

Hi,

Thanks for downloading this free sample.

*This free sample contains **Chapter 1.5. The Fall of Freethinking in Academia, Education and the Media** and a part of **Chapter 4. Unpacking Islam**.*

With kind regards,

Paul Nielsen

Copyright © 2017 by Paul Nielsen

All rights reserved. This sample or any portion thereof may not be reproduced or used in any manner whatsoever without the express written permission of the publisher.

1.5. The Fall of Freethinking in Academia, Education and the Media

The political climate in Europe has made it unprepared for the problems of the 21st century. The politically correct religion is predominant in Western- and Northern European politics, as well as in varying degrees in Canada, Australia and the United States. Any new political party that simply would like to guard the borders of their own country is immediately labelled as a “*neo-Nazi party*”. Often, such parties are quickly put in the Hitler-category, before they can even publish their actual political program. The Politically Correct way of thinking has deeply ingrained itself into many aspects of the Western societies. Not only has the area of politics become infected by it, but also other areas, such as academia, the media and the education system.

Academia

In academia, dogma in general is problematic. Especially within Social Science, dogma has become very predominant. Areas such as Gender Studies, Political Studies, Arabic Studies and Middle Eastern Studies have little to do with freethinking and rationality. Somewhat contradictory, university students are first introduced to the basics of academic thinking, empirical research and the underlying philosophy. They basically get introduced to some of the Western philosophers previously discussed, such as Descartes and Kant, but after that, they engage in the type of dogma-filled discourse that would make the very same Western philosophers shake their heads in disbelief. In reality, researchers should maintain a neutral perspective towards the studied object. When a biologist studies a piece of DNA of a Homo Neanderthal, another human species, in order to find out how this animal compared to us, he or she should be driven by an attitude of curiosity. The mind of the researcher should be free from dogma. The researcher should not be hoping for a specific outcome. He or she should not have a strong opinion about how the DNA of a Homo Neanderthal *should ideally* compare to our own DNA. Now, imagine a strongly religious researcher conducting this study. This will probably not lead to an objective result. Therefore, a strongly religious person, who resents the whole idea of another human species, is better kept far away from the laboratory. However, this is exactly what happens on a daily basis in fields of study such as Gender Studies and Political Studies. In the area of Gender Studies, there are activists working as researchers on a daily basis, completely ignoring well-established facts in the areas of neurology and biology. These so-called researchers are presenting dogma and politically motivated nonsense as facts (such as claiming that the difference between men and women is simply a social construct, while the neurology department already knows that this is not the case).

Academia was originally supposed to be disconnected from the rest of the society. It was supposed to be a place where freethinkers could engage in truth-seeking and reason, outside of the sphere of influence of religion and politics.

Ideology is the enemy of freethinking. Academia used to be a place of freethinking, but now many fields of study have become a place of ideology. This can also be seen in the many university's policies. Often, they enthusiastically promote so-called ‘diversity’. They want diversity in skin-colour, sexual orientation, gender, country of origin, mother tongue, etc. They want to be as “*open*” and “*diverse*” as possible. But they have no problem demonising everyone who is outside of the religion of Political Correctness. They are basically saying this, “*Please be as diverse as possible, but don't you dare disagree with the Politically Correct perspective*”, “*Don't you dare be a disbeliever!*”

A study published in March of 2017 by the Adam Smith Institute showed that less than 12% of academia in the United Kingdom support ‘right-wing or conservative [political] parties’, which is

not a surprise at all. So, how does this atmosphere influence the type of researchers that are being created at such universities? Imagine a freethinking academic who would like to conduct an in-depth research on the degree of racism among migrants coming from Middle Eastern and North African countries. Such a research proposal is very unlikely to receive financing, assuming that such a freethinking researcher would even *exist* in those universities, because such a person would probably have already been filtered out way before he could even make it to the position of being a full-time researcher. Such a researcher would continuously be treated in a very unfair manner by his colleagues or even his own students, such as the recent events in the United States, Canada and Germany, where Politically Correct students named 'Social Justice Warriors' occasionally protest against their own professors.

