



# GREEN BOOK



Almighty masculinity – Women & feminities



الكتاب الأخضر

HM2F

17th of May 2011

Homosexuel-le-s musulman-e-s de France

International day  
against homophobia  
transphobia

A French LGBTQIA Citizen network for an inclusive Islam

Member of the LGBT confederation; coordinator of the CALEM conference

Thank to you Jamal for his  
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French "Livre Vert - Tome I & II"  
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*Islam* means « being in Peace ». It is the second religion in France, and according to some thinkers and philosophers from everywhere around the globe, Islam is witnessing an obvious reformation. Will Islam be able to provide us with a fully appeased, laic, progressive and universally ecumenist spiritual countenance in the future?

That would be an Islam of France able to protect and to defend the right of sexual minorities, especially within the Muslim community, which has been too often wrongly dubbed as intrinsically homophobic. Although homosexuality (*al-mathliya al-djansiya* - الجندسية المثلية) does not seem to be clearly condemned neither in the Quran nor in the hadith.

Additionally, it is here itself the center of “Muslim homosexuals” preoccupation: not being stigmatized anymore by thinkers or religious leaders, who are very often self-proclaimed, using a so-called science which they manipulate according to their own will, in order to dehumanize and infra-humanize us; to make us less than human beings, somehow to justify, according to them, the fact that we are not sufficiently worthy (of being human?) in order to express any form of spirituality, or to embrace freely any faith nor religious practices. The second main preoccupation of our sisters and brothers of Muslim faith, *de facto* homosexuals, seems to be related to a certain islamophobia which they think (are they right or wrong?) is directed towards us.

In other word, wherever these remarks come from, we consider them to be extreme and we want henceforth to openly condemn these discriminations which are in our eyes intolerable; these xenophobic remarks, as much used by religious clerics who described themselves as radicals – some of them are even openly dogmatic –, are the main reasons which have encouraged us to create this citizen network: HM2F.

*Ludovic Lotfi Mohamed Zahed – founder and spokesman of HM2F*

***Muslim and Homosexual, or how to be between the hammer and the anvil?***

*"Lesbian, gay and transgender Muslims affirm that we can be agents in this slow but necessary evolution, as well as women, youth and other groups without power position. But it is only God who gives us a central place in the diversity of humanity - to the forefront, both a place of danger and insight"*

(Siraj Kugle – Homosexuality in Islam [1])

*Islam* means “being in peace”. It is a fact that Muslims do not possess a central religious authority. It is for this reason that when we talk about Islam; it is important to distinguish among three interdependent intellectual entities.

First of all, we can consider Islam as a religion which exists for more than 1430 years, with a dogma more or less accepted unanimously by different Muslims’ sects. When we refer to Islam, we do it also as an Islamic Arabian civilization, sometimes “tolerant” upon sexual minorities, sometimes puritanical, depending upon the geographical and times context; sometimes both at the same time [2]. An Islamic Arabian civilization which sprouted from the Arabian Desert, at a time when human beings could not really make any particular distinction between Islamic laws, inspired from a universal *humanitas*, and Arabic popular traditions.

The final definition of Islam refers (roughly, at least here in France) to this Islamic credo imposed by the orthodox Sunnis scholars of the tenth century and who legislates upon most of the sphere of life of a believer, including homosexuality. An Islamic legislation which has never been enforced that way before. Finally, we see emerging today an Islam qualified as “reformed”, at a time which is considered to be “liberal”; yet, no one has ever been so much categorized by gender or sexuality.

Let us ponder once again for a moment upon the orthodox Islamic credo, is it conservative? At first sight, it is undoubtedly the case. This is so because those faithful intellectuals who had worked out this credo did it with the intentions, clearly shown, to preserve the Islamic traditions inherited from the first Muslims' generation (the Arabic term used is *al-salaf al-salah* - السلف الصالح); these great Sunnis and Shiites imams wanted to endorse such a tradition within the credo which was taking birth, as a fact within two century after the death of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. There is a great probability that homosexuality as it is, two centuries before the conservatives scholars of the tenth century, has never been condemned explicitly, not even by the Prophet ﷺ himself or by his companions [1].

