



Dante's Commedia: Theology as Poetry (ND Devers Series Dante & Med. Ital. Lit.)



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In *Dante's Commedia: Theology as Poetry*, an international group of theologians and Dante scholars provide a uniquely rich set of perspectives focused on the relationship between theology and poetry in the *Commedia*. Examining Dante's treatment of questions of language, personhood, and the body; his engagement with the theological tradition he inherited; and the implications of his work for contemporary theology, the contributors argue for the close intersection of theology and poetry in the text as well as the importance of theology for Dante studies. Through discussion of issues ranging from Dante's use of imagery of the Church to the significance of the smile for his poetic project, the essayists offer convincing evidence that his theology is not what underlies his narrative poem, nor what is contained within it: it is instead fully integrated with its poetic and narrative texture.

As the essays demonstrate, the *Commedia* is firmly rooted in the medieval tradition of reflection on the nature of theological language, while simultaneously presenting its readers with unprecedented, sustained poetic experimentation. Understood in this way, Dante emerges as one of the most original theological voices of the Middle Ages.

"Long taken for granted in Dante studies, the nexus between theology and poetry in Dante's work, especially in the *Commedia*, has only really been subjected to searching critical analysis in the last few decades. The scholars represented in this interdisciplinary collection explore the poem's claims to function as a text embodying theological truth and, more particularly, as a poetic representation of the experience of the mystical. Their efforts comprise a landmark in modern Dante studies." --**Steven Botterill, University of California, Berkeley**

"Moved by both intellectual curiosity and a palpable love of their subject, a group of both young and established scholars, both theologians and Dante specialists, from both sides of the Atlantic, collaborate in this book to search through the poet's volume and pose fresh questions about the relation of poetry and theology in Dante's work." --**Ronald L. Martinez, Brown University**



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