



Benjamin Disraeli: The Novel as Political Discourse

By Michael Flavin

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December 2004 marks the bicentenary of Benjamin Disraeli's birth. Benjamin Disraeli: The Novel as Political Discourse examines Disraeli's novels in order to construct a portrait of the man, his context and enduring reputation. Disraeli's literary career ran from 1826 to 1880. Within this time he became an M.P., Leader of the Opposition, Chancellor and Prime Minister. His novels can be read as the breeding ground for his ideas, gestated away from the pressure cooker of Parliament. From his first novel, Vivian Grey, about the formation of a new political party, to the overtly political "Young England" trilogy (named after a faction of the Conservative Party with which Disraeli was aligned) and beyond, Disraeli's novels expose the development of his thinking while also reflecting the anxieties of his age. This book will appeal to those fascinated by Disraeli and Conservatism. More widely, it will be enjoyed by anyone interested in the development of Britain in the Victorian era. Drawing upon Disraeli's speeches, letters and non-fiction as well as his novels, the book enhances our understanding of this charismatic figure who continues to cast a formidable shadow across the nation's politics and culture.

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Editorial Review

Review

“Insightful and thought-provoking, this is a critical commentary which stimulates as much as it informs. Disraeli’s novels are a goldmine that has been neglected for too long, and Michael Flavin’s incisive study provides an indispensable guide.” —Jane Ridley, author, *The Young Disraeli*

“Although numerous studies have extracted, with varying degrees of success, aspects of Disraeli’s life reflected in his novels, Flavin is the first to make this the focus of a book-length study . . . it makes a compelling and informative case for the interplay between Disraeli’s public roles as an author and politician . . . Flavin’s study will be tremendously useful for readers who seek a fuller knowledge of Disraeli’s literary activity and its influence on his political life. . . . In charting the development of one of the most important figures in the 19th century, Flavin also invites us to consider new relationships between fact and fiction, politics and romance, and the myriad faces of public figures.” —*Journal of British Studies*

“For those unfamiliar with Disraeli’s fiction, Michal Flavin’s book is a useful introduction . . . presenting detailed summaries of Disraeli’s novels and placing them in the relevant biographical and political context.” —*Victorian Studies*

About the Author

Michael Flavin is the author of *Gambling in the Nineteenth-Century English Novel*.

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