The Media

Another area of the society where there is a high degree of presence of and control by members of the religion of Political Correctness is the media. In Western- and Northern Europe, a person can basically go to university to study a body of dogma such as Gender Studies, Political Studies, or White Studies, write a paper that contributes to strengthening this body of dogma and get awarded with a doctorate. After that, the person can get invited to some talk show to talk about how his or her latest research shows that people who agree with left-wing opinions have higher IQs than people who agree with right-wing opinions. The person will then get applauded by a carefully selected crowd of people who are all members of the Politically Correct religion. The creators of the talk show will make sure that there won't be any freethinker sitting at the table with a critical mind and a sharp tongue who is willing to challenge your research.

Sometimes, such talk shows will invite a guest who wants to challenge the Politically Correct narrative. The creators of the talk show will then make sure to choose a freethinker who might indeed be very intelligent, but unable to express himself that well. They will then put this person under a lot of pressure by having him or her sit at a table together with a few well-spoken comedians, who are very popular with the crowd and will make jokes about the freethinker. Something similar happened in the Netherlands, when a Dutch talk show invited the young leader of a brand new anti-establishment party. They then made sure he was sitting at a table together with three aggressive journalists who had prepared a quote from the young new politician that was taken out of context and then they accused him of racism based on this quote. The young politician then wasn't given the opportunity to defend himself against the accusations and was continuously interrupted by his opponents who were supported by a crowd of noisy members of the Politically Correct religion. (They basically implemented the following two tactics simultaneously: misrepresenting the viewpoint of the opponent and shutting the opponent down).

These types of talk shows always remain perfectly within the boundaries of the Politically Correct narrative. Within this safe space, members of the religion of Political Correctness can feel as if their worldview is correct. On a national level, the inhabitants of the country are continuously fed with information that fits within the boundaries provided by the ideology of Political Correctness. These talk shows are usually just held in the local language, such as German or Dutch. They won't go out of their way to invite a well-spoken intellectual from another country who opposes the religion of Political Correctness, so that their viewers are challenged and get a broader perspective on reality. Imagine an articulate academic going into debate with the leader of the German Green Party and completely make her look like a fool on multiculturalism and migration. The creators of the talk show will make sure that that doesn't happen. A population that has been indoctrinated with an

ideology will make sure that their worldview is not questioned. Indoctrinated people are generally not open to hearing new information that would debunk their entire worldview.

The Politically Correct are very powerful, but they are also very weak. They are powerful because they have the social power. Unlike Christian theocrats, they do not cut off heads, but they do have the power to cut off people's reputation. The Politically Correct are also very weak. This is because their worldview doesn't survive the test of scrutiny. Pro-multiculturalism attitudes are based on dogma and not based on objective reasoning, and neither are their views on Islam, migration and the Muslim world based on sound facts, as will be explained later in this book. Therefore, Politically Correct individuals generally do not engage in a fair debate because they cannot win.

Education

Starting at a very young age, Western children are confronted with white guilt, pro-multiculturalism ideas and many of the other elements of the Politically Correct religion. In many Western countries, children are confronted with concepts like 'white privilege'. Children are taught about the horrors of "racism", which then roughly means the same as 'criticising a non-white individual'. The doctrines of Political Correctness are imprinted in the young children's minds through the sheer power of repetition. Schools no longer teach children HOW to think, but instead WHAT to think. In the Netherlands, politician Pim Fortuyn (who got murdered on the streets by a leftist activist) was compared to Hitler in school books for young children.

At several points in their early teens, they will see television shows in which individuals who are outside of the religion of Political Correctness get demonised. They will get to observe how the person gets socially rejected. Their unconscious minds already know by design that social rejection must be avoided. Throughout the years, the links in their minds between the concepts like social rejection versus social approval and being inside versus outside of the religion of Political Correctness are strengthened.

