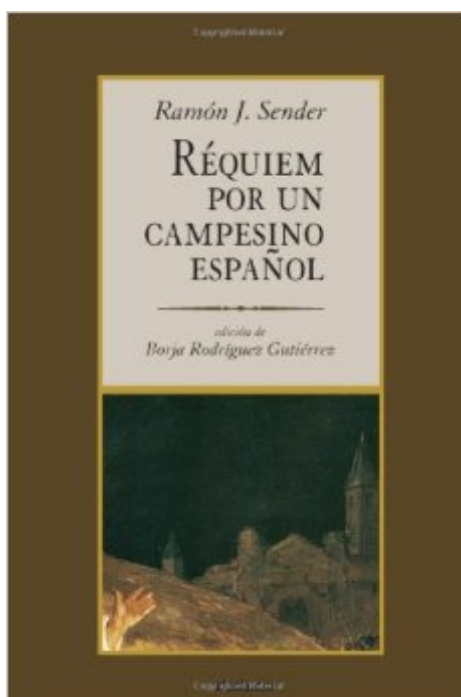


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Requiem Por Un Campesino Español (Spanish Edition)



Synopsis

¿Quiéramos por un campesino español, a short, elegant and moving account of the tragic effects of the Spanish Civil War on a small Aragonese population, is often called Ramón J. Sender's greatest masterpiece. It was the author's own favorite book and -in his own words- of all his novels it is "the simplest, and the most universal". This characteristic of "universality" flows through all Sender's writings, while he manages to still be the most Spanish of the generation that began to write just before the onset of the Spanish Civil War of 1936-39. As a journalist who allied himself with the Republican side in the Spanish civil war, Sender (1901-82) was a privileged eyewitness to Spain's struggle, suffering and defeat, a situation he continued to write about after he left Spain in 1938. While his texts are considered essential source material by historians of this era, at the same time, the anguish and pain, losses and victories of the profoundly Spanish characters are portrayed as universal emotions and experiences that continue to move readers of all nationalities. Within Hispanic literature, *¿Quiéramos por un campesino español* (first published in Mexico in 1953, banned in Spain for many years) is considered to stand on a par with Hemingway's *The Old Man and the Sea* within North American literature. Both are brief and profound, and recount intense, dramatic stories that initially seem uncomplicated. They are both important novels that in their brevity and apparent simplicity continue to resonate with essential truths. Three qualities of the novel are emphasized in the essay by Prof. Borja Rodríguez Gutiérrez that introduces this edition: the story's meticulous, mathematical structure devised by a self-aware writer; its use of reiteration of certain key elements; and the carefully structured allegory with which it transmits its denunciation of the injustice and treachery that underlie history. The careful lexicographic notes included will help the modern reader grasp the plot in all its dramatic, Spanish, intensity.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I studied and became familiar with the facts and dates associated with the Spanish Civil War, but I didn't understand it until I read this book. Sender's story is masterful, he carries you into the life of a common Spaniard from birth to tragic death. As I read I became acquainted with the Catholicism that is so Spanish and that faith's integral role in their society. As the story progressed I empathized with the political injustice and circumstances of the times, until ultimately I was heartbroken over the injustice and tragedy with which the story ended. Profound, moving, enriching, truly Spanish.

A very short booklet with a background in the Spanish Civil War considers the eternal conflict between rich and poor, left and right. But above all it is about not being true to ones calling, the seeking out of friends with power and the bitter flavor of a failed calling and lost values.

Este breve relato, clásico ya del siglo XX en España, fue publicado allí por 1950 o 53, cuando el novelista se encontraba trabajando en los Estados Unidos de profesor. Si a alguien le suena el nombre de Ramón J. Sender, seré por esta breve obra, y tan solo por ella. Ambientada en la víspera de la Guerra Civil Española, en el 36, a través de numerosos flashbacks el protagonista, un cura rural, va recordando la vida de un hombre a quien él bautizó, casó, y finalmente, dijo misa de aniversario de muerte. Lo maravilloso del relato es que en tan pocas páginas queden desveladas no sólo las almas de estos dos personajes, sino que quede fotografiada el alma de un pueblo. Un pueblo que podría ser España entera, pues abarca en pocos personajes el espectro identitario de España, un país lleno de pobreza y riqueza extremas, de envidias ancestrales, de orgullo, vanidad, de paganismo tribal, de pasiones y odios exacerbados por la ignorancia, la superstición, y el nihilismo. Lo más destacado para mí ha sido comprobar lo bien que el autor refleja, sin emitir juicios ni propagandas, la esterilidad del catolicismo en este pueblo tan bárbaro (bárbaro en el sentido peyorativo) que sigue siendo el español. El catolicismo español fue un fracaso sin paliativos; ha sido como vestir de seda a la mona; durante la Guerra Civil la mona se reveló lo que era: una mona. La civilización nunca llegó a la península. Incluso hoy seguimos igual de fraticidas, pero con el patrocinio económico de la Unión Europea.

I read this book in one sitting - it's very easy to go through - the spacing and paging contribute to the reading rhythm -. The detailed chronological and analytical intro are a plus to facilitate understanding for even the less familiarized with this work or the author.

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