

theory & method

modern academic study of islam

overview

- insiders approaches
- outsider approaches

insider / outsider study of Islam

- the question of faith as determining insider / outsider study of Islam?
- insider: faith-dependant study of Islam?
- outsider: faith-independent study of Islam?
- muslim 'outsiders'?

insider study of Islam

- taught by the faithful, for the faithful
- aim: seek to better understand foundations & articles of faith & doctrines
- knowledge: invariant (?) & trans-historic (?), uncritical (?)
- sciences taught: traditional / classical Islamic sciences

sunni / shī'i Islamic scholarship







outsider study of Islam

- faith-independent
- objective & unbiased scholarship
- non-essentialist study
- 'Islam' vs. Muslims
- critical, but non-judgemental (not prescriptive)
- sensitive to the beliefs of the 'other'

outsider study of Islam

some notable outsiders:

- **historical: Donner** (*Muhammad and the Believers at the Origins of Islam*-Harvard University Press (2010))
- **comparative: Netton** (*Islam, Christianity and Tradition. A Comparative Exploration*-EUP (2006))
- **mysticism: Schimmel** (*Mystical Dimensions of Islam*-University of North Carolina Press (1975))

important insiders:

- **Fazlur Rahman** (*Islam*-University of Chicago Press (1966))