As adults, they are often not aware of how their worldview is actually constructed. The things they learned as a child have become deeply ingrained into their unconscious minds. As a result, they will end up unconsciously rejecting information that falls outside of their worldview. When you are using the information from this book to try to open the eyes of the people in your environment, realise that you are often dealing with people who ARE, to *some* extent, indoctrinated. The neural pathways in their brains are constructed in such a way that they have a very hard time acknowledging the existence of very simple causal relationships.

This is a fatal mistake for three reasons.

Firstly, the classroom should be free of indoctrination with any type of dogma. Indoctrinating a new generation with Political Correctness is not very different from indoctrinating a young generation with an Abrahamic religion. As already argued, the European Enlightenment was a push-back *against* religion.

Secondly, children should be taught the importance of ideology-free thinking or freethinking. They should be raised on the values of the European Enlightenment, Western values and principles. To educate a new generation on the values of freedom of expression, freedom of conscience, reason and secularism is not simply to shortly mention these principles as the values of

the Enlightenment and then move on. To truly educate a new generation on these values, children should learn how to *implement* these values and how to engage in freethinking *themselves*.

Thirdly, it brings the maintenance of Western Civilisation in jeopardy. A society has to be maintained by teaching every new generation the fundamentals, again and again and again. The Western world has decided to stop doing this and instead, raise new generations on Political Correctness. Children should be taught how to think and how to reason. They should be challenged. At a later age, when they are at university, their professors should challenge them by going into debate with them and, on purpose, take the opposite side. Students should learn how to debate people who are blinded by an ideology. Professors should challenge them by providing reasons why a dictatorship would be better than a democracy and then have their students debate them on it. This is how to create a strong generation of real Westerners. Right now, the opposite is happening.

Today, too many young Westerners, the ones that are currently under the age of 30, have been indoctrinated quite strongly. This is a problem, especially because the younger part of the population is more indoctrinated than the older part. This is even more so in Northern Europe, the United Kingdom and Canada. One doesn't have to be a genius in the area of demography to realise that this might be something that future historians will identify as one of the reasons why Western Civilisation fell.

Political Correctness erodes the intellectual capacity of the Western world. In order for the Politically Correct religion to survive, the most important thing is for its members to NOT think, NOT be rational and to NOT think out of the box. Children are brainwashed into seeing the world through the lens of Political Correctness and then can be seen spending their young years virtue signalling and labelling people they don't even understand as "*racists*".

It is interesting to note that there is a big difference between Western- and Northern Europeans and Eastern Europeans. In Eastern Europe, the religion of Political Correctness hardly exists. This means that they generally do not view the world through the lens of Political Correctness. Therefore, Eastern Europeans in general are outside of the religion of Political Correctness. Therefore, many Western- and Northern Europeans view their fellow Europeans in the East as "*racists*". In most cases, speaking with people from Eastern Europe about multiculturalism, migration, Islam and even Political Correctness itself, is like a splash of fresh water. They simply 'get' it. They generally think the other Europeans have lost their minds.

However, for the Western- and Northern Europeans, a study that shows that two in three Muslims in Britain would not report a terror plot to the police, is quickly assumed to be a "*racist study*". The researcher from ICM who conducted the study in 2016 is then distrusted. When a group of Muslims murder a group of cartoonists in France, many young Europeans condemn the cartoonists for their "*racism*" and their "*Islamophobia*", while they were not complaining when the same cartoonists were making cartoons about Christians and Jews. When Ayaan Hirsi Ali showed up in the Netherlands, after having left behind Islam and a life of oppression, she was quickly dismissed as an "*Islamophobe*". Even today, most people in the Netherlands remember Ayaan Hirsi Ali as someone who was somehow "*taking advantage of her past*" in order to "*carry out a racist political agenda*". "*She was just using her past as an excuse to express her bias against Islam,*" they say. Opening the eyes of a Dutch person towards the fact that Ayaan Hirsi Ali had been treated unfairly is a process that takes longer than it should take. It suddenly becomes very difficult to understand that a woman, who, after having been oppressed under Islam, comes to Europe and warns about the

Islamisation of Europe, is not a villain. When human beings get locked into a certain ideology in their early lives, they will spend the rest of their lives acting through the mental framework that they were taught. The entire world is then viewed through the lens that this mental framework provides.

