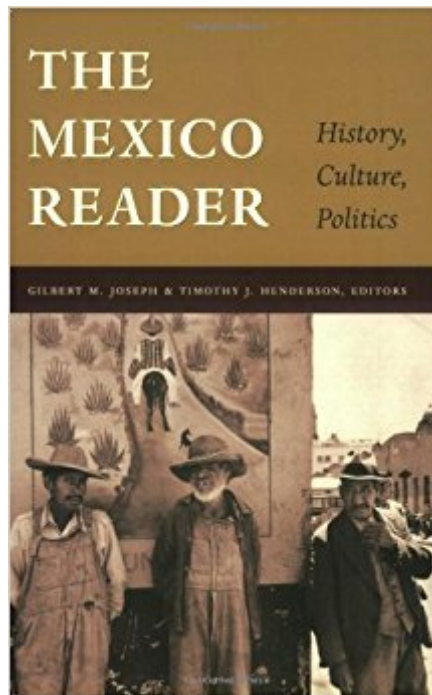


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The Mexico Reader: History, Culture, Politics (The Latin America Readers)



Synopsis

The Mexico Reader is a vivid introduction to muchos MÃ©xicos – the many Mexicos, or the many varied histories and cultures that comprise contemporary Mexico. Unparalleled in scope and written for the traveler, student, and expert alike, the collection offers a comprehensive guide to the history and culture of Mexico – including its difficult, uneven modernization; the ways the country has been profoundly shaped not only by Mexicans but also by those outside its borders; and the extraordinary economic, political, and ideological power of the Roman Catholic Church. The book looks at what underlies the chronic instability, violence, and economic turmoil that have characterized periods of Mexico’s history while it also celebrates the country’s rich cultural heritage. A diverse collection of more than eighty selections, The Mexico Reader brings together poetry, folklore, fiction, polemics, photoessays, songs, political cartoons, memoirs, satire, and scholarly writing. Many pieces are by Mexicans, and a substantial number appear for the first time in English. Works by Octavio Paz and Carlos Fuentes are included along with pieces about such well-known figures as the larger-than-life revolutionary leaders Pancho Villa and Emiliano Zapata; there is also a communiqué from a more recent rebel, Subcomandante Marcos. At the same time, the book highlights the perspectives of many others – indigenous peoples, women, politicians, patriots, artists, soldiers, rebels, priests, workers, peasants, foreign diplomats, and travelers. The Mexico Reader explores what it means to be Mexican, tracing the history of Mexico from pre-Columbian times through the country’s epic revolution (1910–17) to the present day. The materials relating to the latter half of the twentieth century focus on the contradictions and costs of postrevolutionary modernization, the rise of civil society, and the dynamic cross-cultural zone marked by the two thousand-mile Mexico-U.S. border. The editors have divided the book into several sections organized roughly in chronological order and have provided brief historical contexts for each section. They have also furnished a lengthy list of resources about Mexico, including websites and suggestions for further reading.

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Customer Reviews

This massive compilation of articles, essays, poetry, and photographs provides a wonderful introduction to the history and culture of Mexico. Joseph and Henderson are both historians with extensive backgrounds in Latin American and Mexican history. They have selected an eclectic mix of writers, many of them Mexican, including Carlos Fuentes and Octavio Paz. Topics range from the origins and growth of the Aztec Empire to the causes of the Mexican Revolution to the problems facing modern Mexico. There are well-thought-out political tracts here, as well as screeds against political corruption and economic exploitation that drip with outrage. What emerges is a portrait of the "many Mexicos" in which the wealthy, the growing middle class, and the impoverished indigenous peoples are all struggling to find their place in an exciting and rapidly changing land. This work is ideal for general readers, and one hopes it will encourage many to read and learn more about this important and diverse nation. Jay Freeman Copyright © American Library Association. All rights reserved --This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

"For any journey through Mexican history, politics, social movements, and popular culture, travelers should start with this fascinating collection. Expertly edited and translated, each document adds to the rich landscape and each is cogently introduced to the reader. The perfect source book for any college course on Mexico from the Aztecs and Mayas to the 21st century."—John H. Coatsworth, Harvard University

