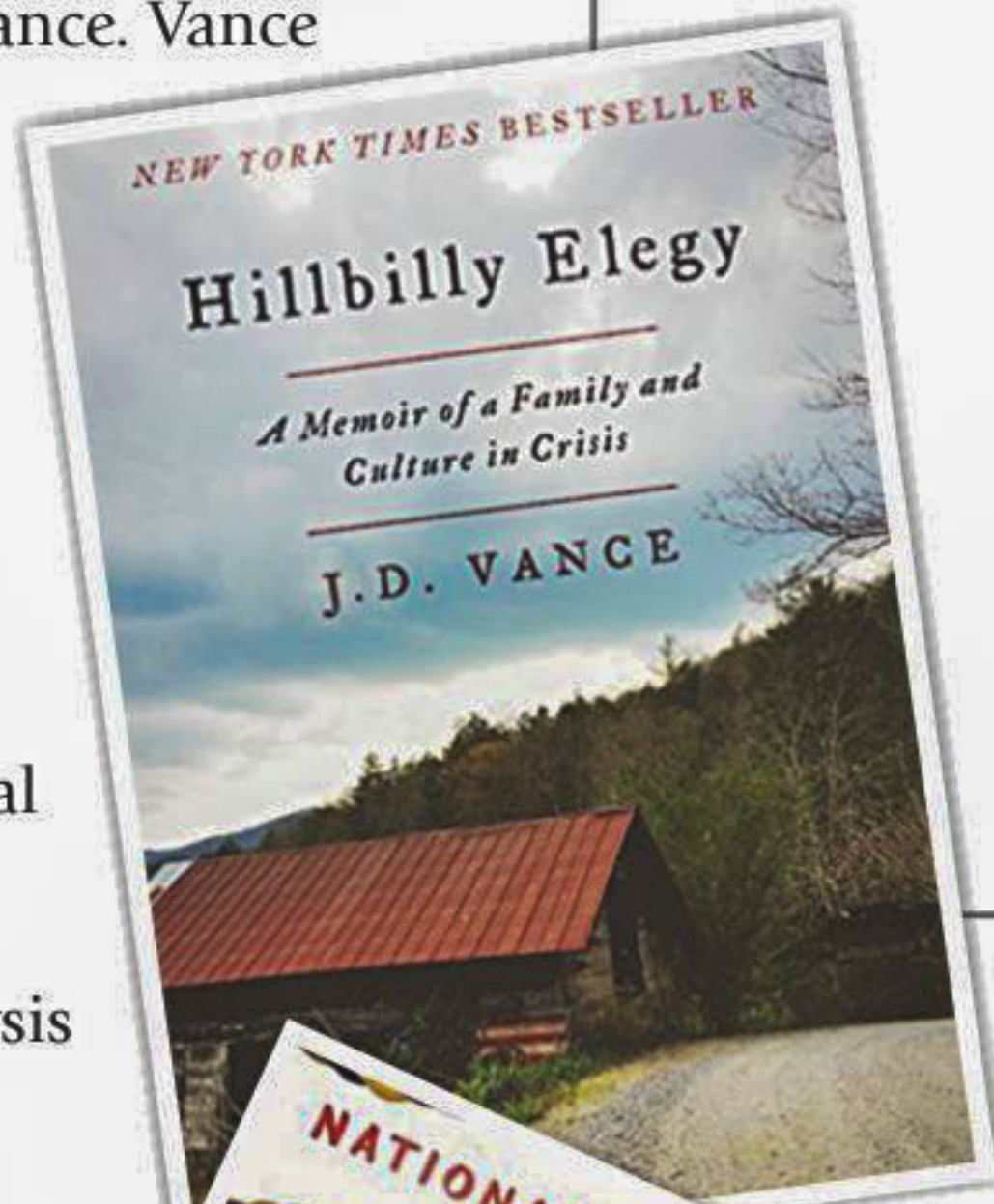


MILIA ALI
Rabindra Sangeet exponent

The 2016 publication that I found both enjoyable and educational is **Hillbilly Elegy**, a memoir by J.D. Vance. Vance describes his upbringing in the heartland of America in a family with a history of low paying, physical jobs that are fast disappearing. In telling his personal story he offers a compassionate sociological analysis of the white underclass that is responsible for the ascent of Donald Trump.

Although I did not see eye to eye with Vance on many issues, the book gave me an insider's view of the anger and discontent among the underprivileged white people who rather than blame themselves for their inability to adapt to the demands of globalisation hold the "Obama Economy" responsible for being trapped in a poverty cycle.

