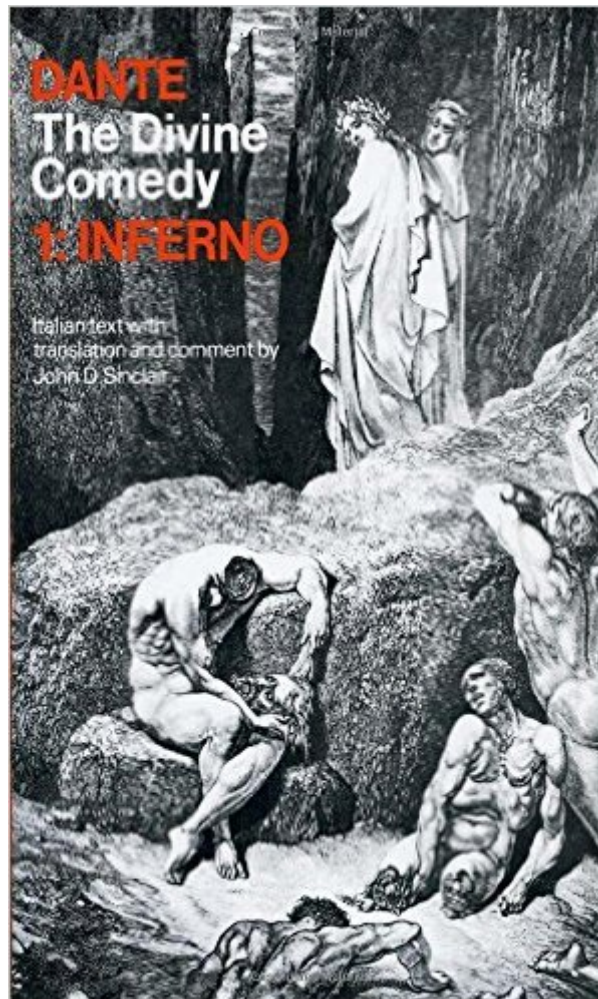


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Inferno: The Divine Comedy, Volume 1 (Galaxy Books)



Synopsis

An invaluable source of pleasure to those English readers who wish to read this great medieval classic with true understanding, Sinclair's three-volume prose translation of Dante's Divine Comedy provides both the original Italian text and the Sinclair translation, arranged on facing pages, and commentaries, appearing after each canto, which serve as brilliant examples of genuine literary criticism.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Dante's Comedy is one of the three or four must-reads if you want to gain an understanding of mediaeval thought & culture. The problem is that Dante's Italian--because of the rhyme scheme & stanza structure--is simply not translatable into English. Our language does not have enough rhymes available to use the same pattern as Dante, or anything like it. Many have tried--Longfellow, Sayers, Pinsky--& all have failed to some extent or other. Sinclair's prose translation tries to show you what Dante says, without trying to imitate his poetic structure. This, unfortunately, may be the best & only way to get a good feeling for the content & meaning of this remarkable work. Highly recommended--but if you're really interested in pursuing this further, try to learn some Italian.

I've read John Ciardi's terza rima translation of the Inferno and, let me tell ya, it does not compare favorably to John D. Sinclair's masterful prose rendition. Sinclair doesn't have to contrive any awkward rhymes or make any stilted arrangements because he is more or less translating it word by

word. Therefore, the prose is muscular yet eloquent, allowing for a great range of flexibility. I can't recommend this one highly enough. The only reason I bought this translation in the first place is because Harold Bloom (*Western Canon*) touts it as the best rendition into English, and, my goodness, he was spot on! As a great added bonus, at the end of almost every canto, Sinclair helps illuminate and clarify the text through lucid commentary. He tersely but effectively enlightens the reader concerning all of the contemporary references to Dante's time and place, including many of those whom Dante was acquainted with and much more (e.g., mythological allusions, Medieval theology, etc.). Essentially, one doesn't even need to be truly conversant in Greek and Roman mythology or Christian Theology to fully comprehend this uncanny work, thanks wholly to Sinclair's annotations and notes. If you're bogged down due to the myriad translations, fret no more! Sinclair will guide you into the stinking maw of Dante's Hell, and you'll think it's absolutely torture to stop reading once you've begun!

Anxious to read my first English translation of Dante's poem I feared I would miss the joy of reading it in my native language so I searched for a book congaing both texts. This was just what I needed! Although not always literal (understandably) I feel this text does a great job at capturing the essence of Dante's work. Grazie mille.

This published version includes not only the best translation of Dante's first book in his *Divine Comedy*, but also includes Dante's original Italian text. And both languages are aligned by line number within each chapter. Fun to read, especially if you know a little Italian or a little Latin. This is my favorite version.

La Commedia Divina is one of the cornerstones in literature, and Sinclair's translation is, hands down, STILL the *Primus Inter Pares* of English translations of Dante Alighieri's work of genius. Sinclair's translation is based on even older source-material than Giorgio Petrocchi, but instead of trying to "get artistic" with Dante's original *Terza Rima*'s, he stick to easily understood prose backed up with lots of elaborate notes, invaluable in understanding Dante's work fully. Be sure to get the "Purgatorio" and "Paradisio" volumes too; they are equally essential. "The divine comedy" is such a grand piece of work that it deserves to be read in different translations, but for God's sake, make the Sinclair version one of them... ..A good alternative is the Mark Musa translation. Another good idea is to get the book "The Dore Illustrations for Dante's *Divine Comedy*", because, to me at least, the imagery of DorÃ© has become an integral part in fully appreciating the medieval way of thinking,

portraited in Dante's Comedy."La Commedia Divina" has had such an impact on me, that I at some point actually considered learning Italian to get the full splendour out of Dante's poetry... ..Well, there's still time...

You can SEE the action in all of its physical and emotional colors. Too bad I cannot read it in its original Italian.

This parallel-text edition gives the Italian alongside Sinclair's translation, which is prose but gives you a close understanding of the Italian. The footnotes are helpful without overburdening the reader, and each canto ends with some good expatiatory commentary on each canto. This makes for a very nice reading of the piece for the general reader.

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