



Rethinking the Origins of Islam

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Message from the Guest Editor

In the past few years, we have witnessed a growing interest in the academic study of Islamic origins. Scholars have developed different theories with which to reconstruct the emergence of Islam. Some of the most contested issues include the milieu within which Islam emerged, the crystallization of this religion to become what we know it as today, the history of the Qur'anic text and its development into textus receptus, and the biography of the prophet Muhammad. At issue is the dating and reliability of certain Muslim literary sources from which information about the formation of Islam can be derived. While some scholars seek to uncover “the historical kernel” hidden in these sources, others regard Muslim literature as having no historical value and instead sketch an alternative account of early Islam through other sources.





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