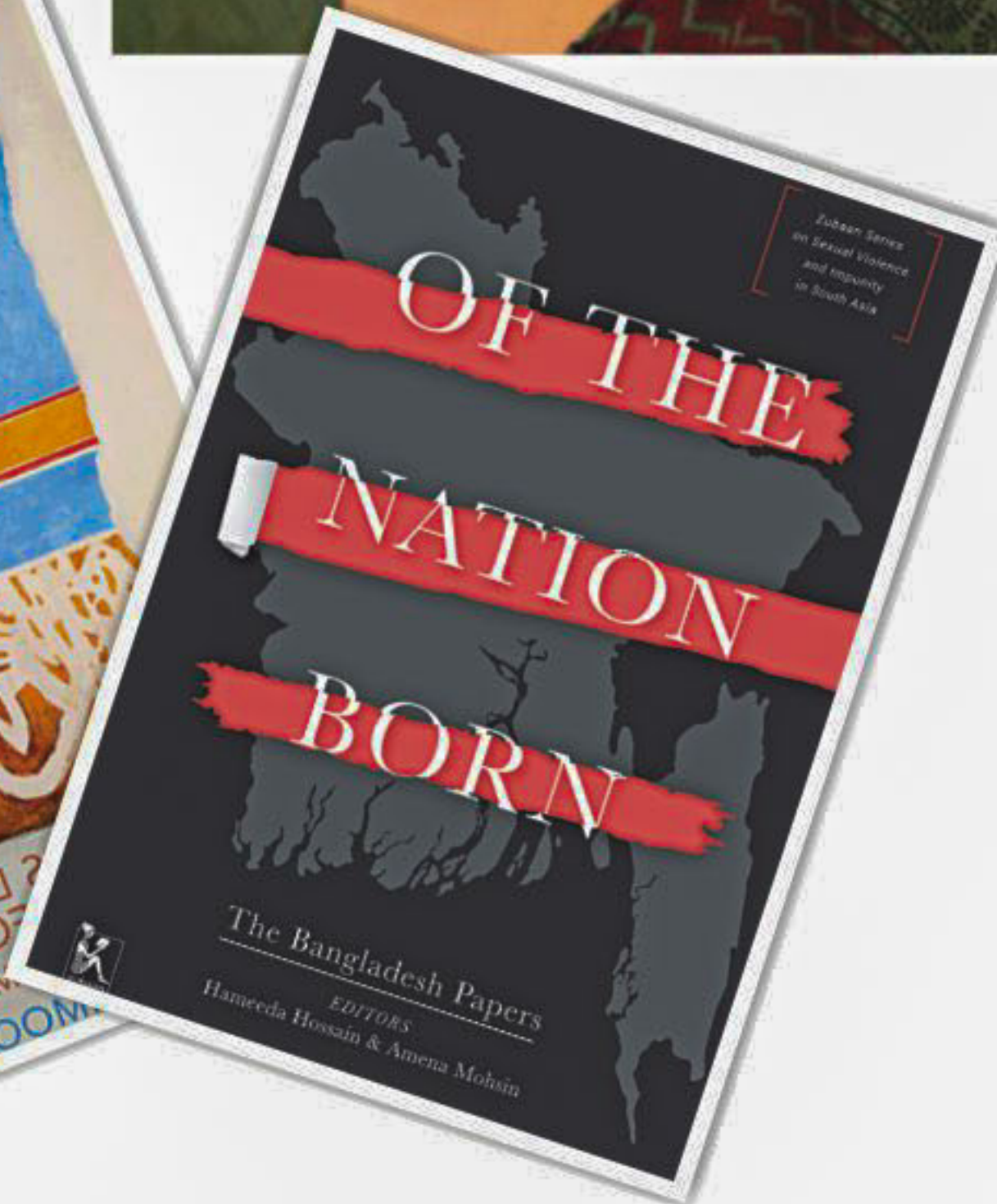
Americanah by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie is a book that I am currently reading. I find it honest, funny and gripping. It is the story of a Nigerian woman who comes to America and is forced to grapple with what it means to be coloured. When after many years she returns to her native country she becomes 'Americanah' because she views her surroundings with "American eyes" It is a remarkable novel of race, identity and love that people, like me, who straddle two worlds (their native country and the United States) can relate to.



AMENA MOHSIN
Professor of International Relations,
University of Dhaka

In 2016, I enjoyed re-reading **Of the Nation Born: The Bangladesh Papers**, Hameeda Hossain and Amena Mohsin (eds.), (Zubaan, New Delhi, 2016).

I think there are so many books that I have enjoyed reading, but I guess given the debates, I enjoyed, **Religious Difference in a Secular Age: A Minority Report**, by Saba Mahmood, (Princeton University Press, 2016).

