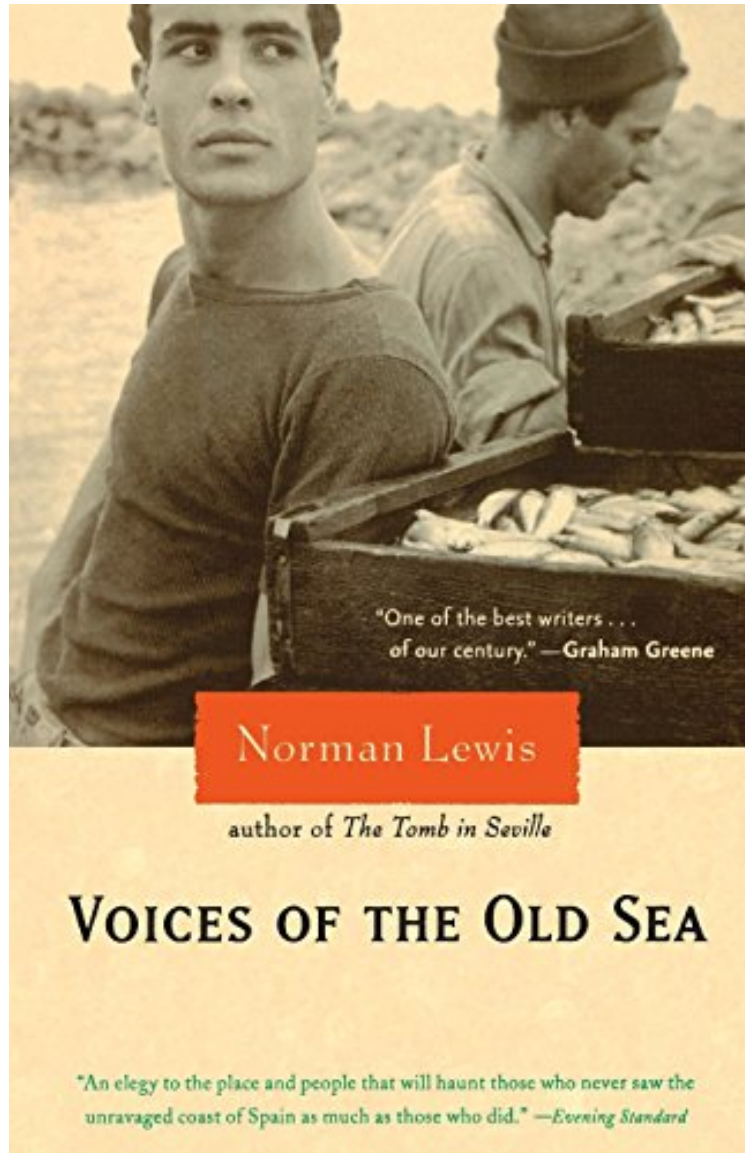


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Voices of the Old Sea

Norman Lewis

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#1265768 in Books Da Capo Press 2006-01-03 2006-01-03 Original language: English PDF # 1 8.20 x .55 x 5.50l, .60 #File Name: 0786716908240 pages | File size: 29.Mb

Norman Lewis : Voices of the Old Sea before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Voices of the Old Sea:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. One of the best writers you've never heard of By David Savageau Of course this is a wonderful book, easily gotten through, but whence the idea this is travel writing? It's one of several autobiographical books Lewis put out decades after his visits. This one first appeared in 1984 recounting three seasons he spent in the late 1940s in a remote Spanish fishing village. Voices of the Old Sea is more like an ethnography, but

by someone who writes like no social scientist - descriptively, ironically, and with some kind of love for the people he's studying. It's a primitive world Lewis remembers. You'll be shocked by his images of animal cruelty - bear baiting, dog starving, dolphin maiming. But that is part of the whole package. Throughout, we get a sense of an unstoppable vanishing. Farol and Sort, its sister village two miles away, are as different from each other as they are from the rest of Spain. In a little while, the hustlers and the tourists will discover them and we'll just have this book to record what's lost. Would it have hurt this publisher to include a map locating Farol and Sort in relation to Barcelona and Gerona? We have no idea where they were or whether they exist anymore.

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful.

Lyrical loss
By John the Reader
This is a sad story of tragic loss. Great reading or rather writing, of course, and obviously moving, but sad to be so fully and eloquently shown a way of life so rewarding, yet so tranquil in its simplicity, so totally destroyed by "development". Farol; a simple fishing village in the old Spain, had the misfortune of being on that coast eventually exploited and destroyed as the "Costa Brava". The author, after a rather tough time in WWII sought out a retreat in the then isolated region just as it was identified by the Spanish government and local entrepreneurs as being "suitable for substantial development as a holiday destination". Which development, of course, not only destroyed the village, its daily life and annual cycles, but the whole culture of the inhabitants. Lewis painstakingly, over three seasonal domiciles, earned acceptance from the fisher-folk, carefully not to transgress local taboo - no leather on the boats - he gained a grudging place, and was reluctantly given recognition, as an almost honorary local, even to his own "beautifully wrecked" chair outside the local bar. He sought a `sense of place' just at the time that it was torn from the villagers, and their age-old dependence on their local shamans and natural leaders. The story of that journey to acceptance and the all too rapid evaporation of the mores of such simple rustic values by the corruptions of development and tourism - headed mainly by a former bandit of this arid region with its villages of cat lovers contesting with the village of dog owners - is a fascinating read. As Cyril Connolly wrote ...

"Lewis is able to write about the back of a bus and make it interesting"
Here Lewis had a far more significant subject - a community in its still hopeful death throes in the path of `progress'.

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful.

Lost Catalonia
By NoVAReader
This is truly great travel writing. Prior to the 1950s, Lewis visited the coast of Catalonia several times to get away from England and to experience more of the country he loved. His stories are gentle, respectful accounts of the people he met and the friendships he made. He gives the reader a special view of life in coastal Catalonia (now known as the Costa Brava) that existed before it was transformed into a hot European tourist destination. He also gives the reader a first-hand look into the transformation as it happened. The fishing stopped. Centuries old local customs and unusual traditions vanished in just in a few years. Traditions were replaced by expediency. The simple life was replaced by profit-seeking. Authentic life experiences were replaced by manufactured ones, mainly designed to meet the false expectations tourists had of Spain.

After World War II, Norman Lewis returned to Spain and settled in the remote fishing village of Farol, on what is now Costa Brava. *Voices of the Old Sea* describes his three successive summers in that almost medieval community where life revolved around the seasonal sardine catches, Alcade's bar, and satisfying feuds with neighboring villages. It's lucky Lewis was there when he was. Soon after, Spain was discovered by its neighbors in a more prosperous northern Europe, and the tourist tide that ensued flowed inexorably over the old ways of the town and its inhabitants.