Eventually, more and more Muslims' thinkers displayed their homosexuality (for example Imam Mushinh Hendricks in Cap town – South Africa). Others publicly defend the rights of sexual minorities or of women, to name only a few, as they know with exactitude how much fascism and extremism of all horizons are fond on this type of scapegoat. These intellectuals defend the right of individuals and who are themselves Muslims [3] and who belong to some vulnerable minorities less and less visible within the Muslim Arab world (in Uganda, Egypt, Iran, Saudi Arabia [4]); a dogmatism which rely more often upon a represented identity which is hegemonic, very often negatively defined on the basis of what one should or should not do, in order to be a good Muslim. Some dogmatic Muslims, who have inherited a certain Islamic heritage which has been politicized, to show their strength, declare that they are trying to track the slightest perversion.

*"Perverts", or "mentally unstable";* this is actually how Mr. Tarik Ramadan considers the homosexuals in his article of 26<sup>th</sup> of May 2009 called *"Islam and homosexuality"*. The author says that "The Islamic position on homosexuality has become one of the most sensitive issues facing Muslims living in the West, particularly in Europe. It is being held up as the key to any eventual "integration" of Muslims into Western culture, as if European culture and values could be reduced to the simple fact of accepting homosexuality. The contours of this de facto European culture is in a state of constant flux, shifting according to the topic of the day. Just as some insist, as do the Pope and certain intellectuals—often dogmatic and exclusivist defenders of the Enlightenment—that Europe's roots are Greek and Christian (thus excluding Muslims), so several homosexual spokesman

and the politicians who support them are now declaring (with an identical rejection of Muslims) that the “integration of Muslims” depends on their acceptance of homosexuality” [5].

Some Muslims who call themselves as radicals do not seem to be afraid of offending their fellow citizens who they consider with less esteem. Nor do they fear to mix up different subjects of debate, for example by confusing between the protections of inalienable human rights and those dealing with the politics of the politicians, which do not concern us more than a fellow European citizen.

This is a very good example on matters of rhetoric build up in pieces around a scapegoat (sexual minorities). Besides, this is essentially the principle critics made to this article of Tarik Ramadan for his lack of raw objectivity, on both axiological and historical basis. Because in fact, what has been the status of homosexuality up to now within the Arabo-Islamic civilization known for centuries for its hospitality and its relative tolerance?



*What was the attitude of Muslims towards homosexuality, some centuries ago and onwards?*

*Islam* means “being in peace”. However, to talk about homosexuality for most Muslims is to come out with this type of conclusion: “Islam forbids homosexuality”. In fact, it seems that for most Muslims, Islam lacking a central clergy strictly speaking, homosexuality is considered as in Christianity and Judaism as a sexual behavior against nature and that certain Muslims will go so far as to qualify it as a perversion and a mental instability.

The necessity of birth and the importance of the family occupy a central role in the sub-conscious of the Muslim’s nation. The prophetic oral traditions of the Prophet of Islam ﷺ, seem to put forward this recommendation of procreation in declaring that “those whom Allah has given a pious wife, He has helped him in half of this religion; let him be fearful in the second half left” [6]. It is clear enough that in those times and still now in some regions of the Arabo-Islamic world, the condition for the expansion of a civilization or a religion is procreation. In a Muslim society, the social pressure that impinges upon the individuals, so that they are in conformity to a patriarchal model, is particularly strong. Though the difference between man and woman, and the question of gender seem to occupy an important part in the founded texts of the Islamic credo. For Islam and for other monotheists, every sexual intercourse seems to be conditioned only in the sacredness and divineness of monogamous relationship and marriage.

