

James Morris

A Landscape of Wales (Dewi Lewis Publishing)

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A Landscape of Wales is a handsome publication, containing dozens of sumptuous large format landscapes, made throughout the nation of James Morris's birthplace.

Morris's subject matter ranges from sublime, post-industrial landscapes – the title image could be mistaken for a still of Mordor from the *Lord of the Rings* – to the banal; such as a view offices and the Dragon Hotel in Swansea.

Grey is a predominant tone throughout this colour publication: the greys of the disused slate quarries; grey stones of great castles; grey asphalt of market towns and housing developments; grey concrete urban infrastructure and of course, the unforgiving greys of the rain-filled skies that brood above these diverse landscapes. Although this may seem like an uninspired observation, it really quite a striking feature of this work.

Like Simon Roberts, whose book *We English* makes an appropriate contrast to this work, Morris has also veered towards tourist destinations. These images contain the majority of the human figures in the book, which are crammed into the frame, swamping the views. These images are underscored by R. S. Thomas's bleak, polemic epigraph *Reservoirs*, at the beginning of the book, lamenting the demise of Welsh culture to the hands of the English. Don't let this put you off.