

Good example of a history of wales john davies book review

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Winston Churchill once said: History is written by the victors. This clearly means that most history books are filled with what those in power wish to and deem worthy of recording. A History of Wales written by John Davies is not just any other history book. True, it consists of facts and figures and dates pertaining to the history of Wales. However, the book delves into the roots of the country and all that it went through to reach where it stands today. John Davies provides a closer look into the issues that plagued Wales since the pre historic times and into the modern era. Not only this, through this book he educates readers of what they never knew about the country. Most importantly, the book focuses on the people of Wales and how they contributed to the land socially and culturally. Wales is known for its scenic beauty and landscapes which are often compared to a heaven on Earth, but this book captures the beauty of its character in a way like no other. It narrates the progress of the country through medieval times of the Saxon and Romanic invasions to the industrial revolution and onset of modernity. Apart from this, the most important thing that Davis tries to highlight in this book is the progress of the country and anyone who wishes to learn more about Wales' contribution to the development of Britain must gain the knowledge Davies tries to impart. The book focuses on industrial, social as well cultural development of Wales which is a success the reader in the pages. The narrative transports the reader to go back in time and relive each moment that Wales lived and breathed since pre historic times. Like any reliable history book author, Davies also uses evidence in order to tie down all the information discovered about Wales so far. Due to this

evidence readers are given an extensive crash course into the nomadic roots of Wales and would be surprised to learn that Wales has seen Roman as well as Monarchic periods. In the book, we learn of Wales' involvement in the interests of the crown and the politics behind it.

The book is quite informative on the subject of the Roman invasion and the reader learns about the way the Latin language played a part in it. When the author talks about these eras, he does so in such elaborate detail that it is not hard for the reader to imagine the scenes taking place right before their eyes. Apart from this, Davies also touches a very important topic that changed the history of the world; Imperialism. He talks about how Imperialism affected the world as well as a remote land like Wales and how it led to the revolution which moved Wales towards progress and prosperity. Of this era, the most interesting is the way the author talks about the common man and the working class, rather than focusing on the monarchy. This is what sets the book apart from other history books, because it focuses on the masses and how they shaped the country and not the rulers.

Moving on from the ancient times, the author brings the readers to the development of the country through invasions, wars and most importantly the industrial revolution. In these chapters he covers how ways in which industrial revolution and modernity shaped the minds of the working class men and how they started a march towards a better life with better means. The most contribution of Wales in the industrial revolution was the production of iron. Wales became one of the most important providers to far off lands such as Russia and America and this contribution was responsible for the economic stability of the country. The setting up of quarries and

railroads ensured the expansion of this industry. While he talks about the development of industry, Davies highlights the class difference in the Welsh society as well.

The description of the power struggle between the propertied class and the Welsh Chartists has also been described in great detail. He says that while this struggle was going on, the bourgeois fearing social reforms tried their best to go back to their medieval roots and take their culture back to a time they were more comfortable living in. They resisted against change and were not open to the reforms modernity brought with it. This resistance proved to be futile because Wales after the second Industrial Revolution became one of the main coal exporters to the world. Wales also contributed largely to the production of wool and hence the working class kept prospering and contributing to the economy while at the same time became socially and culturally enlightened.

Lastly, the most important era Davies talks about is the Thatcher government and its impact on the industrial, cultural and political infrastructure of Wales. During this era, the most important event that took place was the miner's strike between 1984 and 1985. Davies believes that this event was revolutionary as it changed the dynamics between the labor and government and was significant because it meant that the working class finally stood up for what they believed to be right. However, it also their defeat left the working class considerably demoralized.

Following this, he talks about the way industry itself was revolutionized in Wales and how industry was replaced by much more efficient and streamlined industrial processes. This established economic stability as

production requirements were met much more efficiently. It opened up more job opportunities and required laborers to get educated in order to operate machinery with modern engineering, which was a step towards a progressive nation altogether. He also talks about the political changes in a country which was previously only ran on the words of the monarchs.

References

Davies, J. (1994). A history of Wales (1st ed.). London [u. a.]: Penguin Books.