

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

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Excessively European, refreshingly European, not as European as it looks, struggling to overcome a delusion that it is European. Argentina—in all its complexity—has often been obscured by variations of the "like Europe and not like the rest of Latin America" cliché. *The Argentina Reader* deliberately breaks from that viewpoint. This essential introduction to Argentina's history, culture, and society provides a richer, more comprehensive look at one of the most paradoxical of Latin American nations: a nation that used to be among the richest in the world, with the largest middle class in Latin America, yet one that entered the twenty-first century with its economy in shambles and its citizenry seething with frustration.

This diverse collection brings together songs, articles, comic strips, scholarly essays, poems, and short stories. Most pieces are by Argentines. More than forty of the texts have never before appeared in English. *The Argentina Reader* contains photographs from Argentina's National Archives and images of artwork by some of the country's most talented painters and sculptors. Many selections deal with the history of indigenous Argentines, workers, women, blacks, and other groups often ignored in descriptions of the country. At the same time, the book includes excerpts by or about such major political figures as José de San Martín and Juan Perón. Pieces from literary and social figures virtually unknown in the United States appear alongside those by more well-known writers such as Jorge Luis Borges, Ricardo Piglia, and Julio Cortázar.

The *Argentina Reader* covers the Spanish colonial regime; the years of nation building following Argentina's independence from Spain in 1810; and the sweeping progress of economic growth and cultural change that made Argentina, by the turn of the twentieth century, the most modern country in Latin America. The bulk of the collection focuses on the twentieth century: on the popular movements that enabled Peronism and the revolutionary dreams of the 1960s and 1970s; on the dictatorship from 1976 to 1983 and the accompanying culture of terror and resistance; and, finally, on the contradictory and disconcerting tendencies unleashed by the principles of neoliberalism and the new global economy. The book also includes a list of suggestions for further reading.

The Argentina Reader is an invaluable resource for those interested in learning about Argentine history and culture, whether in the classroom or in preparation for travel in Argentina.

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Editorial Review

From Library Journal
Considering the continuing economic crisis in Argentina, this volume is a timely addition to Duke's "Latin America Readers" series (see also Peru, 1995, and Brazil, 1999). An extensive collection of documents, the book is divided into ten major sections, representing topics and issues such as the independence movement, populism under Per"n, and state violence following Per"n's death in 1974. A brief but useful introduction sets the stage for the documents in each section, and each one is preceded by an explanatory note. There are 77 documents included, 40 of which have not been previously published in English. The editors (Nouzeilles, romance studies, Duke; Montaldo, languages and literature, Universidad Sim"n Bol!var) have carefully selected pieces that represent voices outside mainstream Argentina, several from writers whose words have been silenced. From Eurocentric cosmopolitan Buenos Aires to gauchos on the last frontier, these readings have a powerful collective impact. The volume complements the recent Culture and Customs of Argentina to provide a comprehensive view of this complex nation of some 37 million people. Recommended for academic and larger public libraries. Boyd Childress, Auburn Univ. Lib., AL
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Review

“[It is] impossible to find a better introduction to the labyrinth, enigma, and delight that is Argentina, from the first sightings to the latest curses. Splendid and indispensable!”—Ariel Dorfman

“[T]he best introduction for English readers to [Argentina’s] history, culture, and society. . . . [T]his collection subtly conveys the admirable and loathsome qualities of a complicated and in many ways unfathomable society.”
(Benjamin Schwarz *The Atlantic Monthly*)

"*The Argentina Reader* is the third title-following *The Peru Reader* and *The Brazil Reader*-in the excellent series sponsored by the Consortium in Latin American Studies at the University of North Carolina and Duke University. . . . [A] very well crafted, well illustrated and consistently interesting volume. . . . [T]he volume reads effortlessly well, which speaks . . . of the skill of the translators, especially the main translator, Patricia Owen Steiner."
(John King *Journal of Latin American Studies*)

“[A] timely addition to Duke’s Latin America Readers series. . . .[P]rovide[s] a comprehensive view of this complex nation of some 37 million people. Recommended. . . .”
(*Library Journal*)

"[A] timely and stellar collection. . . . This highly rewarding contribution will be useful for students and Argentina experts alike."
(*Foreign Affairs*)

"This impressive collection of articles and documents introduces the reader to the enigma that is Argentina. . . . A richer and more eclectic overview of the country and its people would be hard to find."

(Pushpinder Khaneka *The Guardian*)

"Conveying the complex enigmatic contradiction that is Argentina in the pages of a book is accomplished in this installment of Duke's 'Latin America Readers' series. . . . the editors provide ample context for any reader to appreciate Argentina's rich culture and history. . . . From sports and arts to history and politics this is a welcome and timely addition to our understanding of Argentina."
(Teo Ballvé *NACLA Report on the Americas*)

"Wide-ranging. . . . [A]n excellent starting point for further reading. . . . [H]ighly recommended."
(*The Rough Guide to Argentina*)

From the Publisher
"Impossible to find a better introduction to the labyrinth, enigma and delight that is Argentina, from the first sightings to the latest curses. Splendid and indispensable!"—Ariel Dorfman

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