

Religious Studies Topic of the Month

February 2025

What could a fresco reveal About Islamic-Christian Dialogue?

Topic of the month aims to stimulate discussion at Key Stages 4 and 5 and bring religion to life. This can be achieved by considering religion's relevance in our vast modern world. We have selected a current news article, which you may wish to read and integrate into your teaching practice, using the discussion prompts provided.



Disclaimer:

This topic relates to an article, written by Tom Almeroth-Williams for the University of Cambridge* and is entitled "Islamic 'altar tent' discovery".

Introduction

This article refers to the discovery of a 13th-century fresco in Italy showing Islamic tents used in medieval churches.

[\(Click here to access the article\)](#)

Discussion prompts

- How is art used in places of worship?
- Why might the type of decoration found in a church be important?
- How could the fresco change our view of Islamic and Christian relations in medieval times?
- What could the use of Islamic art in Christian settings tell us about cultural exchanges during medieval times?
- What artistic techniques are used in the fresco, and how do they reflect medieval European art trends?
- How could church architecture affect worship?
- Why is the discovery of the fresco significant for historians and archaeologists?

Links to topics featured in our specifications:

- **GCSE:**
 - Forms of expression and ways of life
 - The common and divergent forms of architecture, design and decoration of Catholic churches
 - The meaning and significance of paintings, fresco and drawings within Catholicism