

sacredness is a later one. In light of Jesus' phrase in John 4:21-24 and the book of Hebrews, Christians need to consider, what role modern Jerusalem (geography) has in biblical interpretation and how this shapes the definition of how humans are connected to, and who belongs to the people of, God. Apparently disconnected but very much related to sacred geography is the definition of the identity of God's people, or how one draws the borders to define who are "Israelites." As Knoppers' wordplay in the subtitles of chapter 6 suggests, should we talk of the enemies within or without? Describing the history of Jews and Samaritans in the Persian period, with Sambalat (Samaritan) and Jerusalemite priests closely connected, he demonstrates that there was more to be feared from within than from outsiders—non-Israelites. It was only later in the Greco-Roman period with a clear geographical and textual boundary, that the enemies became "outsiders." The realization of this principle may be relevant as biblical scholars interpret the motif of the enemy or "antichrist" in biblical prophecy, which unfortunately has been mostly related to Antiochus Epiphanes, a complete "outsider."

And finally it would be good to pay attention to Knoppers' interpretation of Ezra-Nehemiah in its Persian context in the light of Seventh-day Adventist perspectives of Dan 9, including that of Ellen White (*Prophets and Kings*. Nampa, ID: Pacific Press, 2010). There is something worthy of further research. Overall, I highly recommend Knoppers' *Jews and Samaritans* for his intriguing, objective, and sound interpretation of an issue which has so many ramifications regarding religious identity.

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Norton, Anne. *On the Muslim Question*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2013. 288 pp. Hardcover, \$24.95.

"The Jewish question was fundamental for politics and philosophy in the Enlightenment. In our time, as the Enlightenment fades, the Muslim question has taken its place" (1). With this assertion, Anne Norton offers her opening salvo.

Since 2001 and the beginning of the "war on terrorism," Americans have been obsessed with the threat of Islam coming to its shores, either in the shape of "kamikaze-type" attacks or as immigrants. Much of the heat of the issue has lacked a clear understanding of the realities. Anne Norton's provocative book deals more with the questioners than with the question. While she sheds light on Islam and Islamic beliefs and practice, she asks the readers to examine their own biases and information sources. The very question should focus attention on the questioner in the search for greater mutual understanding.

The Jewish question asked what we should do with the Jews and what possible place was there for them in Western societies. As time went on, Norton suggests, the West became more Jewish and the Jews became more

Western. The same process, she suggests, is taking place again with the Jews' Semitic cousins, the Muslims—in particular, with the Arab Muslims.

The point made is whether Islam is to be judged by Westerners on Western standards, or in a post-Enlightenment fashion, is Islam to be judged by Islamic standards? What makes the West more correct than the other? A parallel question is, "How possible is it to move into the other's world to gain both understanding of the other and of ourselves?" If the author's style seems awkward and, at times, difficult to follow, it is well worth the effort.

Norton explores Muslim attitudes on sex and sexuality through the lens of the Netherlands, which may not be the most objective; and this, I think, is just her point. How can we accuse the Muslims of being conflicted in this area, when the culture of Holland demonstrates even greater confliction?

The theme of this book appears to be to show that much of Western antipathy to Muslims actually stems from our own foibles and insecurities. Rather than deal with our own problems, we project them onto Muslims, much as we have done, in the not-too-distant past, with Jews and Blacks. Demonization is a very common way of establishing our own goodness and superiority. We condemn (and fear) the terrorism of fanatical Muslims, forgetting our own past and our veneration of "true believers" who willingly went to their death for the cause they espouse.

This makes this a troubling book, as it holds up a mirror to our own past and camouflaged present, exposing us to our own reality. To accuse Muslims of expansionism and various forms of discrimination is to ignore (deliberately?) Western colonialism and expansionism and varying forms of discrimination (i.e., women, races, the poor, the stranger, etc.)

There are times when Norton moves onto rather thin ice, in the view of this reviewer, such as her extension of fascism into current Islam. She is also, in my opinion, unrealistically hopeful and idealistic in her treatment of Arab democracy, which some would say is an oxymoronic term.

This will be excellent and important reading for missiologists, social anthropologists, political scientists, and others.

In closing, Norton writes,

Knowing these things, I see the Muslim question as the Jewish question of our time: standing at the site where politics and ethics, philosophy and theology meet. This is the knot where the politics of class, sex and sexuality, culture, race, and ethnicity are entangled; the site where structures of hierarchy and subordination are anchored. It is here, on this terrain, that the question of the democratic—its resurgence or further repression—is being fought out (228).

In closing, I quote another political pundit, "We have met the enemy and it is us" (Pogo).

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