On the other hand, where sexual pleasure is considered by Christians and Jews as an original sin, in Islam it is a blessing to which it is recommended to devote body and soul. In this way, mating does not only lead to procreation; it manifests also the harmony of divine order in which the distinction between male and female principle and their complementarily constitute the elementary foundations. Thus, this stigmatization of sexual minorities seems to be the direct consequence of the use of certain verses of the Qur’an which condemn in a formal way the acts of the people of Loth; a Prophet ﷺ who had also been mentioned in the bible with some accounts of the sexual acts of the

people of Sodom and Gomorra. In this way, the Qur'an in the chapter 27 gives us an account of the story of "Loth who said to his people you practice indecency yet you are those who see clearly?"; "You approach men instead of women to satisfy your lust? You are rather a folk who are ignorant" [7].

Many other chapters of the Quran describe the misdeeds of the people of Loth; sexual relationship with men rather with women, sexual corruption, rape, lack of respect to the words of the Prophet ﷺ [8]. Hence, we can come to the conclusion that the deeds of the people of Loth does not point homosexuality as a reciprocal relationship between two adults of the same sex on the basis of love, respect and equality; Qur'an talks about murders, thefts, rapes. The Qu'ran reported that the folk of Loth were destroyed by God, Who buried the town under a torrent of rocks. For some this event justifies the stoning of homosexuals, considering them as the reincarnation of the transgressions of the people of Loth. Yet, neither in the Quran nor in the hadith, which always refer to the practices of the people of Loth, did not seem to describe more precisely which sexual acts are in question A hadeeth of the Prophet ﷺ seem to reject categorically the sexual practices between two person of the same sex, as it was practiced by the folk of Loth: "whenever you found two men committing the misdeeds of the people of Loth (the rape, male prostitution, or more generally any kind of homosexual practices between two consented adults? Difficult to say), put them to death, the passive as well as the active" [9].

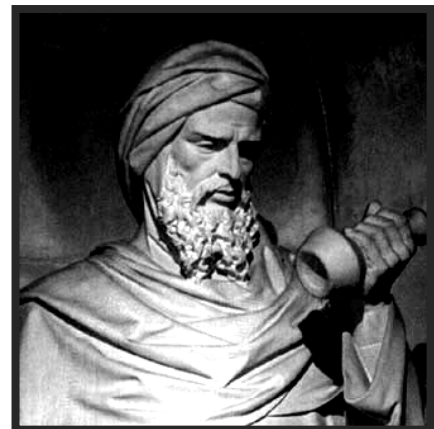
Heterosexual anal intercourse seems also to be condemned by the majority of the Islamic scholars: "God do not look at the one who have penetrated his wife behind". Moreover, "...in front or behind, do not approach the anus or the menstruation" [10]. But that statement seems to be, somehow, established over centuries on medical basis; first Muslims did not considered what we call today "homosexuality" as a "perversion". For all that and on the basis of this ambiguity relative to sexual practices of the people of Loth, some branches of Islam consider that adultery – *zina* – is the penetration of a penis into a vagina rather than the sexual act itself, as it is the sperm which contains the source of life [2]. Since Homosexual activities are not susceptible to generate life, some Muslims,

in some ways are ready to accommodate with the confusion and the silence which accompany homosexuality even today in most of the Muslim Arab countries.

We have not to forget the Qur'an's promises to the believers that on entering the paradise they will have virgin's mates – *houris* – and they will be served by Adonis – *ghoulam*. It seems that many poets and sultans refer to these promises to justify their homosexual relationships with their lovers [11]. The history of the Muslim world – Arab, Turkish or Persian – had known homosexuals poets or emirate artistes who displayed their homosexuality. In the eighth century, the poet Abu Nuwas was said to be the lover of the son of the sultan Haroune Ar-Rachide of Baghdad. More or less at the same time al-jahiz wrote his "*Adonis and courtesan*"; he presented two experts in the Islamic Law who were opposition concerning their sexual preferences. One praised the courtesans or slave-singers and the other the Adonis. By making them talking like that, al-jahiz revealed the erotic fantasy of the Muslims at that time; fantasy in which young men had their place in the eyes of other people. And examples like these are numerous [2].

