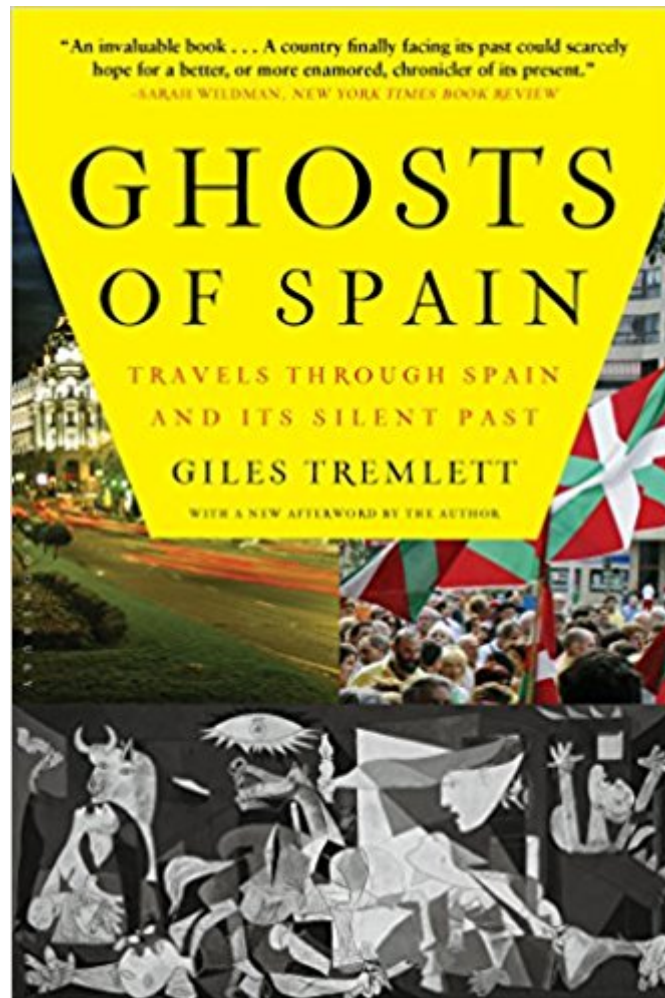




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Ghosts Of Spain: Travels Through Spain And Its Silent Past



Synopsis

"Part modern social history, part travelogue, *Ghosts of Spain* is held together by elegant first-person prose...an invaluable book...[that] has become something of a bible for those of us *extranjeros* who have chosen to live in Spain. A country finally facing its past could scarcely hope for a better, or more enamored, chronicler of its present."-Sarah Wildman, *New York Times Book Review*

The appearance, more than sixty years after the Spanish Civil War ended, of mass graves containing victims of Francisco Franco's death squads finally broke what Spaniards call "the pact of forgetting"-the unwritten understanding that their recent, painful past was best left unexplored. At this charged moment, Giles Tremlett embarked on a journey around the country and through its history to discover why some of Europe's most voluble people have kept silent so long. In elegant and passionate prose, Tremlett unveils the tinderbox of disagreements that mark the country today. *Ghosts of Spain* is a revelatory book about one of Europe's most exciting countries.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

"[Tremlett] paints a rich, multicolored canvas of one of Europe's most fascinating nations." *Entertainment Weekly*

"This well traveled journalist knows his subject as he ventures through the past to explain the present personality of a country so varied that even in modern times its complicated medieval legacy is part of everyday life." *Washington Times* (Ann Geracimos)

"Tremlett has written a smart and highly readable book that mixes incisive political history with sophisticated cultural reporting." *Seattle Times* (Robin Updike)

"[An] incisive and engaging book." [Tremlett's]

sober analysis of how the Madrid train bombings of March 11, 2004...exposed deep fissures in Spanish society is the best report I've read on the subject. [A]n invaluable book. Indeed, since it appeared in Britain last year, 'Ghosts of Spain' has become something of a bible for those of us extranjeros who have chosen to live in Spain. A country finally facing its past could scarcely hope for a better, or more enamored, chronicler of its present. New York Times Book Review (Sarah Wildman) "An affectionate, deeply informed tour of the country. a highly informative, well-written introduction to post-Franco Spain. Mr. Tremlett's taut recounting of the 2004 train bombings in Madrid makes especially timely reading, with the suspects now on trial. New York Times (William Grimes) "Mr. Tremlett's...affectionate yet critical intimacy with the country helps to make this book much more than an ordinary journalistic survey. Extended residency has...allowed Mr. Tremlett to gather off-beat stories distinctly revealing of his adopted land. Wall Street Journal (Francis X. Rocco) "[A] provocative and vividly written book that is part history, part political and social commentary, and part love letter. This book should be in all public and academic library collections on Spanish history and culture. Library Journal "Tremlett went native almost immediately upon his arrival in Spain twenty years ago. He wants us to see, hear, touch, and taste exactly why there are pages here on almost every exemplary, cautionary, and symbolic aspect of Old Spain and New. Harpers (John Leonard) "[A]n evocative, often poignant sojourn through the as-yet uncleared psychic mists of the civil war. Star-Tribune (Michael J. Bonafield)

Giles Tremlett is the Guardian's Madrid correspondent. He has lived in, and written about, Spain for the past twenty years.