Young people have basically been told the following: *“Your worldview and identity is pro-multiculturalism, white guilt and anti-racism. You are going to view the entire world through the lens that this identity provides. You are morally superior and you have the right to demonise everyone who has a different opinion than you. Also, it is very easy because you don’t have to think too much.”* The unconscious principles which are then used to support this worldview are the principles of cultural relativism and limitless tolerance, which lead them to the Double Standard.

In the United States and Canada, many young people are currently being raised on the idea of *“safe spaces”*. Ideas that fall outside of the framework of Political Correctness are seen as so offensive that hearing these ideas is believed to be psychologically damaging. The young generation should therefore get ‘protected’ from these opposing ideas. It is hard to come up with a more effective way to create a generation of idiots. Besides being deeply and intensely indoctrinated with Political Correctness, these young people have an additional tendency to connect Western values and principles to the concept of *“white supremacy”*. Western values and principles are thus *“racist”* and Western Civilisation is *“oppressive”*. Their entire worldview then collapses upon being confronted with the fact that prosperous non-Western countries such as Japan, Uruguay and South Korea (of which the populations are not ‘white’) are also built on these Western principles, and that the people who live in these countries are not *“oppressed”* at all, on the contrary. The same happens when confronting them with the fact that Palestinians and many Turks are actually ‘whiter’ than many Italians and Spaniards.

Let’s finish this subchapter with a quote.

“The most effective way to destroy people is to deny and obliterate their own understanding of their history.” - George Orwell

4. Unpacking Islam

In order to create a clear image about Islam, it is important to dig deeper within the ideology itself. You have probably realised that especially Europe is in a very bad situation right now. Meanwhile, you might wonder why this one group of people consistently causes so many problems and is so badly integrated. How can people, after having been in Germany for three generations, prefer Sharia over German law? It just doesn't seem to make much sense.

This is a question that can only be answered by unpacking the ideology of Islam, which is created by and based on the life of one single person. This chapter has a high potential to make certain things 'click' in your head. You will be amazed at how perfectly Muhammad's personality matches with the collective psychology of many of today's Muslims.

There are several sources that Islamic ideology is based on. The most important book is the Quran. This is the collection of 'revelations' that Muhammad claimed to have received from 'Allah'. Then, there are the Hadith. These are a collection of stories about the life and deeds of Muhammad. Then, there is the Sira, which is his own recorded biography. The Hadith and the Sira together form the Sunnah, which is Muhammad's way of life ('the way of Muhammad'), in which the way that Muhammad behaved is modelled and put as an example for Muslims. The Sharia is based on an accumulation of this literature. What you can immediately see is that everything is constructed around one single person. Muhammad is the prophet, the final prophet, the true messenger, the best man who ever lived, etc. You probably get the general idea. Muhammad is even the most popular name for new-born boys in many countries, among which are also certain Western countries. This is because many Muslims like to name (at least one of) their sons after their prophet.

When an ideology is the result of the psychology of one single person, there is often a consistency between the mind of that person and the ideology. There is a consistency between the psychology of Adolf Hitler and the contents of his book. The same is the case for the Pali Canon and the Buddha. Therefore, an ideology provides insight into the mind of its founder. Likewise, one can choose to study the life and the personality of the founder in order to better understand the ideology itself. To really understand Islam, the single most important thing is to understand Muhammad. Therefore, we will first dig into the life and personality of this important historical figure. After that, certain topics, such as women, non-believers, and deception and lying will be discussed; the ten most famous examples of modern-day Islamic Deception will be discussed; and the chapter will conclude by discussing how Islam affects the minds of its modern-day followers.

