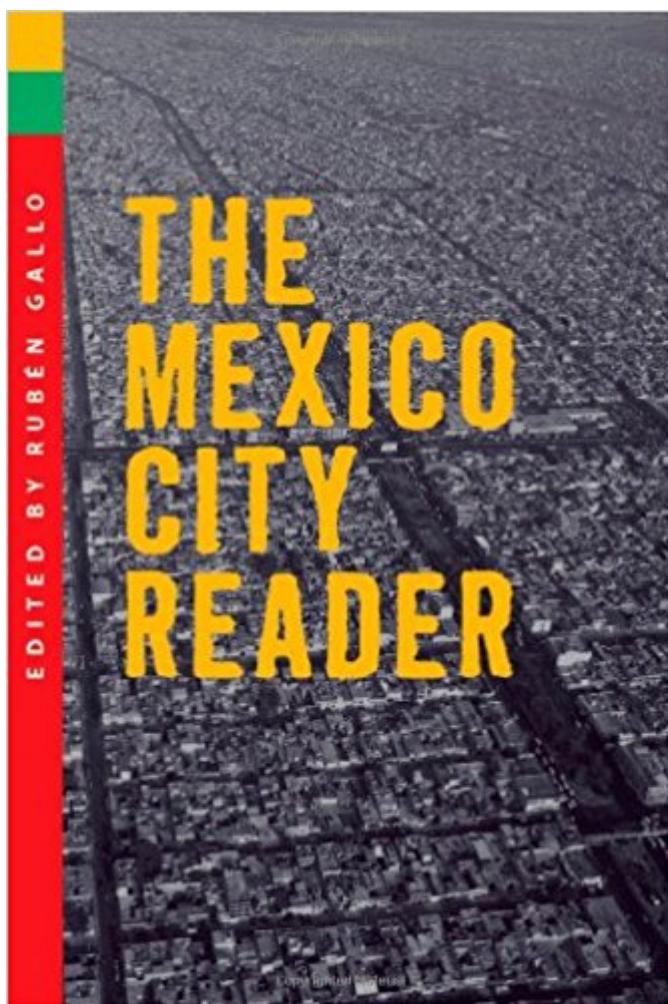


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# The Mexico City Reader (The Americas Series)



## **Synopsis**

Mexico City is one of Latin America's cultural capitals, and one of the most vibrant urban spaces in the world. The Mexico City Reader is an anthology of "Cronicas" -short, hybrid texts that are part literary essay, part urban reportage-a

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

"Gathered under topical headings such as The Metro, Eating and Drinking, Corruption and Bureaucracy, Gallo has chosen some of the most engaging and lively chronicles of [Mexico City]."--Jean Franco, author of "The Decline and Fall of the Lettered City: Latin America and the Cold War""In spite of its size, its proximity to the United States, and its extraordinarily vibrant cultural life, Mexico City remains almost invisible as a literary locale to North American readers who do not know Spanish. Ruben Gallo undertakes to fill this gap with his anthology of writings about the city, and he does so with great skill, insight, and verve."--Maarten van Delden, author of "Carlos Fuentes, Mexico, and Modernity" A must-read for anyone interested in the social and cultural pulse of modern Mexico City. •Clara Ricciardi, "The Bloomsbury Review""Gathered under topical headings such as The Metro, Eating and Drinking, Corruption and Bureaucracy, Gallo has chosen some of the most engaging and lively chronicles of [Mexico City].";Jean Franco, author of "The Decline and Fall of the Lettered City: Latin America and the Cold War""In spite of its size, its proximity to the United States, and its extraordinarily vibrant cultural life, Mexico City remains almost invisible as a literary locale to North American readers who do not know Spanish. Rubn Gallo undertakes to fill this gap with his anthology of writings about the city, and he does

so with great skill, insight, and verve." Maarten van Delden, author of "Carlos Fuentes, Mexico, and Modernity"

The Americas, Ilan Stavans, Series Editor, Irene Vilar, Associate Editor

I'm certainly not a chilango (a native of Mexico City), but over the past 30 years I have made about 10 trips to this extraordinary basket-case of a city, the most recent trip being December of 2011. I thoroughly enjoy visiting there, but I am not blind to its problems and dangers. In my younger days, I'd most often go there alone; but even when accompanying someone who was new to the city, except for the occasional guided tour we'd most often walk or travel by metro or cab (and, as several writers suggest, it is in walking about it that one truly gets the fullest experience of Mexico City). Thus, I like to think that my knowledge of the city's broad center (where most of these essays are set) is fairly thorough. So, reading this fine collection of essays about life in the D.F. was, for me, a rather strange experience. Very often, I found myself saying, "Yes--that indeed once was true, but now . . ." First, the reasons you, as a possible visitor to Mexico City, should consider buying this book: Ruben Gallo's introduction, which sketches out the long history of the city and then critiques the usual theorizing of the D.F.--the nostalgic lamenting of the loss of Mexico City's former graceful status of the City of Palaces--in favor of a theory arguing that, especially since the immediate aftermath of the 1521 conquest, the city has constantly been remaking itself; all of the essays in the section called "Places," which still ring true to me; the various photo-essays, in particular Francis Alys' "Ambulantes"

This is a wonderful book, I strongly recommend it.

This Reader contains several stories that explain the background of various landmarks in the Distrito Federal. Each chapter makes a great day read and they are well-written and pertinent, even for frequent visitors.

I have a thing for both Mexico and for non-fiction. This interesting collection of essays about D.F. satisfies my curiosity.

Overall, a very good anthology of diverse material on Mexico City. The focus on just the one city--the DF--is wise and unique: many readers/books would try to encompass all of Mexico or

Mexican minorities or women in Mexico or whatever have you. But by narrowing the scope via geography and openly showcasing Mexico City as a geographical unit worthy of its own anthology (which it is, certainly) this book opens up many varied aspects of the locale from foodways to politics to history. Indeed, instead of having too-narrow a focus, in fact the book is far too short to come close to cutting into the deep layers of Mexico City, though it's a fine place to start--the best place insofar as social sciences I would say. My only complaints are:1) It's already very dated: we need a new edition of this fine book for it to address today's Mexico City. I am awaiting the day when anthologies will be websites instead of books and constantly updated akin to Wikipedia or Wikitravel. In many cases, the age of this book really shows though that should not discourage anyone from reading it because it does still offer a real wealth of insight.2) The book simply should have been longer. Aside from the cost of printing a slightly larger book, I don't see any real obstacle to making it longer, either, as many course readers number over 600 pages. This one clocks less than 350 pages and there are plenty of worthwhile essays on Mexico City in the public domain--historical documents, even--so copyright isn't a viable problem. The editorial approach taken has been superb: nearly all the included material is great. However, the editor could have sourced even more material to produce a far more robust book. "Readers" really serve two purposes: to educate a seminar student or other person on the topic at hand via reading the whole damn book or, to serve as a reference book for someone interested/involved in the subject. For the latter, the more material the better. I hope for a new edition of this book soon. For now, it's still very worthwhile despite my small misgivings

Awesome book. This book paints a picture of Mexico City like no other. It's a collection of 30-some essays and reportage. Some have a historical perspective (e.g., the Metro system just after it was built), while others are very recent. This isn't a guidebook, but it will give you a better understanding of the city's underpinnings than a stack of Lonely Planets ever will. Most of the authors are Mexicans; a lot of the essays are famous in Mexico, and appearing in English for the first time. There is a level of authenticity here that is not reached by competing books (e.g., David Lida's 'First Stop in the New World' -- which is more of an American journalist's perspective on things.) The writing is exciting, artistic, and well-chosen.

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