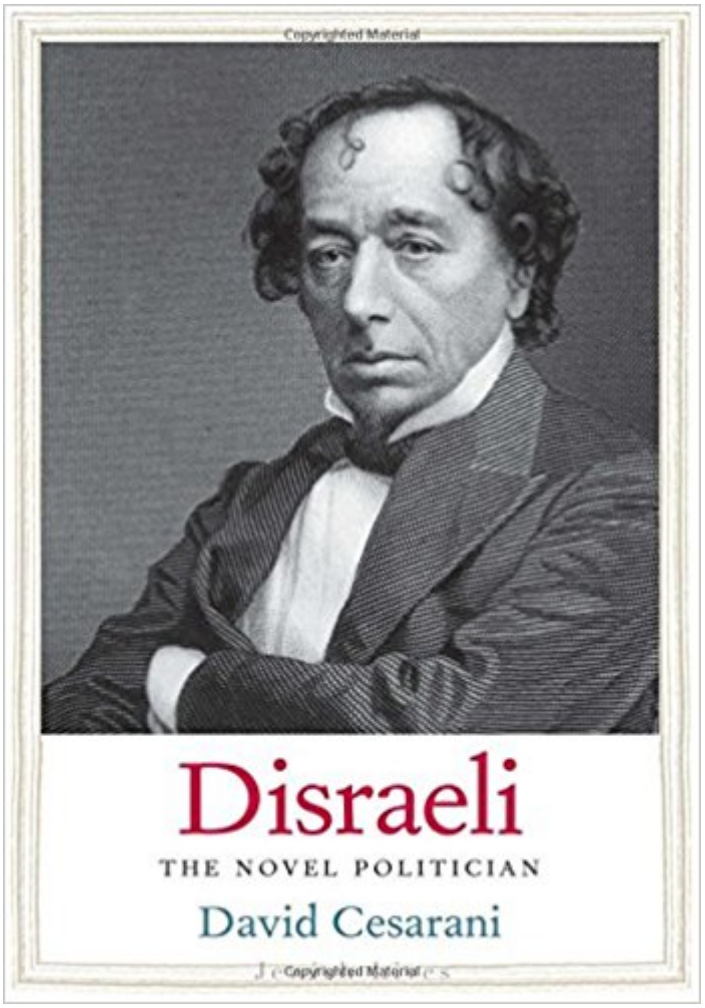
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Disraeli: The Novel Politician (Jewish Lives)



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Synopsis

A fresh, vivid look at Disraeli's life, achievements, and temperament that casts doubts on his much-touted commitment to Jewish rights Lauded as a Ã¢â ¬Å“great Jew,Ã¢â ¬Â• excoriated by antisemites, and one of BritainÃ¢â ¬â„¢s most renowned prime ministers, Benjamin Disraeli has been widely celebrated for his role in Jewish history. But is the perception of him as a Jewish hero accurate? In what ways did he contribute to Jewish causes? In this groundbreaking, lucid investigation of DisraeliÃ¢â ¬â„¢s life and accomplishments, David Cesarani draws a new portrait of one of EuropeÃ¢â ¬â„¢s leading nineteenth-century statesmen, a complicated, driven, opportunistic man. While acknowledging that Disraeli never denied his Jewish lineage, boasted of Jewish achievements, and argued for Jewish civil rights while serving as MP, Cesarani challenges the assumption that Disraeli truly cared about Jewish issues. Instead, his driving personal ambition required him to confront his Jewishness at the same time as he acted opportunistically. By creating a myth of aristocratic Jewish origins for himself, and by arguing that Jews were a superior race, Disraeli boosted his own career but also contributed to the consolidation of some of the most fundamental stereotypes of modern antisemitism.

