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History of Christianity
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5-3-1 Assignment

Stille + Klein Articles

Questions: (5)

1. What does Christoph Luxenberg's work argue?
2. Why are some Arab scholars being harmed for their academic endeavors into the origin of the Koran and Islam?
3. Is there evidence that suggests the Koran may not be exactly the God-spoken word from the angel Gabriel to Mohammed?
4. What are the two opposing views in the reconstruction movement within Islam?
5. Why were Jews and Christians potentially involved in the early stages of Islam?

Answers:

1. That parts of the Koran were actually "pre-existing Christian Aramaic texts" that were incorrectly interpreted by Islamic scholars.
2. Because the Koran is "Not to be doubted", and anything that provokes that statement is to be judged.
3. Yes- inscriptions didn't appear until many decades after Mohammed's death, it seems to have been written by several authors, and there are variations in the texts as time progressed.
4. The first is that Islam is "codified from the very first day" (Klein). The second is that there may be more questions that need to be asked in order to better understand the history of Islam and its beginnings.
5. Donner's research led him to believe that at its beginnings, Islam included Christians and Jews because it was seen as a monotheistic revival movement (and a heresy spreading from Christianity), rather than a specific codified religion that excluded Christians and Jews.

Terms: (3)

1. *Fatwa*- a scholarly Islamic religious ruling
2. *Hagarenes* – the descendants of Hagar / tribe of Ishmael
3. "*Ecumenical phase*" – a period of time where Muhammed's followers (monotheists more than anything) began to develop Islam as a religious movement.

Summary: (1)

Both articles outline the negative responses academic scholars have received for beginning to ask questions about Islam and reconstruct its history and origins in more historically accurate ways. Islam's traditional teaching is that the Koran is not to be questioned, while research is pointing to many deviations from the classical beliefs about its origins. As the text is exegeted and historical documents are examined, many scholars are receiving backlash- yet still they are excited about the implications of such discoveries about the origins of Islam.