

A review of robert leeson's the song of arthur essay sample



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Although countless books about the story of King Arthur have been written, Robert Leeson has managed to give us something new in his book, *The Song of Arthur*, something that definitely makes it worthwhile to enjoy Arthur's story once again.

The Song of Arthur is a collection of stories about the legendary King Arthur, based on pagan stories about Arthur from the 5th century AD. Narrated by Taliesin, who is Merlin's father (although in some literature is shown to be also Merlin himself) and the official bard of Arthur's court, Leeson's rendering of Arthur's life depicts for us the time of Arthur's defense of England from invaders, among other things. There is apparently nothing really new in the overall plot itself, but Leeson, instead of just retelling the story of Arthur, focuses on *how* Arthur's story is retold. The life of Arthur is presented in a new way, such that King Arthur's world comes alive as never before. Taliesin's point of view, a refreshing change in itself, is presented in a quite original lyrical fashion.

Leeson grounds his stories on historical facts and evidence. His approach to the mysticism commonly associated with King Arthur's era is ambiguous, in that there are many suggestions of the role of magic in the many events described, but hardly any blatant display of magic. The reader has to decide for himself if what was just described was indeed magic, or nothing out of the ordinary, giving the story a new kind of mysticism. Thus Leeson manages to keep the stories grounded in reality while not exactly leaving magic out of the picture.

The originality of Leeson's approach, paired with the timelessness of King Arthur's tale, makes *The Song of Arthur* an overall worthwhile read.