

## Moses and Multiculturalism (FlashPoints)

Barbara Johnson



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Countering impressions of Moses reinforced by Sigmund Freud in his epoch-making *Moses and Monotheism*, this concise, engaging work begins with the perception that the story of Moses is at once the most nationalist and the most multicultural of all foundation narratives. Weaving together various texts—biblical passages, philosophy, poems, novels, opera, and movies—Barbara Johnson explores how the story of Moses has been appropriated, reimagined, and transmitted across cultures and historical moments. But she finds that already in the Bible, the story of Moses is a multicultural story, the story of someone who functions well in a world to which he, unbeknownst to the casual observer, does not belong. Using the Moses story as a lens through which to view questions at the heart of contemporary literary, philosophical, and ethical debates, Johnson shows how, through a close analysis of this figure's recurrence through time, we might understand something of the paradoxes, if not the impasses of contemporary multiculturalism.

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