Nowadays, for most Muslims concerned directly or indirectly by this subject of equal treatment of minorities within the Muslim communities, it is not a question of "trituration" the shari'ah (the Islamic credo). But most western Muslim thinkers of the twenty first century seem to be guided by the thirst of returning to the sources [12]; a return to the source of our Culture which has always been by itself a form of renaissance [13].

These thinkers seems henceforth completely conscious of this triptych separation which we mentioned above (tradition-dogma-reality of attitudes), in their attempt to analyze the tenets and the resulting questions of homosexuality within an Islamic context. A very vast question indeed, since it seems to pose the essential problem which the Muslim Arab civilization is facing at that very moment, and which is not only of homosexuality alone.





*Rediscovering Qur'an, far from inhuman exegesis*

Mohamed Mezziane says, about sexual minorities per se: "it is troublesome to compare the actual judicial offensive accompanied with discrimination of many Arab and Muslims countries against homosexuality and the acquisition of a judicial status for many homosexuals in most western countries (besides, an offensive which is contrary with the most commonly accepted idea of tolerance of Muslims societies concerning homoeroticism and homosexual practices)" [14].

But again, which Islam are we talking about? We need first of all to keep in mind the tolerance known for ages within the Arabo-Islamic civilization towards minorities, including sexual minorities, especially the eunuchs of the harem, etc. those eunuchs who had no sexual interest for women. They would be considered nowadays to be a part of sexual minorities, homosexuals for example (a medieval term invented in the 18<sup>th</sup> century for political purpose). Sexual eunuchs were summoned by the wives of the Prophet of Islam ﷺ.

On this matter, Faris Malik point out that also the Quran and the hadeeths – oral Prophetic traditions – also contain allusion of homosexual attract admitted by heterosexual men. In the collection of Al-Bukhari, there is a hadeeth saying: "we used to fight alongside the Prophet ﷺ; we did not have any women with us. We said to the Prophet ﷺ: "can we treat some eunuchs like women?" the Prophet ﷺ forbid us to do so..." the fact that Muhammad ﷺ forbid his companions to consider some eunuchs as sexual objects is not the question here. Surely, to use a heterosexual as a eunuch is not a good thing – this is essentially the misdeed of the people of Ith. But how about having a relationship with a eunuch? Given that ibn mas'ud referred to the use of eunuch for sexual satisfaction, and given that the Prophet ﷺ understood what he said, this seems to indicate that having (sexual) intercourse to obtain sexual satisfaction was not unknown to the Arab society, and that they considered this intercourse to be appropriate with male eunuchs. Since

eunuchs were not considered to be masculine, there is no prohibition on that, not even in the Quran, according to Faris Malik [15].

Eunuchs were considered to be sexual objects for heterosexual men in the mamelouks dynasty according to David Ayalon in his book about eunuchs, caliphs and sultans (Jerusalem, 1999). Eunuchs seem to have been used as rampart against homosexual desire (by heterosexual men) in some ways. They are described by being effeminate and docile in bed at night, manly and good fighters during the day for a military campaign [16].

### ***Does Islam have a clear-cut view on the question of homosexuality?***

Concerning the Sacred Texts, we have to point out that Nowhere, neither in the Qur'an nor in the Sunna – *hadeeth*, oral traditions of the Prophet ﷺ – homosexuality is condemned, as recalled on May 17th, 2010 by the rector of the Mosque of Bordeaux, Imam Tareq Oubrou. According to that statement, today it is a duty to change some misogynistic and homophobic traditions, and talk about real issues, without amalgams, or misunderstandings, or political manipulations.

First of all, the verses mentioning "the people of Lut" in the Qur'an, never speak of homosexuality by nature; homosexuality – الجنسية المثلية – is not mentioned once. The Qur'an mentions violent sex, dominative, inhuman practiced by the people of Sodom and Gomorrah, and other criminal practices that have nothing to do with homosexuality – rape, theft, refusal of hospitality, murder, etc.. [8]. Moreover, their traditional sex was described as unprecedented. It is said in the Qur'an: "How dare you practice a vice than any people before you had practiced" [17]. And we know today that homosexuality has not been "invented" by the people of Sodom and Gomorrah.

