

Islam

Important Research Results

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Islam din wa dawla

Islam – not a religion only

Islam is a civilization: an empire built up in a town. Religion and politics, law, economy, hygiene etc.

Early Arabic expansion: 'openings' (*futuhāt*) or self-defense (*jihad*) but never 'war' (*harb*).

Own social ideology

Long, deep crisis of the Islamic world. Process: Western social systems don't work; conservatives demand, regimes refuse *Sharia*. Attack: own statesmen, Western tourists, the West (terrorism).

Cf. last slide

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Millat Ibrahim – Hanifiyya

Abrahamic religions?

Popular/ academic myth: Judaism-Christianity-Islam.

But *millat Ibrahim* is Islam only (Q 2:130-135 16:23 3:65-67.95 6:161 22:78).

Abraham's roles in Judaism: ancestor, covenant; Christianity: archetypical believer; Islam: a *Hanif*.

Natural monotheists?

Hanif (revert): natural monotheist without revelation (Q 6:74-78). Back to the original pure religion of Abraham (not Adam: it's about Arab identity).

Islam as 'Hagarene' heresy (John of Damascus, 8th c.).

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Ahl al-Kitab – not the Book

Books are fascinating

All nations are given scriptures to recite (Christians, Jews, Persians etc.). Not fair: Arabs without Arab messenger / Arabic message? (Q 16:103, 43:3 etc.)
No Arabic NT in the 7th c.
How about translating?

Not the OT/NT

It's not about accepting OT and NT, but the hypothetical 'books sent down to Moses and Jesus', now corrupted / lost.
'People of the Book' are people – not the books – to respect, because of their founders.

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Qur'an – as revelation

A text to recite

Qur'an = text to recite or read loud (Syrian *qeryana*)
Signs (*ayat*) of God: nature, history, messengers.
Direct communication with God is impossible, only angelic inspiration (Q 42:51 + *Asbab an-Nuzul* Moses vs. Muhammad)

The process

Nuzul – Wahy – Qur'an
1. Allah sends down the message to Jibril,
2. Jibril takes the message and inspires Muhammad,
3. Muhammad listens, understands and recites it to himself and others.

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Nuzul – sending down

'Sent down thing' (*tanzil*)

The original text (*Umm al-Kitab*) has been sent down in parts (Q 43:4 85:22 56:78.80) from the 7th heaven to the 1st heaven, from there by Jibril to the earth, into the heart of Muhammad (Q 2:97 26:192-195).

Theory: there is no human element in the Qur'an. Muhammad listens, memorizes and recites loudly, others write it down and repeat.
11-12th c. Ashari theology: the Qur'an is uncreated. Reciting it: like Eucharist for Catholics (Saeed).

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Wahy – inspiration

Experiencing inspiration

Muhammad told Aisha how he gets inspiration:

- he hears the voice of the angel like a bell (painful, cold sweat)
- the angel visits him visibly.

(*Bukhari* 1:2 4:438)

Or...

Or, he also gets inspiration under the blanket/robe of his wives.

(*Bukhari* 3:755 5:119 – *Fath al-Bari* from 15th c. gives no comment).

Qur'an – redactions

No change?

Muslim claim: the 1924. *Kairo* edition and the original text are the same. Problems of Arabic orthography led to 3 redactions and Qur'an-burnings by Muslim authorities: 653. Uthman, 705. Al-Hajjaj, 934. Ibn Mujahid

Which story?

Muhammad and Jibril edited the text together (*Bukhari* 1:5 4:819).

Scattered parts collected within 20 years after his death, finally published by Caliph Uthman (*Bukhari* 6:201 9:301).

Tafsir – understanding

No Sola Qur'an

M-A exegetical tradition, still no real hermeneutics. Q: a text without context.

No understanding without: *Sira* (earliest biographies), *Hadith* (reliable reports), *Tafsir* (classical commentaries).

Artificial, fragmented text. Obvious and dubious parts (Q 3:7)

Abrogation (*naskh*, Q 2:106 13:39). How many texts: 5-250? Which text is later (*Makki* or *Madani*)?

Hadith – reports of old

Hadith science (9-10th c.)

Hermeneutical need: situation of verses sent down. Hundreds of thousands of stories: work for generations to sort them out.

Categories: reliable (*sahih*) good (*hasan*), weak (*daif*), fake (*mawdu*).

Most reliable (*sahih*) collections: *Al-Bukhari* (9 vols) and *Muslim* (7 vols).

Other traditions: *Sunan Ibn Majah*, *S. Abu Dawud*, *Jami At-Tirmidhi*, *S. An-Nasai* (none *sahih*).