Book Information

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Reviews (Kirkus Reviews)Ã¢â ¬Å“A lively, original, and revisionist account of Disraeli.Ã¢â ¬Â•Ã¢â ¬â •Todd Endelman, University of Michigan (Todd Endelman)"Cesarani, the late noted Holocaust historian and award-winning author, succinctly tells the complex story of Benjamin Disraeli (1804Ã¢â ¬â œ81) . . . . This readable portrait is a great addition to European history, biography, and Jewish collections."Ã¢â ¬â •Dan Kaplan, Booklist (Dan Kaplan Booklist)Ã¢â ¬Å“Ã¢â ¬Â¦ [an] absorbing study of Disreali the JewÃ¢â ¬Â•Ã¢â ¬â •Daniel Finkelstein, The TimesÃ Â (Daniel Finkelstein The Times 2016-04-16)Ã¢â ¬Å“This groundbreaking biography is a passionate and stimulating account of Disraeli as both man and myth. With pace and clarity the author, writing at the height of his powers, skillfully and intelligently unravels the enduring mystery of Disraeli's Jewishness.Ã¢â ¬Â•Ã¢â ¬â •Bryan Cheyette, author of Diasporas of the Mind (Bryan Cheyette)Ã¢â ¬Å“A vivid and illuminating new biographyÃ¢â ¬Â¦ [and] a crisp persuasive book.Ã¢â ¬â •Jonathan Freedland, the Guardian (Johnathan Freedland The Guardian 2016-06-11)Ã¢â ¬Å“This well-researched new biography uses DisraeliÃ¢â ¬â„¢s wide range of novels to address fascinating questions about him and provide a close reading of his political career and shifting loyaltiesÃ¢â ¬Â¦ Cesarani doesnÃ¢â ¬â„¢t gloss over DisraeliÃ¢â ¬â„¢s weaknesses: his numerous affairs, profligacy and constant debt (only parliamentary immunity kept him out of prison). Yet his portrait of this complex figure remains sympatheticÃ¢â ¬Â¦Ã¢â ¬Â•Ã¢â ¬â •Sara Jo Ben Zvi, Segula (Sara Jo Ben Zvi Segula 2016-08-01)

In this groundbreaking, vivid look at DisraeliÃ¢â ¬â„¢s life and accomplishments, David Cesarani draws a new portrait of one of EuropeÃ¢â ¬â„¢s leading nineteenth-century statesmen, a complicated, driven, opportunistic man. While acknowledging that Disraeli never denied his Jewish lineage, boasted of Jewish achievements, and argued for Jewish civil rights while serving as MP, Cesarani challenges the assumption that Disraeli truly cared about Jewish issues. --This text refers to the Paperback edition.

A fine depiction of Disraeli by a skeptical biographer. Fine, as it’s data driven. Often, though not always, its goal seemed to be to debunk anything positive about Disraeli. However, it does give him his due, especially near the end. It’s there where the author (may his memory be a blessing) finally entertains the idea that, despite not being a practicing Jew, or a person who even would directly call himself Jewish (and, in fact, called himself Christian), being Jewish by birth affected most of his behavior, even if Disraeli in his early years did not address his own Jewishness. Just because he

didn’t seek out Jewishly important sites in Jerusalem in his youthful trip there doesn’t mean he didn’t feel Jewish inside. And just because Disraeli’s idea of what Jewish means, and what Judaism is, was faulty and more or less untutored and even untrue, his was a Jewish life because the issue was so powerful to him at most stages of his life.Cesarani’s discussion of the ironies arising in Disraeli’s promotion of Judaism as a racial category are enlightening, and painful to read.In essence, Cesarani was a sound historian, but in this book lacked, at least to me, a literary writer’s sense of what makes up character and what motivates characters. Maybe it’s that he isn’t sympathetic to his subject. The best biographers also have the gift of literary insight into their subjects. Consider Justin Kaplan on Whitman, or Robert D.Richardson, on Emerson and on William James, or W.J. Bate on Johnson and Keats.I only wish Mr. Cesarani were still alive so that I could write him to ask him questions about some of his interpretations of the facts and of Disraeli’s actions, as well as about his idea of what Disraeli was feeling at times in his life.

I have not quite finished it yet but I am enjoying it very much. You have to be up on your 19th Century British history to be able to fully understand it, but I am enjoying it just the same.

I was somewhat disappointed in the book. I believed that Disraeli’s life would be compelling, but as seen here that was not true, It may well have been that my expectations exceeded reality. None the less, a hole in my knowledge was at least partially filled

too much of the same without backing up assertions.I am left somewhat confused about what he really believes and how Disraeli arrives at this conclusion

well researched book by late historian Cesarani who we will miss. Cesaranidied recently prematurely at 58 years old.

Rather dry. The story was written in a not very interesting manner.

Very good nicely wittenGives insight intocht a complex personality

Excellent for cutting home baked bread. low price and high quality. he love it, good product with high quality. tell a lot of the product .

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