An important question to ask is: what is Islam?. The answer to this question is that *Islam is the religious and political ideology from the Quran, the Sira and the Hadith.*

Islam = Quran + Sunnah

Sunnah = Sira + Hadith

Islam = Quran + Sira + Hadith

4.1. An Analysis of Muhammad

You are probably already familiar with the severe consequences of depicting Muhammad. As already mentioned, at the beginning of 2015 the staff of the French magazine, Charlie Hebdo, were killed by Muslims because they had made a satirical cartoon of Muhammad. Something similar also took place in Denmark.

In the Quran, it is written that anyone who depicts the prophet should be punished by death. It is noteworthy that anyone who depicts Jesus, Shiva, the Buddha or Yahweh, does not receive the same treatment by the Christians, Buddhists, Hindus or Orthodox Jews. This is the case because the books of these other religions do not sanction the depiction of their prophet.

So, who was this Muhammad figure? When asking Muslims this question, the answer is usually full of great words as well as an occasional touch of mysticism: *“He was the most amazing man who ever lived!”*, *“He went to heaven on a flying horse!”*, *“He was God’s final messenger”*. This mix of claims about the type of person that he was, combined with the type of claims that should be placed within the sphere of mythology rather than history, often makes it hard to create a clear impression of the man. However, we should not forget that he is not a figure like the Centaur, from Greek mythology, the creature with the body of a horse and the head of a man. Religious stories are often filled with vague events. Christian texts speak about angels coming down from the heavens, an arc containing two each of every animal on earth, the earth’s surface burning, etc. Such stories are very unlikely to actually have happened and are therefore better placed within the sphere of mythology. The story of Muhammad is often treated the same way. This leads to the most standard questions about Muhammad lacking clear generally accepted answers. Questions such as: what kind of man was he? How does he compare to other influential historical figures? What were his strengths and weaknesses?

Please note that Muhammad was not a mythical figure. Muhammad actually existed, and he did so in a precise geographical location and within a specific time period. This seems obvious, but it is important to emphasise. Muhammad was a real man, made of flesh and blood, just like Christopher Columbus, Alexander the Great and Julius Caesar.

It is possible to conclude certain facts about certain historical figures. Often, facts about Muhammad are denied, argued about and lied about. This is especially done by Muslims themselves. Western Politically Correct individuals then put the story of Muhammad in a subjective context. They believe that such religious stories can somehow be placed within a certain vague context in which every truth is relative. Perhaps he indeed DID fly to heaven on a flying horse, who knows? We shouldn’t judge, right?

However, it is clear that other historical figures cannot be subjected to the same post-modern treatment. Somebody who argues that Christopher Columbus did not discover the Americas, but instead Antarctica, is not taken seriously. When treating this with an all truth is relative mind-set, we could say that there are multiple interpretations of reality and that all of them are equally satisfactory. It should be obvious that this makes no sense at all. We know for sure that Columbus discovered the Americas. We even know exactly where he arrived on shore and what happened next. We know this from records written by the man himself and the undeniable geographical developments that took place within the Americas as a result of it.

Furthermore, it is possible to describe the personality of historical figures. What kind of people were they? Were they warriors? Were they intellectuals? In the case of Columbus, it is

relatively easy to create an accurate impression about the type of person that he was, because he himself wrote records of his adventure. A historical figure of whom we can easily gain insight into her thoughts, feelings and personality is Anne Frank, the Jewish girl who had been hiding in Amsterdam for many years during the Second World War and kept a diary.

Then, there are other figures where it is relatively hard to create an accurate impression of his or her personality. A striking example of this is Genghis Khan, the leader of the Mongols who conquered a larger landmass than anyone else did in all of human history. The Mongols themselves did not create written records, so most of what we know about them is from records written by their enemies and victims. Based on this, we do know that he was a very big and intimidating figure, as well as an unrivalled genius in the area of military strategy and especially capable in psychological warfare. So, it is harder to make an impression about Genghis Khan than it is about Anne Frank and Christopher Columbus, but we can still draw some conclusions about what kind of man he *must have been* in order to accomplish what he did accomplish under the given circumstances. There is no post-modernism here. Given the things we do know for a fact, it is still possible to create a reliable impression on Genghis Khan's life and what kind of person he *must have been*.

