



History of Islamic Theology (Princeton Series on the Middle East)

By *Tilman Nagel*

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A study of Islam. Using the Koran and other primary sources, Tilman Nagel delves deeply into Islamic history as he traces the development of Islamic doctrine. He explores the centrality of the Koran in Islamic theology and examines its canonization process and the central themes of its message.

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

In this accessible study, Nagel (Timor the Conqueror) offers a comprehensive study of Islam. Using the Koran and other primary sources, the author delves deeply into Islamic history as he traces the development of Islamic doctrine. In an opening chapter, Nagel explores the centrality of the Koran in Islamic theology. He examines the Koran's canonization process and probes central themes of the Koran's message: "divine power," "the human creature" and "attaining salvation." In subsequent chapters, he explores the relationships between such Islamic sects as the Sunni and the Shiite, and the two types of Islamic theological literature: the hadith, an oral report or a story, and the kalam, a genre that "develops theological and metaphysical statements." He also examines Islamic monotheism; the development of Islamic philosophy in the Middle Ages and its relation to theology; and the relationship between Islam and Gnosticism. Although the focus of the book is on the early development of Islam in the ninth through 12th centuries, Nagel demonstrates the ways in which Muslims have carried these beliefs into the modern world. A helpful chronology and a list of suggested readings complete the book. Though the price will be prohibitive for many readers, the book's wealth of information can be mined repeatedly for gems of knowledge about Islam.

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From Library Journal

Nagel (Univ. of Gottingen), a recognized expert on Islamic theology and history, presents a scholarly, well-researched work on the most important elements in Islamic theology and history, containing a descriptive chronology from Islam's beginnings in the seventh century to the modern era. Nagel makes the controversial assertion that "Jews and Christians deviated from true monotheism; the Jews claimed Ezra, and the Christians Jesus to be the son of God, thus lapsing into polytheism." Recommendations for further reading and sources cited are published in several languages, and Arabic terms are well defined. However, some indexes are purely alphabetical lists?one wonders why they are included. A companion to the classic reprint of Ignaz Goldziher's *Introduction to Islamic Theology and Law* (1981); recommended for libraries specializing in Islamic studies.?Michael W. Ellis, Ellenville P.L., NY

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Review

"In this accessible study, Nagel offers a comprehensive study of Islam." -- *Publishers Weekly*, April 12, 1999

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