

Bossy, concentrate on the interaction of religion and society at the local level rather than on institutional developments. In Chapter 8, Jones concludes with an examination of the traditional Counter Reformation: Spain, the role of the Jesuits, and the ambiguous behavior of Philip II.

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**Ian Machin. *Disraeli*. London & New York: Longman, 1995. Pp. viii, 194. Paper, \$14.95. ISBN 0-582-09805-X.**

Ian Machin, Professor of British History at the University of Dundee, offers his discerning study of Benjamin Disraeli, earl of Beaconsfield. There are no astonishing novelties, but Machin has written a political biography that bears the mark of solid research and consistency of treatment. Thus we receive the view of Disraeli as a pragmatist reveling to climb the greasy pole of politics, and who is no ideologue where flexibility and ambition will better assure the rise to power and the keeping of it. Machin blends chronology and commentary in a tight but lucid narrative, an excellent treatment of Disraeli and his career. Among the virtues of Machin's work are its witness to the powers of compromise and alliance in politics, and instruction by inference about the system of constitutional government in Britain during a time of transformation. Thus it should be a lesson to Americans who grouse about the frustrations of Congressional politics, wherein posturing, compromise, and alliance count among our legacies from the British tradition.

Machin presents a clear, detailed accounting of Disraeli's political ascent. Disraeli showed practical ability in the early 1850s when, in order to help his Conservative party keep power, and recognizing the trend of sentiment against Protectionism, he forsook that policy that formerly had assisted his rise to power. But he had decided that in order to mount a continual opposition he must support policies that had some chance of success. Disraeli had the burning desire for political office, and loved argument and oppositional politics. He enjoyed the game of politics consummately, and because he persisted, in his full maturity he enjoyed paramount influence in Britain and Europe during the Turkish crisis and its resolution in the Berlin Congress of July 1878.

The book is the product of careful, extended research that has been balanced with the insight gained from teaching and discussion. As an aid to teaching, it has several strong points: *Disraeli* is a sound model for writing, combining chronological narrative with interpretation at each of Disraeli's career markers, and close on the facts of that career. Machin's concluding analysis merges the prominent strands of prior discussion and reiterates his evaluation of Disraeli as a political genius. The fine scholar's aids include end-of-chapter notes (with frequent brief comments) and a convenient chronology. Also, a bibliographical essay enhances comprehension of the political and social background of Disraeli's life and the abundant literature interpreting his political and literary careers.

The polished but dense writing seems best suited to upper-level undergraduates and graduate students. However, the insights and research information should make the reading worthwhile for any student or teacher. I can confidently recommend this affordable, handy volume in the "Profiles in Power" series.

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