My goal in this thesis is to concentrate on the origins of Islam as we can understand it from the Quran itself, without using other, later sources. At the same time, I am interested in the relationship between pre-Islamic Arabia and early Islam. My method will be based primarily on Mary Douglas and her grid-group analysis.

This British anthropologist attempted to analyse different social situations, in which various systems of understanding the world are formulated, using the parameters of "group" (the degree to which the borders of a group are defined) and "grid" (the number of rules by which an individual is controlled). These two parameters then made it possible for her to classify different cosmologies according to their ideas and their social reality.

Applying this method, I will attempt to extract from the Quran – not primarily a narrative text – a description of the change of early Muslims' social situation and development of their religious ideas which is connected to it, and I will attempt to use Mary Douglas' anthropology to explain how such a transformation happened and could happen.