

REVIEWS

Jews Don't Count, David Baddiel, TLS Books, London, 2021 (ISBN 978-0-00-839947-4), 125 pp., hb £9.99

In a world of diversity training, critical race theory, and growing antisemitism, David Baddiel's short book is an important contribution. Baddiel, a well-known British writer, comedian, and television presenter, shares his encounters with others in the realm of the arts, literature, theater, politics, and social media on the topic of Jewish identity in the modern world.

On antisemitic slurs at sports events: 'He said: but the Y-word [Yid] *isn't* as bad as the N-word. I said: why not? He said: *because Jews are rich*'. What my friend was saying is that because Jews are 'comfortable, privileged and moneyed; they don't need, not really, the protection of anti-racism' promoted by the left (p. 25).

On a mural that depicts capitalist bankers with Jewish stereotypes playing Monopoly on the backs of the world's poor: It was considered proper because Jews are 'white'; that is, that 'caricaturing Jews was okay because they are Privilege and Power and Control and all the other things contained in the word "white"'. People who do such art are 'Fighters for the Oppressed' (p. 44). On microaggressions (minor insults to minorities): 'He's not concerned about microaggressions to Jews. Because there is not a proper call-out culture around those' (p. 58). On Jews and Israel: 'I don't care about it [Israel] more than any other country, and to assume I do is racist. To assume that I have to have a strong position either way on Israel is racist. Because I am a British person – a Jew, yes, but my Jewish identity is about Groucho Marx ... and none of that has anything to do with a Middle Eastern country three thousand miles away ... [T]he idea that I should care *more* about the Palestinians smacks of something weird. It smacks of an idea that somehow Jews – non-Israeli Jews – must apologize for Israel; that Jews – non-Israeli Jews – should feel a little bit ashamed of Israel and must, before they are allowed into any kind of public conversation, make some kind of supplicant-like statement to that effect ... I am not responsible for those actions and expecting that I should feel so is racist' (pp. 91–3).

On the sensitivity to non-gays acting gay roles and non-blacks acting black roles, he writes: 'Just as particular racism can only really be defined by the victims of that racism, the deep truth of identity is only available to those who live that identity. Casting a non-minority actor to mimic that identity feels, to the progressive eye, like impersonation, and impersonation carries with it an element of mockery; or at least, it is reductive, lessening the complexity of that experience by channeling it through an actor who hasn't lived it' (p. 66). And yet on non-Jews playing Jewish roles, there is no such sensitivity. On the antisemitism of Labor Leader Jeremy Corbyn: there is a 'hierarchy of racisms' and 'Jews don't count' in that hierarchy. This led to the discussion of Corbyn's antisemitism becoming a political issue and not an attempt to truly understand the 'fragile lived experience of Jews' (pp. 116–7).

Jews are considered not-white by the white nationalists and very white by the progressives. They are considered weak and contemptible, or superpowerful, but never victimized (p. 99). After citing a long list of public antisemitic incidents and another list of personal antisemitic incidents, Baddiel comments: 'This is why Jews don't feel white, if by white you mean safe' (pp. 111–3).

Jews don't count – not for progressives and not for nationalists. They are invisible, dangerous. Life is not safe for Jews in the modern world – a point Baddiel makes very clearly.

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The Invention of Papal History: Onofrio Panvinio Between Renaissance and Catholic Reform, Stefan Bauer, Oxford University Press, 2020 (ISBN 978-0-19-880700-1), xii + 276 pp., hb £70

The history of the papacy has seldom received such focused treatment as it does here in Bauer's learned and articulate study. But his is not merely a study of the papacy, or a segment of the papacy, or even of a particular Pope or two or three. Rather, uniquely, Bauer brings his expertise to bear in a thoroughgoing analysis of a historian of the sixteenth century and that man's investigation of the papacy.

The name of Onofrio Panvinio may not be on the lips of every scholar or student of the Reformation, but his work was significant and it here receives the serious study that it has long deserved. To accomplish his task, Bauer leads readers through the twisted path of the quest for