What comes to your mind when you think of Spain? Does it remind you of a place where you can spend your holidays? I have never been to Spain. Judging by the postcards, movies and the excitement on the faces of my friends, I expected Spain to be an ideal place to spend your holidays. But little did I know Spain has more layers to it besides being a place for fun and frolic. It is also a place which is struggling to come to terms with its ghosts. Less than 40 years after the death of the Generalissimo, Francisco Franco, the people are still divided on what Spain went through during his reign. A lot of modernization happened under Franco. On the other hand, there was also a lot of brutality. Ironically, it was also a time when brother turned against brother or neighbour against neighbour. Even after all these years, Spain is still deeply divided on this subject and is reluctant in

exorcising the demons. Modern Spain is trying to forget the past. At the same time, it is also trying to capitalize on the tourism. The tourism which has boosted construction has also ushered in corruption. At the same time, there are lone wolves who stand up against the tide. If this is not enough, nationalism is creating a division in the map of Spain. The Basques refuse to be Spanish. Similarly, Barcelona is not Spanish if you take the language and culture into consideration. Having spent a considerable time in Spain, Giles Tremlett shows us a side of Spain which we have not seen. In order to paint this picture of Spain, he not only draws from the experience of living in the country for so many years but also the networks he has created in the country. He goes to different parts of the country, conducts interviews and uses this as the basis for telling us about the struggles of Spain. This technique serves in telling the facts like in an investigation in a very interesting way. This is the book to read if you are armchair traveller or if you plan to visit the country. Visiting places can help you take photographs. Knowing the people will help you tell a much more interesting story using the photographs. It will also help you understand and appreciate the locals you meet.

I have learned a lot about the Spain, politically, culturally and emotionally. The Spanish are an interesting and very diverse people; some of whom do not want to be one nation but a federation of states. My only criticism, if it is that, is I wish there was more on the Spanish Civil War, which is why I picked up the book. Yet I am glad I read the book because of the other facets of the nation that I now understand a little better. It really makes me want to go back and visit specific regions of the country.

For those who are interested in the pre WW II wars between Fascism and Socialism/Communism. this book, though somewhat repetitive with other books on this subject, is a very good read. Do take the time for this book!

a real insight into the Franco days and the aftermath of "forgetfulness" and "reinvention" of a nation. Well written and harrowing in parts as the history is still recent. He's still very much revered in the older circles and still whispered about behind closed doors by those who still fear and mistrust the system. Brought to life by an excellent researcher who clearly loves his adopted country.

I read this book while touring Spain. I wish that I had read it before beginning the tour, but it found it to be exceptionally well written, very balanced, and wonderfully educational. I gave it to our tour guide once I completed reading it. I would recommend this book to anyone that plans to travel to

Spain, especially those that will travel within the country. The descriptions of the various regions will appreciate the history of each, the differences, and most importantly, why the Spanish seem to lack a sense of nationalism, and are much more loyal to their region.

In an effort to explain a secretive history, Giles Tremlett seems to repeat himself endlessly in a very long-winded fashion. Even as someone who is enthralled with the history of Iberia, this book was so hard to get through I couldn't even finish. The information he provides is interesting, albeit much of it is something you can find elsewhere; the major issue is his writing style.

Nice follow up after reading the classic *Iberia* by James Michener. Brings the reader up to date on life in modern Spain which is still haunted by ghosts of its civil war and the battle between tradition and modernism. La Transición, or Spain's transition to democracy is something that is occurring both historically, politically, and personally as Spain enters a more globalized, connected world. Tremlett describes this "transición" from all perspectives, but it is his personal perspective, as an ex-pat Brit raising his family in Spain, which I found particularly enjoyable. His descriptions of day to day life juxtaposed into chapters dealing with deeper historical and political events, such as the aftermath of the Spanish Civil War, the legacy of Franco, the Basque separatist movement, the pride of Catalans, and the 2004 Islamic bombings, makes this book very readable and pertinent to truly understanding not only the country but its people, and their remarkable history.

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