

The Other Prophet: Jesus in the Qur'an. By Mouhanad Khorchide and Klaus von Stosch, trans. Simon Pare. London: Gingko Library, 2019. 229 pp. ISBN 978-1-909942-36-3. \$39.95, hardback; \$37.95, eBook.

Its dust jacket features a charming fourteenth-century Persian painting of Muhammad (clothed in green) and Jesus (in blue) traveling side by side on a camel and a donkey, respectively. Page-marker ribbons attached to the book's spine—a boon to the reader—echo the color of these travelers' robes. In short, *The Other Prophet: Jesus in the Qur'an* by Mouhanad Khorchide and Klaus von Stosch makes an excellent first impression! Happily, the attractive exterior of this “intensive theological analysis of Jesus in the Qur'an” (1) is more than matched by its well-structured, beautifully written, artfully translated contents.

The Other Prophet stands apart from recent books on Islam's Jesus in several regards. Firstly, it has been co-authored in a rigorously collaborative manner, as Khorchide (a Muslim) and von Stosch (a Christian) explain in the opening chapter. Having committed themselves to the principles of comparative theology, their method has also been empathetic, as they explain: “we try to feel our way into the other's beliefs and help each other to formulate our respective faith as persuasively as possible” (5). Thus, although their religious commitments differ, they speak with one voice—often in the first person singular—throughout chapters 1 to 4. By contrast, in the final chapter, each scholar offers his individual conclusions in his own voice and from his own religious location. In a further collaborative move, Khorchide and von Stosch acknowledge the involvement of project assistants Zishan Ghaffar (the principal author of chapter 5) and Darius Asghar-Zadeh (who contributed to chapter 6).

Secondly, the book's structure is chiasmic: flanking chapter 4, the apex, are chapters 1 and 7 (the formal introduction and conclusion) plus a pair of chapters (2 and 3) providing essential information on Christian doctrine and another pair (5 and 6) in which the focus is on Islam. Thus, the reader finds systematically presented information about Christology and prophetology *per se* not typically found in a single volume. Having asserted that “Christology is a central theme of the Qur'an, and one with which the proclaimer of the Qur'an and the early Muslim community fully and critically engaged” (2), Khorchide and von Stosch provide overviews of Christology's development by the seventh century (chapter 2) and during the nineteenth and twentieth (chapter 3). Particular attention is given to Friedrich Schleiermacher's reformulation of Christology which replaces two-natures doctrine with “the doctrine of the archetypal and historical nature of the person of Jesus Christ” (43).

The co-authors' own method is to trace how the Qur'an's image of Jesus develops over time, progressing from messenger to warner, then servant, then prophet—yet also stressing that the Qur'an is more concerned with Jesus's life and teaching as a whole than with any specific phase of his life (75). That is, theirs is a diachronic approach to Islamic Christology. Furthermore, they practice holistic reading of the Qur'an's main Jesus-passages, thus approaching surahs 19, 3, and 5 as discrete literary units and in relation to the Qur'an's themes as a whole, a practice they demonstrate in chapter 4. In the process, they show how “the proclaimer of the Qur'an dissociates himself from the Christological discourses of the time and establishes his own prophetology” (4). Included here is a helpful explanation of the titles *Messiah* and *Word of God* as they are applied to Jesus in the Qur'an (91–94). The fruit of this diachronic analysis, in turn, informs an explication, in chapter 5, of Qur'anic prophetology, Jesus's position therein, and the interchange between prophetology and Christology. Chapter 6 then introduces several sets of issues that figure in exploring whether Islam offers equivalents to the “functions of Christology” (158).

As a project, *The Other Prophet* endeavors to show how a fresh look at “the history of the dispute over Jesus in the Qur’an” might improve Christian-Muslim relations today; to demonstrate the high value of Christological debate as an interpretive lens through which to understand the Qur’an; and, having acknowledged that study of Jesus in a non-Islamic context can be a rich Muslim theological experience, to suggest how Qur’an study can actually “intensify and purify” Christian belief in Jesus (3). Some readers will be off put by the authors’ twofold decision to cite “the proclaimer of the Qur’an” quite consistently throughout their text, all the while quite deliberately determining to “leave it open as to whether this is God or Muhammad or both” (2n2). Some will take exception to aspects of their survey of Christian thought or of their diachronic process. Some will be disappointed (as was I) at the lack of an index. Nevertheless, *The Other Prophet: Jesus in the Qur’an* is an engaging piece of scholarship. This book will be useful to specialists, who will appreciate its extensive bibliography. It should find its way onto many a graduate-course reading list. Khorchide and von Stosch believe that their study indeed “shows that the Qur’an depicts Jesus as more than simply the bearer of a message; it sees Jesus...as the content of the message” (207). What we have, they assert, “is a productive distinction between the two religions rather than an unreconcilable standoff” (210). In the process of making their case, they give us much to ponder.

Lucinda Mosher
Hartford Seminary

The views, opinions, and positions expressed in all articles published by the *Journal of Interreligious Studies (JIRS)* are the authors’ own and do not reflect or represent those of the *JIRS* staff, the *JIRS* Board of Advisors, or *JIRS* publishing partners.