Going back to Muhammad: can we create an accurate impression of what kind of person he was? Yes, we can. The Quran is a collection of his own words, which he claimed to have received from 'Allah' and the Hadith are a series of compilations about his life. The best compilations are the ones from Sahih Muslim, al-Tabari, Bukhari and Ibn Ishaq, who are greatly respected within the community of Muslim as well as non-Muslim historians when it comes to the details of Muhammad's life.

Imagine if you were to check your daily news website tomorrow morning and would read about some 'guru' somewhere in Portugal who claimed that God was speaking to him. What would you think? You would probably chuckle a bit and continue to read the more important news articles. This is not a strange response at all, because we live in a time in which people travel by airplane, in which tech billionaire Elon Musk is working on a transportation route to Mars, and in which you can access more information by simply using the phone you have in your pocket, than people living 100 years ago had access to during their entire lives. In addition, you probably went to school. So, when someone walks up to you claiming that God has been 'revealing' information to him, you probably either think that he is a crook or that he should immediately visit the neurology department of the nearest hospital.

But even though this is the case, strange 'gurus' and 'prophets' still exist. The South Indian guru, Sathya Sai Baba, claims to have the ability to levitate, read people's minds and raise the dead. He even has millions of followers and hundreds of people claiming to be "eye witnesses" of his supernatural abilities. In Siberia, there is a man claiming to be the reincarnation of Jesus and who has 4000 followers living in his settlement and around 10000 followers worldwide. Then, there is the James Randi foundation, which offers 1 million dollars to the first person who can show supernatural abilities in a scientific setting. Until this very day, not a single guru, prophet, or magician has been able to collect his 1 million dollars.

Also, cult leaders are nothing new. Just to name a few from the last 50 years: In 1978, cult leader, Jim Jones, convinced 900 of his followers to commit suicide; in 1997, cult leader, Marshall Applewhite, and 38 of his followers committed suicide in order to be teleported to a spaceship following the Hale-Bopp comet; and in the 1990s, cult leader, David Koresh, had sex with the

underage daughters of his followers. What these figures often have in common is that they are exceptionally skilled in persuasion.

So, with this introduction of both historical figures and self-proclaimed gurus in mind, let's tell the story of Muhammad.

Early Years in Mecca

Let's go to the Arabian Peninsula around the year 570 AD, where Muhammad was born. He had no father and his mother died when he was only 6 years old. He grew up as a poor, illiterate boy and was taken care of by a society of trading merchants. He did have an uncle, a merchant named Abu Talib, and he worked for him as a camel shepherd.

The horrible climate protected the Arabian Peninsula (today: Saudi Arabia, Yemen, Oman, Qatar, UAE) from conquest and cultural influence. No civilisation at that time had the impression that there was something to be gained by expanding their territory towards the Arabian Peninsula, so the area was relatively isolated, with the exception of certain trade routes. The lives of the Arabs were largely devoted towards their daily survival. To understand Muhammad, it must be noted that he grew up in this environment. The Arabian Peninsula was an empty, barren region. During the day, it was very hot and during the night, it was very cold. The earth was dry, so there wasn't much plant growth.

There were many pagan traditions in Arabia, particularly among those based in the trading centres such as Mecca, Muhammad's birthplace. Some of these trading centres and towns had religious buildings that were visited by pilgrims during the holy months. Muhammad was part of the Quraish tribe, a powerful merchant tribe that controlled Mecca. They worshipped a moon god with the name 'Allah', but other gods were recognised as well. The Quraish were a multi-theist tribe and the town of Mecca was well-known for its religious tolerance, where people of all faiths could come and pray.