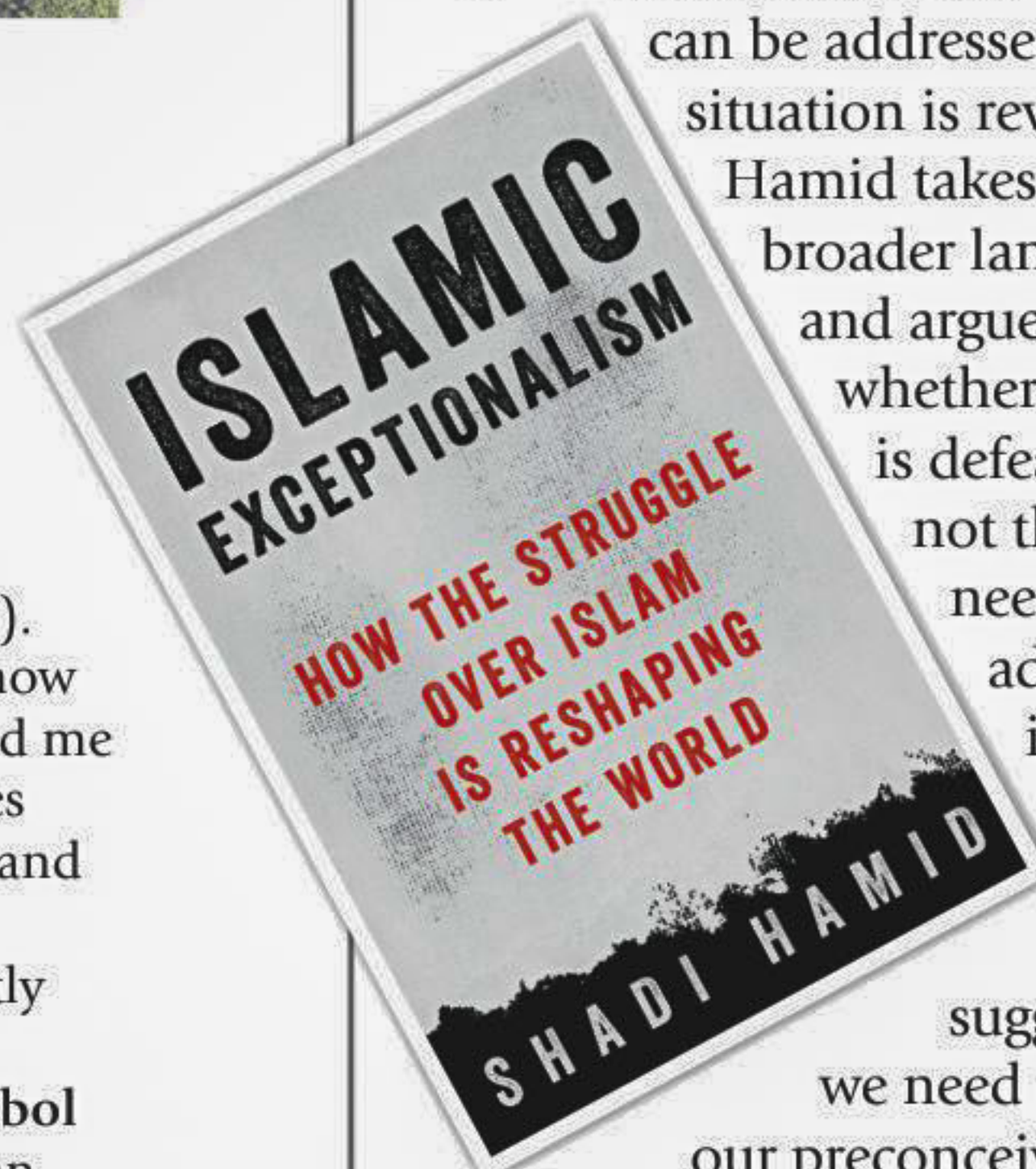
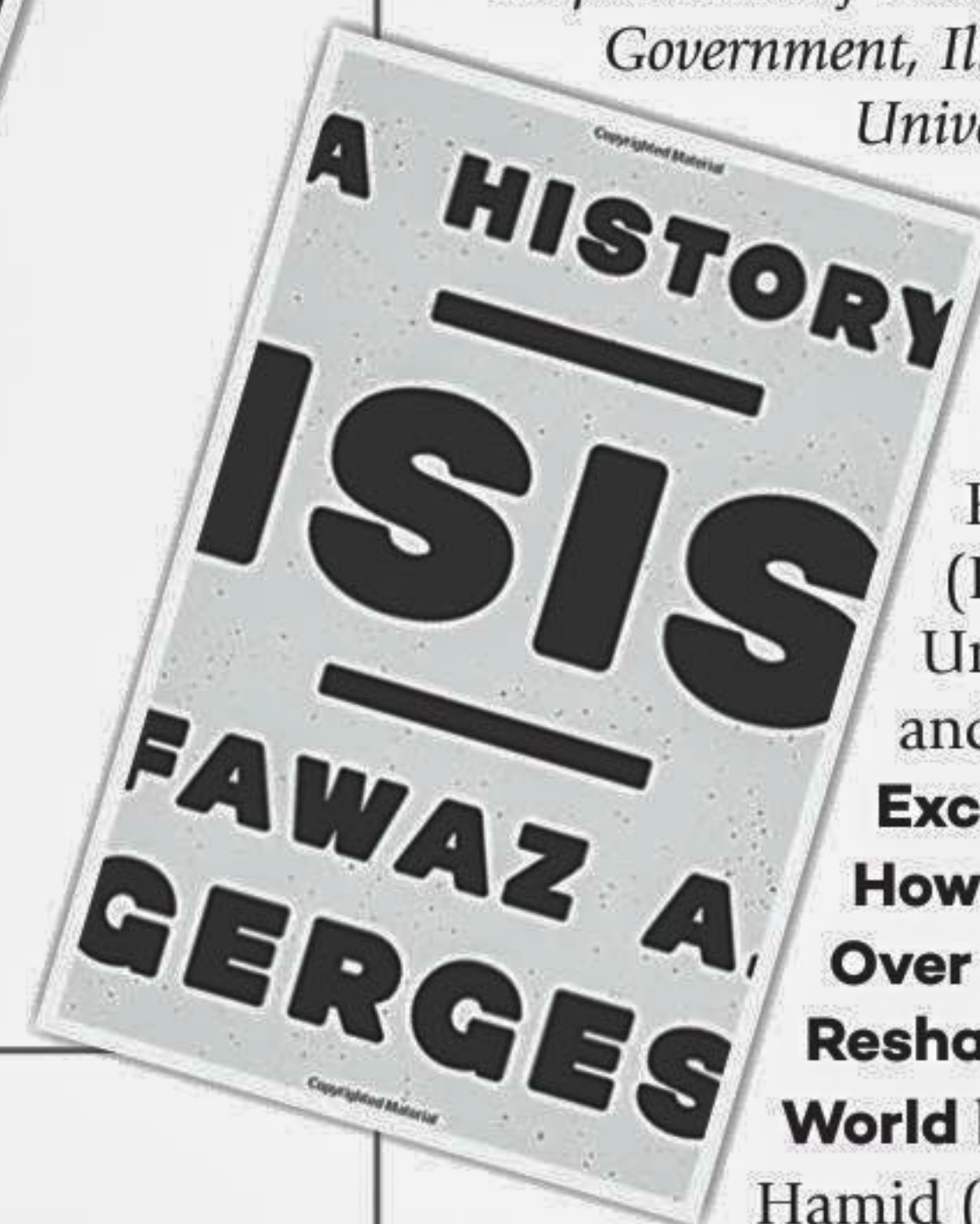