Considering that these crimes - rape, theft, etc. - Are characteristic of homosexuals is discriminatory and it is an amalgam. If one replace the term "people of Lot" with "Jews" or "Blacks", we would see that we cannot now condemn all "Jews" or "Blacks" for a crime committed by a city populated predominantly, 5000 years ago (!), of "Jews" or "Blacks". In this example, the discrimination and the amalgam are obvious. But when it comes to homosexuality, it is less obvious and some dogmatic Muslims continue to accuse us of all these heinous crimes committed by people who had, among other things, homosexual *violent and dehumanizing* practices.

Therefore, these sexual practices and are often cited by dogmatic Muslims because they think homosexuality is mentioned in the Qur'an *indirectly*. But these violent practices have in fact nothing to do with homosexuality per se. It would be more likely that these sexual practices have been described by the ancient historian, Herodotus: "... Once in a lifetime to sit in the temple of love [dedicated to the goddess Ishtar] and ... have sex with a stranger ... men pass and make their choice. Whatever the money, the woman never refuses, because that would be a sin, the money being by this act made sacred "[18]. In good faith, these acts do not describe homosexuality per se. These are sexual domineering, violent practices which can be equated with prostitution in public. These domineering and violent sexual practices also seem to be still in force among the Arabs until shortly before the end of the modern era (nineteenth century), as reported by *Khaled Al-Rouyaheb* in his wonderful book "*Before Homosexuality in the Arab-Islamic World*" [2]. And so the hadeeth attributed to the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, that says: "If you find two men to commit the crime of the people of Loth, kill the active and the passive" [19]: well this hadeeth, again, does not apply to homosexuality per se, but applies to acts of prostitution made in public. Today there is no question of practicing such a punishment for acts of prostitution made publicly [20]. But it will still take time before the Arabo-Islamic countries - often within the scope of dictatorial regimes - evolve on these particular issues [21]; dictatorships, despotic regimes, which cannot be honestly considered as Islamic.

Besides this hadeeth was narrated by one of the companions of the Prophet ﷺ with the most sulfurous reputation, which itself was involved personally with homosexuality. Aisha RAA, with whom Abu Hurāira also had an altercation, said that what Abu Hurāira considered the words of the Prophet ﷺ, actually was not the word of the Prophet ﷺ. These are inconsistencies about hadeeth narrated by Abu Hurāira – hadeeths attributed to the Prophet ﷺ, in reality often misogynistic and homophobic hadeeths – in total contradiction with the facts as reported also by other companions of the Prophet ﷺ whose reputations are safer. Inconsistencies about Abu Hurāira that have already been highlighted in 1983 by the famous Muslim feminist, *Fatima Mernissi* in her famous book: "*The political harem, the Prophet and women*" [22]. We, sexual minorities who are fighting for human rights, must be aware that the opinion of one man of bad reputation is not valid in front of the advice of the wife of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ; Aisha RAA, the closest of his wives, the first scholar woman within Islam.

Plus Abu Hurāira, the companion of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ – the reputation of the companions is considered sacred to the majority of Muslims – seemed to be himself questioning about his sexuality. He spoke to the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ who, far from condemning him, urged him to accept his fate [23]. But Abu Hurāira preferred to marry and have kids. Then he used to be one of the fiercest persecutors of those whom they use to call the "mukhanathun" – مخنثون. The mukhanathun were men effeminate, androgynous men, who had no desire to women, who did not marry women, before whom the Prophet's wives did not veil with their hijab. Today mukhanathun could have been described as "gay" or "transgenders". The Prophet ﷺ defended one of these mukhanathun; Abu Hurāira wanted to kill because of his effeminate manners and way of dressing [24]. It is therefore obvious that the opinion of Abu Hurāira on homosexuality was not neutral, and in total contradiction with the ethical position of the Prophet of Islam ﷺ who, again, defended proactively these individuals belonging to what we call today "sexual minorities". What religious or political leader had given such an example, one thousand and almost five hundred years ago?

