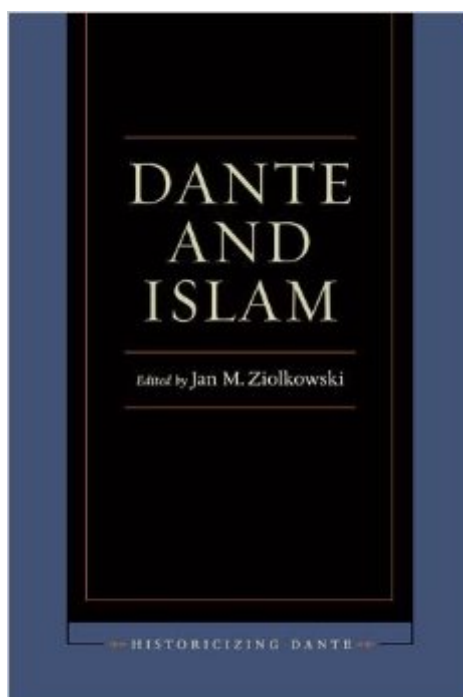


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# Dante And Islam (Historicizing Dante)



## Synopsis

Dante put Muhammad in one of the lowest circles of Hell. At the same time, the medieval Christian poet placed several Islamic philosophers much more honorably in Limbo. Furthermore, it has long been suggested that for much of the basic framework of the Divine Comedy Dante was indebted to apocryphal traditions about a "night journey" taken by Muhammad. Dante scholars have increasingly returned to the question of Islam to explore the often surprising encounters among religious traditions that the Middle Ages afforded. This collection of essays works through what was known of the Qur'an and of Islamic philosophy and science in Dante's day and explores the bases for Dante's images of Muhammad and Ali. It further compels us to look at key instances of engagement among Muslims, Jews, and Christians.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Dante and Islam is one of the toughest books on Dante I have read. That is saying a lot, as I have been reading a lot on Dante this past month. For the past century, it has been a hot topic in Dante scholarship that Muslim eschatology influenced The Divine Comedy. There is speculation that Dante knew Arabic, but as it has never been proved, so we must continue to dig deeper in this matter. In the essay "Dante and Islamic Culture," we learn of the proximity and contacts between the Catholic world and the Islamic world in the Middle Ages. We are also given examples of possible connections between Dante's works and Arabic texts. Subsequent essays then discuss the

availability of a translation of the Qur'an in Dante's time and whether or not Dante would have read it/borrowed from it. The most interesting section in the book was "Images of Muhammad in Dante." There are two essays in this section. One compares Islam and the heresy of Arianism and the other examines Dante's placement of Muhammad in Hell. Both were fascinating to read, but highly academic. This book, as I stated in the last sentence, is highly academic. I knew that going into this book, because it is from a university's publishing house. However, it was printed in a more affordable paperback version, which usually signifies that this book would have a broader appeal and will interest many readers. Unfortunately, I found this book to be too specialized and only really appealing to a very, very small audience. I have had this book in my possession for months and tried to read through it time and time again, but I had to keep putting it down because it was both over my head and contained many references which I did not understand. I'm not sure if that is a flaw with the book or a flaw with me.

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