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The Prophet's Ascension: Cross-Cultural Encounters with the Islamic Mi'raj Tales

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The Prophet's Ascension: Cross-Cultural Encounters with the Islamic Mi'raj Tales

The tales of the mi'raj describe the prophet Muhammad's journey through the heavens, his encounters with prophets and angels, and his visit to heaven and hell. The tales are among Islam's most popular, appearing in Arabic, Persian, and Turkish literature, and in later adaptations throughout the Muslim world. Often serving as narratives designed to promote the worldview of particular Muslim groups, the tales were also a means for communities to construct rules of normative behavior and ritual practices, and were used to assert the superiority of Islam over other religions. The essays in this collection discuss the formation of this narrative, the mi'raj as a missionary text, its various adaptations, its application to esoteric thought, and its use in performance and ritual.

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