It is interesting to note that a few thousand kilometres to the North, the new Byzantine Empire was being established. Byzantium had stone roads, man-made canals, aqueducts and a rich culture of theatre and philosophical debates that were open to the public. For that time period, Byzantium was an amazing civilisation influenced by both Roman and Greek history.

There isn't really much to say about Muhammad's years as a teenager. He was basically helping the traders, who took care of him, and he was naturally learning from them.

At the age of 25, Muhammad's life improved when he married the wealthy widow Khadija, who was 15 years older than himself. She also had a trading business, so Muhammad started to work for her. This allowed him to further improve his skills of persuasion, but it also gave him an opportunity to travel. During these travels, he came in contact with other tribes, which allowed him to get some basic knowledge about the religions of Judaism and Christianity, knowledge that was not available to the local population. (He would later use this knowledge to his advantage by incorporating the stories that he had come across into his 'revelations' from 'Allah').

It is important to emphasise that he grew up in an environment of traders. This most certainly caused him to pick up and internalise excellent persuasion skills. He worked for his uncle, who was a salesperson, and now he had gotten married to a woman who was also a trader and he started working for her as a salesman. So, if we do know ANYTHING about what kind of person Muhammad was, we know for sure that he was a salesman and that he probably became quite good at it over time.

What do we know about salespeople? What skills do they have? Good salespeople are strong persuaders. They have the ability to convince people and to influence people's decisions. Also, there are certain skills that we know pretty sure Muhammad did NOT acquire up to this point. He still couldn't read and write. We can also safely assume that given the course of his life, he was probably not an intellectual, he was not a philosopher and he was not a scientist. In addition, he was not a great swordsman or a great archer. None of his actions so far create the impression that he really knew where he was going. He did not have some big dream about a better world, or a vision about inventing something. He was not the kind of person who would have some great idea about building a canal from the sea to provide water to the area, such as the early Persians had a thousand years earlier.

After many years of working as a salesman and travelling, Muhammad's lifestyle became more comfortable. During these periods, he had the chance to think more about his own life. It is quite likely that he was experiencing the symptoms of an early midlife crisis, including a desire for personal accomplishment and meaning. One day, at the age of 40, he suddenly claimed to his wife that an angel named Gabriel had come to him in a dream. This was the first time that Muhammad made such a claim. After his wife believed him, he started to promote his new religion in the city of Mecca. Muhammad proclaimed himself a prophet in the same lineage as Abraham and Jesus and started to try to convert people around him to his new religion. He narrated the Quran to his followers and told them that these 'revelations' were the exact words of 'Allah', which is basically the name of the local moon god that he copied. He couldn't write, so he had another person write down his "revelations" for him. Outside of his wife, his first convert was his young cousin Ali, who would later become his son-in-law.

At the time, Mecca was a very tolerant society. So, when Muhammad started to promote his new religion, the Meccans did not interfere. Today, Muslims often claim that the Meccans persecuted Muhammad for preaching Islam. This is incorrect. The Meccans knew Muhammad was trying to grow his religion in their city, but they didn't interfere. As mentioned earlier, multiple gods were worshipped, and traders from many different tribes of the Arabian Peninsula came to Mecca to buy and sell goods. These traders often had different beliefs or prayed to different gods than the Meccans and this was not a problem. Also, people trying to gain followers for all kinds of superstitious nonsense were nothing new. There were more instances of Arabs in that time period claiming to be "*in contact*" with all kinds of genies and spirits. (The Disney movie Aladdin takes place in an Arabian environment and includes a character that is a blue genie living in a bottle. These types of beliefs were not strange in Arabia in that time period). But even when Muhammad later started to criticise and mock the local religion and the ancestors of the local people, the leaders of Mecca did not engage in violence and simply started to mock him back.

This can be put in our current Western context as follows. Muhammad used his freedom of expression to mock the local tradition. The locals responded by using their freedom of expression to mock him back. From the standpoint of the Meccan leaders, they were basically maintaining their policy in the areas of freedom of expression and freedom of religion.