Moreover about the Arabo-Islamic traditions considered to be "authentic" - often wrongly attributed to the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, as we have seen - there is also the hadeeth often quoted saying, " When two men have sex as did the people of Loth, the throne of the Merciful is shaken [25]. This hadeeth is apocryphal, which means it was added to the Arabo-Islamic tradition long after the death of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ who never claimed that the universe can shake simply because of a sexual relation between two consenting individuals. So why do some Muslims, often dogmatic, still repeat this apocryphal hadeeth, if it was so obvious from the Qur'an that homosexuality is sinful by nature!?

Similarly, there is never any mention of feminine homosexuality anywhere. The only hadeeth that talks about sexual relationships between women is also apocryphal, first cited by al-Tabaraani رحمته الله over three hundred years after the Prophet's death ﷺ and was added after the elaboration of the six so called "authentic" books of Hadeeths. This fact tends to prove in this case, after the death of the Prophet ﷺ, that women's sexuality was controlled by the men in power's vision, who did not think a woman without a penis could have an "independent" sexuality - for several Muslim scholars, adultery was considered to be the penetration of a penis into a vagina [26]. Moreover, these apocryphal hadeeths suggests that with the dogmatization of Islam, "Arabs" no longer saw "homosexuality" - defined here as the exclusive research of a same sex partner - as a threat to filiation, a sacred concept for the tribal morality of that time ; but for the first time probably in the history of the Arabo-Islamic world, several decades after the Prophet's death ﷺ, this behavior was seen as a pathology [2].

Remember also the verses of that Surat who speaks of the celestial journey accomplished through Jerusalem by Muhammad ﷺ: "Say: Everyone acts according to its kind - in Arabic *shakilat*, شكيلة - but your Lord knows best who follows the best path. They ask you about the soul. Say: "The soul comes under the command of my Lord, and indeed of knowledge ye have been vouchsafed but little." If We willed We could withdraw that which We have revealed, and then you will not find anyone to defend you against Us. " [27]. Here "shakilat" could be translated as "deep nature on which the individual was shaped" or "gender identity". It is an interpretation certainly much more modern

and progressive than most dogmatic Muslims would like to impose. Only God knows why He created us so and why each one is acting a certain way, depending on its gender or sexuality.

In conclusion we believe homosexuality is not a sin by nature, and it is the duty of every good Muslim to fight against homophobic violence, as recalled by the Rector of Bordeaux, Imam Tariq Oubrou [28]. More importantly, it is the duty of all good Muslims in France – and elsewhere – to manage a place for sexual minorities within the Muslim community; homophobia is not an opinion but a crime [29]. For us all use of the Arabo-Islamic tradition for political purposes can only serve Islamophobic extremists and dogmatic Muslims. Finally, remember that the Prophet himself forbade – according to his faithful companion, the Caliph of Islam Omar ibn Al-Khattab – to base our ethic mainly on his sayings and hadeeths; we have to stick mainly on the Qur'an, very probably because he knew that some parties might use his words to change, playing on the misunderstandings, the fundamentally egalitarian and non-violent spirit of Islam [30].

***The sexual minorities are on the cutting edge of an impending Islamic revolution***

*Islam* means “being in Peace”. But, according to what we have described earlier in this book, we are facing nowadays some kind of rejection or fear toward femininity. Probably because femininity is considered, especially by dogmatic and some radical Muslim, as intrinsically related to passivity and therefore to wickedness. And what would be more dangerous, from a dogmatic point of view nowadays that Islam seems to be attacked from all sides, that men, supposed to be embodied with masculinity, nonetheless showing there passive, penetrated (weak ?) femininity publically; especially here in Western countries where sexual minorities have more and more rights recognition each and every year.