ALI RIAZ
Professor and Chair of the
Department of Politics and
Government, Illinois State
University

I enjoyed reading **ISIS: A History** by Fawaz A Gerges (Princeton University Press) and **Islamic Exceptionalism: How the Struggle Over Islam Is Reshaping the World** by Shadi Hamid (St. Martin's Press).

In some ways they complement each other as both authors are trying to untangle various strands of Islamist politics. These two books seem to approach the issue of Islamist politics from different vantage points. Gerges traces the genesis of ISIS and highlights the socio-political environment which engendered the rise of it, therefore his central point is that if the fundamental causes can be addressed the situation is reversible.

Hamid takes a broader landscape and argues that whether the ISIS is defeated or not there is a need to address the issue of Islamist politics; he suggests that we need to shed our preconceived ideas with regard to Islam. He explains the relationship between Islamist politics and liberalism. He has challenged the common assumptions on Islam and its role in politics, and how religion as a social force is viewed.



MAHRUKH MOHIUDDIN
Director of Marketing,
University Press Limited
(UPL)

I loved **Niruddesh Deshe** by Neel Lohit (Sunil Gangopadhyay).

I absolutely loved how the storytelling transported me to a different reality. There are times even today when I close my eyes and try to breathe in the air of "Dikshunpur". I know exactly what that air smells like.

I also loved **Koyekti Bihbol Golpo** by Shahaduzzaman. Shahaduzzaman's collection of short stories blew me away. I carry that slender book around. Each and every story connects me to something inexplicably powerful, deep within. Those who haven't read them need to dive into the stories to know what I mean!