This continued for 13 years. Yes, this was a period of 13 long years! Muhammad tried to grow his religion while occasionally mocking the Meccans, and the Meccans allowed him to do so and occasionally mocked him back. At the end of those 13 years, he was able to convert only around one hundred followers.

When looking at the contents of Islam itself, it basically consists of pagan practices from that time period and some elements of Christianity and Judaism that he picked up during his travels. He often didn't really understand them. He never read any books because he couldn't read.

The relationship with the Meccans remained good until an event in which Muhammad was convinced by the Meccans to recognise the local gods in addition to his 'Allah'. Muhammad agreed and this was a positive change. The Meccans had observed Muhammad for 13 years now and they probably knew that a cult unwilling to recognise other gods, wouldn't be a good idea in a multi-theistic society. Therefore, they had a conversation with Muhammad and convinced him to recognise other gods as well. When Muhammad told this to his own people, they were apparently quite confused with this sudden change in his attitude, because this wasn't what 'Allah' had been 'revealing' the whole time. Muhammad then rescued the situation by claiming that he had been 'tricked'. He claimed that 'Satan' had been speaking to him lately, in order to confuse him. He then renounced the acceptance of the local gods. The Meccans did not like this at all and intensified their criticism and mockery of Muhammad and his religion. This period is described by many Muslims as "*A period of persecution*". Again, this is not correct. Only one Muslim died during this period, who was an older woman who died of old age.

It is very important for modern-day Muslims to keep insisting that the Meccans were the first to become violent against the Muslims instead of the other way around, so that they can justify the killings of Meccans that takes place much later in the story as 'payback'. Therefore, modern day Muslims still speak about "*persecution*" and even "*torture*" of the Muslims, by the Meccans. Some of them even tell stories about "*many deaths*". This simply is not true.

At the deathbed of Muhammad's protector and uncle, Abu Talib, the leader of the Quraysh of Mecca tried to make a final peace with Muhammad. Muhammad then rejected this offer. After Abu Talib had died, Muhammad went to look for a political alliance and tried to create a treaty of war between the people of Mecca and the people of Medina, another town in the far north. The Meccans found out about this and decided that they had enough of Muhammad. They then tried to capture him in order to execute him.

It is important to note that the Meccans did not attempt to kill any Muslim other than Muhammad himself. Muhammad managed to escape by using his son-in-law Ali, to distract the assassins. The assassins did not harm Ali.

Muhammad and his followers then left Mecca and travelled towards Medina, which was called Yathrib at that time. This took place in the year 622 AD, the year that is used as the beginning of the Muslim calendar.

The City of Medina and the Three Jewish tribes

From this point on, Muhammad's attitude became more violent. In the Quran itself, you can clearly see this evolution. The early verses are more peaceful, but then this suddenly changes. The later verses are the reason why the Quran is the most dangerous book on the planet. These earlier verses of the book are often referred to as 'Mecca Islam' and the later verses as 'Medina Islam'. Muslims who try to market their religion as non-violent, often refer to specific verses from the Mecca period of Muhammad's life, while trying to reframe and rationalise the entire part of the book that came after it. Do not forget that the Quran is a collection of everything that Muhammad

claimed to be 'revelations' from his 'Allah' and Muhammad changed his mind based on the geopolitical situation he found himself in, as well as his own short-term desires. Remember that Muhammad was not an intellectual or a great thinker, but he was an exceptionally skilled persuader and deceiver.

Muhammad's 'Allah' seemed to be especially concerned about the personal desires of Muhammad himself. He made sure that his Muslims obeyed him perfectly. "*Believe in the Messenger or suffer the consequences*", is repeated more than 20 times in the Quran. The Mecca-period of the Quran tells unbelievers to "*follow the example*" of Muhammad or suffer Hell. The Medina-period of the Quran tells unbelievers to "*obey*" Muhammad or suffer death.

(End of free preview)