Michael Jebsen 1835-1899: Reeder und Politiker: Eine Biographie has been reviewed by Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung (November 5, 2007), Germany's most prestigious daily newspaper with weekly book reviews by leading German academics in their fields:

"Until recently Michaelis had belonged to the category of politicians not that of famous and inspiring figures. He was discovered by Bert Becker (since 2002 a visiting professor in the Department of History at the University of Hong Kong), who had been fascinated by him for "almost 15 years". For his biography, which employs a comprehensive methodological approach in the field of cultural history, he was allowed to use not only Michaelis' voluminous person archives but materials from more than 30 other archives. Thanks to these abundant sources, the reader is spared no detail.

However, because Becker convincingly sets Michaelis' life and deeds in their respective historical period, his voluminous book is also a reference work for those wishing to comprehend society and education, administration, social and economic life, the evangelical-conservative governmental state-of-mind, and the diffusion of Protestantism in Imperial Germany and the Weimar Republic.

.... Becker's conclusion that the "contradictory figure" of Michaelis deserves more attention and appreciation than "previously attributed" is justified. This conservative administration officer was an energetic manager and successful Christian reformer. He should not be judged solely on his brief term as chancellor which was merely one brief episode in his career. A physically small man has found a great biographer."