



Historia mínima de España

Juan Pablo Fusi

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From Reader Review *Historia mínima de España* for online ebook

Fran JimMar says

"solo se puede saber lo que somos si se determina cómo hemos llegado a ser lo que somos"

Pedro García says

Para tener una visión general de la historia de España, o completar los huecos si, como yo, solo lees sobre las partes más turbulentas. Muy recomendable.

Emiliano Carrasco says

Excelente material de referencia, bien planteado y, en efecto, mínimo.

RK-isme says

3+ Stars = Very Good

Where Juan Pablo Fusi is good in this book, he is exceptional. Otherwise, he can be weak. The writing of history involves a careful selection of ‘facts’ from what can be mountains of material. In writing a general history, such as a history of a country over hundreds of years, a historian must decide what is important, what is interesting, and what the historian is comfortable with/knowledgeable of. This all takes on a new slant when the historian is writing the work on behalf of a publisher with whom they have a contract which specifies specific requirements. Finally, the historian must deal with their own biases and themes. For the reader, all of the above should be rather invisible, not something that intrudes upon the book. Unfortunately, such is not the case here. Much of the author’s struggle is clearly on display and, at times, is distracting.

I should point out that I was aware that this could be the case when I bought this book. Books entitled “Historia Minima de ...” are more likely than not to have these issues to some degree and this one is far from being bad. I have given three stars as this book is a good introduction to the topic. (I would only hope that readers would see this as introductory and would go in search of other, more detailed texts.) It is also, as in my case, a good overview written in the Spanish language, a language with which I still struggle while reading. (I find that reading history books in a second or third language is easier than reading novels, poetry or technical books. It is good practice when I have not had a great deal of opportunity to speak with native speakers.)

So keep the above in mind that the book has lots of good information while reading my complaints. The book begins with a prehistorical look at Spain. This is where I first became ‘distracted’ with the book. The author, Juan Pablo Fusi, is a historian, not an anthropologist. The section is weak and somewhat out of date. I would recommend that anyone interested in the prehistory of Spain read *Celtas e iberos en la península ibérica* by José Luis Maya, a book which discusses the changing theories. The book is both detailed and

brief.

Other, somewhat lesser distractions, arose throughout the book as many topics were dealt with in a somewhat offhand way. For example, the seven year dictatorship of Primo de Rivera from 1923 to 1930 is barely mentioned. I know little happened during his time but its role as the last real dictatorship before Franco's rule is surely worth being discussed.

Fusi comes into his own in discussing the Civil War, 1936 - 1939. While I would have liked to see more detail, he does manage to give a balanced view of both the causes and the progress of the war. He carefully avoids the temptation to take sides.

He is likewise strong in the final, post-Franco part of the book. He gives the reader good details here, making this one of the more detailed parts of the book. In my case, this was fortuitous because this is the era with which I have the least knowledge, having read more on earlier Spanish history. What also becomes clear is that Fusi takes a certain amount of pride in the degree to which Spain has embraced democracy and become a modern country within the welcoming arms of the EU, the Eurozone and NATO. He tells us over and over how far Spain has come and gives little sense of the fact that Spain is often mentioned in the same breath as Italy and Greece as a bit of a basket case economically. (Something that I personally see as being a result of being in a those 'welcoming arms of the EU' and 'the Eurozone').

I would also point out that there is a certain amount of distracting repetition in the book, often with almost verbatim sentences. Fusi is obviously aware of these sentences and I am at a loss as to why he does this, given that he is obviously skimming some eras in Spanish history to keep the text brief.

In the final analysis though, after all of my petty complaints, I would say that the book is an easy read and gives a good overview. Great for anyone wanting to set a base for future studies in the subject of Spanish history, or practicing reading Spanish. In any event, my next go at the 'Historia Minima de ...' series will be '... Argentina', which has the benefit of having been written as a series of essays by different authors.