40 *Hadith Qudsi* (inspired but variants) and 40 *An-Nawawi* (minimal coll.).

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Bible vs. Qur'an

The Bible

Written by dozens

Within 1500 years

Revelation *directly* from God or through angels

God reveals *Himself* in history and in person so people might know him

Many genres

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Al-Qur'an

Written by *one* person

Within 22 years only

Inspiration of *a spirit* claiming to be an angel

God informs a person about his *will* and character (conceptual)

One genre (*Qur'*)

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Myths about the Qur'an

No book like that?

The Qur'an cannot be imitated (prose in rhyme).

The Qur'an cannot be translated only interpreted. Only the Arabic original can be called Qur'an.

Parallel editions (Arabic-) and now many English.

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No Arabic? Pre-scientific?

You cannot understand the Qur'an and Islam without knowing Arabic.

If it's true: 80% of Muslims do not understand Arabic.

The Qur'an contains many scientific truths – really?

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Allah – the God or Allah?

Allah (Q 20:14)

Ar. *ilāh* = god, *ilāhā* = gods, *al-ilāh* = the god = *Allāh* (?)
cf. Syr. *Alāhā*, Nest. *Allāha*.

Allah = God / proper name?
Another God / view of God?

Mostly biblical, but:

- holy? (Q 59:23 62:1 only)
- close? (Q 50:16 only)
- loving? (Q 5:54 cf. 3:31)

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Absolute oneness (*tawhid*)
+ transcendency (*tanzih* –
like the Sun).

Conceptual knowledge
(99/313 ‘most beautiful
names’) only – read the Q!

No ‘Three’ (Q 5:17.73.166
4:171): *Allah+Isa+Maryam*

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Shirk – polytheism only?

No god beside of God

Purification of pagan pan-
theon: Allah only, no ‘as-
sociates’ (gods, goddesses
or angels, jinns, prophets,
Q 4:36, 31:13)

Unbelief (*kufr*) and associ-
ating (*shirk*) are the un-
pardonable sins (4:48).

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No other Ruler / chance

Associating Rabbis/Monks
(Q 9:31 *At-Tabari* comm.)
Allah: only Lord = giver of
rules. (Unfair, see *Ulama*.)

Allah: only power in uni-
verse. Claiming something
could(n’t) have happened
if somebody (else than
Allah)... is a ‘small *shirk*’.

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Isalogy – the true story?

Isa (?) Masih (?)

After 600 ys: overwriting
the apostolic / patristic
tradition? If Allah had a
son... (Q 43:81) but cannot
(9:30 112:1-4). No *walad*
(begotten) or *ibn* (son of)
Allah. ‘Son of Mary’, Allah
said ‘Be!’ (3:59 66:12).

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Baby Jesus preaching
(19:28-35) – apocryphal
gospels.

Was *not* crucified (4:157
3:55) – anti-Jewish notion,
textual problems, dozens
of Muslim interpretations.

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Tahrif – meaning or text?

Repeated Revelation

Concept: Muhammad says only what messengers always said (Q 29:46).
If Jews / Christians teach different, referring to their scriptures, they misinterpret them (Q 2:59.75 4:46 5:13-15.41 etc. + some great commentators).

Corruption of the Bible

Traditional charge from Ibn Hazm 10th c. till today: biblical texts had been corrupted by Jews and Christians. (When...?)
If OT / NT are not corrupted: Muhammad/Qur'an/ Islam is illegitim!

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Allah and Muhammad

Mortal or more?

A mortal (Q 18:110 3:144 29:50-51 7:188 46:9) but also: Seal of the Prophets (33:40), Grace to the Worlds (21:107). Closer to Muslims than they (33:6). Loving him (Q 9:24 cf. *Al-Bukhari* 1:15 *Muslim* 1:71).

Allah AND Messenger

M. also as object of faith (Q 48:8.13 49:15), obedience (3:32 64:12 4:13-14. 64.69 33:36). Obey him = obey Allah (4:80 48:10 3:132 24:56). Loving Allah = following him, than Allah loves (3:31).

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Replacing Muhammad

The model (Q 68:4 33:2)

Long debates: what he said, did, liked/disliked: natural (*fitra*), advisable or religious obligation?
Choosing the able (Sunni: *khalif*), descendants (Shia: *imam*), chain of initiation (Sufi: *silsila*).

Caliphate

Khilafa after Ali became hereditary; abolition 1924 Turkey.
Challenges of globalization vs. 12th c. legal solutions led to decision / authority / identity crisis in Sunni Islam (see ISIS).

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