I purchased Mexico Reader as a textbook for my Chicano History classes, and found myself so into it that I read it all (vs. only several parts needed for class).Very interesting recollections and/or opinions of historians on the events of Mexican history. Just the story about Aztecs and their culture worth buying it. I had a certain opinion (like we all do), but after reading it I know it was baseless and I didn't know dang about it... It is way more complicated than most of the people seem to think.Some of the articles include actual historical pieces and can be a bit tedious for a modern reader to

swallow, but majority of the content is very well-thought-of and composed of interesting and captivating features. If you interested in Chicano studies, I would highly recommend this book - it talks about a lot of nuances (like soldaderas for example) that are usually overlooked in regular books on the subject. It has some sort of spirit to it that let you not just read it as a book, but actually makes you understand what people felt as they were going through events of Mexican history.

This book reads like thick chocolate richly textured anlood inspiring from the grandeur of the Aztecs to the heartbreak of the conquest to the whirlwind of revolution to the triumph of modern Mexico. It is a compilation of scores of writers from a simple parish priest to giants like Carlos Fuentes and Octavio Paz all providing essays and poetry and more.

I particularly enjoyed reading and further learning about Mexican culture and tradition. It touches on subjects, that I as a Mexican born, but U.S. educated, had not learned about. It was a fabulous introductory history book and analysis on Mexican history. This is one of those books from college I know I will keep in my personal library collection for years to come. It begins with our indigenous roots and touches into various cultural beliefs and customs and explains them in a manner that made everything "click". Truly recommend this book if you are searching for a precise yet interesting read on mexican culture and history!

The book contains writing by many voices over several centuries. By the time I finished it I felt I had a much better understanding of Mexican history.

I am a Norte Americano residing in Mexico and wished to gain a rudimentary understanding and perspective on the history, multiple cultures and continually evolving politics of this nation. A friend loaned me this book and I found it precisely met my needs and wants. I decided to buy my own copy because as I continue to learn and discover more about Mexico and Mexicans, I find myself referring back to the book as a valuable resource to provide perspective. A recommended read for anyone who is a serious student of Mexico or who lives in or extensively travels throughout Mexico

The wonderful historical anecdotes -- Villa's and Zapata's`meeting the night before their triumphant march into Mexico city, Cortez's own recount of his first meeting with Montezuma -- are worth the price of the book. But, it's the book's contribution to a person's attempt to understand Mexico's highly complex culture, that is (for me) what makes it so powerful. The editors demonstrate their skill

in their selection of the first three essays: the first by a Mexican basher that's filled with stereotypes that unfortunately form the basis for the many misconceptions held by Mexico's neighbors to the north; the second is by a Mexican nut who can't decide whether he hates or admires the US, and holds racial views that are as radical as those of Adolph Hitler; the third essay is by the nobel laureate, Octavio Paz. When I saw his name, I immediately realized what the editors were getting at -- give the readers a nut from each side of the fringe and then give them a distinguished voice of reason. But, the editors surprise us by selecting an essay by Paz that is solely dedicated to the significance of the verb chingar (to f***) within the Mexican culture. The essay is brilliant, but it does nothing to dispel the craziness of the first two. In summary, this is a book that not only informs but, more importantly, makes one think! I treasure it.

If I had known this book before I could have helped my students a lot better than I did. Why do I like this book so much? Because it is a very wise selection of a very wide variety of texts about Mexican history and culture. It is a great anthology that will give its readers a very good picture of Mexican Culture. The authors chosen are excellent. If you are a student or a teacher of Mexican Culture, this is a book you should read. Moreover, for those of you that only want to reach the Medieval ideal: Mixing learning and enjoyment, this is also a book for you. Dr. Rafael Furlong De la G. (PhD Litt.)

This is interesting reading from Cortes' first hand view and account prior to the fall of the Aztec Empire, to Aztec blood and worship practices, to land reform writings and the whole history of Mexico laid out in its important documents, letters and accounts according to the authors. Dry at times as land reform documents can be, important but not exactly spirited writing, to some really nice pieces by Mexico's finest. Accounts of modern day Mexico City are of interest. Worth reading before it sinks into its own filth. For the serious lover of Mexican history, not for everyone. Good at what it does..

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