In one word, nothing seems to be more insulting for dogmatic Muslims than a visible feminity – shown by women, and moreover by men. For that particular reason, we think that Islamic feminists and LGBT activists have to unify their efforts to fight back misogyny, homophobia and also that islamophobia stating that Islam could not deal reasonably with human freedom no with diversity. According to intellectuals like Judith Butler [31] or Elizabeth Stuart [32], we have to built our own subversive, appeased, identity: a “queer” identity, following the path of what we could call an *“Islamic queer theology of liberation”*. We belie that such a theology could benefit the entire Muslim “Oumma” – the Muslim “Nation” –, since that Islamic theology of liberation as to be built now without any political or nationalist – Arab – aim; plus, that theology of liberation’s main goal has to the welfare of Muslims and not dogma or traditions anymore. We, women and sexual minorities, have no choice but to be at the forefront of these axiological questioning. And that is a blessing from our beloved Lord, Allah SWT.

L.Zahed – founder and spokesman of HM2F



## **The testimony of Louisa & Clara: « Islamophobia, anti-Semitism & homophobia »**

*I met Louisa in front of the famous painting "L'origine du monde" of Gustave Courbet – at the Orsay Museum in Paris. I see a beautiful girl, North African type, admiring this painting. I'm intrigued and I decided to tackle her. The feeling was quickly good between us. She said she has a little time and we decided to get acquainted around a cup of tea. I suggested the bar The square in the swamp – "le marais" –, she agrees. Three quarters of an hour later we find ourselves in this friendly and cozy place to talk.*

*She describes herself as a very shy woman. She said she is 28, she is a practicing Muslim and a lesbian. She works in IT and has a small Adonis, a two year's old little boy from an arranged marriage. Life is not very easy since she hid from everyone, especially from herself. Of her marriage, Louisa says little. She confesses between two words she did not have the strength to say no to her parents. Carried away by the dedication of his family in Algeria, she let herself run like a puppet. So much bitterness and regret in her voice. She is an optimist and finds in her son and in Allah all the comfort that allows her to live.*

*Now divorced from her husband, she lives a relationship with a young Jewish woman. She said she is happy even if sometimes she feels sad not to share this happiness with her family. Sometimes, Louiza would love to tell them everything but she knows deep inside herself that her parents would reject her and moreover take her child away. She entertains only superficial relations with them and sees them during the religious feast and holidays in Caen. I asked if I could meet her Jewish friend one day, because so much religious strength opens my respect and tickles my curiosity. And I have to say that this couple is very beautiful, very rare, and it is my pleasure to enter their world. She invites me to come home tomorrow to meet Clara (...).*

*Once in their apartment, I was greatly surprised. I had the impression of being in a single's flat, and nothing presaged a lesbian couple with a child living here. No picture of them together, no personal effects, only common and ordinary utensils. So I ask her the question. She replies that mistrust prevents them from behaving as a family. They prefer to live like that, hidden even in their most intimate place. Clara confirms that they prefer to live in secret rather than assuming what they are.*

*May our Lord Allah-Yahvé stays beside them with his Love – Samy, after an interview with Louiza & Clara.*



## **The testimony of J.: a vision of an appeased and familial Islam**

Some of us seem to live an appeased Islam, following in this the example of the elders. Mrs Bariza Khiari, first elected Muslim in France and female senator of Paris who shared to us: "I want to talk to you about an Islam that you don't know. An Islam that is familial, quiet, more attached to the essence of things than to the observance of dogmas, an Islam made of love, culture, poetry, music and magic (...) I'm therefore a Sunni Muslim, from malekite school of thought and of Sufi tradition. And our Islam, like for the majority of Muslims, is an Islam completely appeased, opened, tolerant, in harmony with the secular tradition of France.

It is this kind of peaceful and lovely Islam that our brother J. wished to testify in turn.

*I'm from Mauritius, 23 years of age, and I'm a foreign student living in France since 2007. At about the age of 7-8 years old, I realize my difference in sexual orientation in comparison to other children of my age. At 11 years old, I was admitted to a boy's college, I was being humiliated by my classmates for my effeminate mannerism. I would prefer loneliness rather to bear humiliations, and thus I would not participate in group activities. At that time, I would not find any reference to find support except Islam, which was (my defense) against verbal and physical violence. I started to look for religious knowledge and I found in it my real "raison d'être" as homosexual. In all what I did and what I endured, the divine presence embraced me with His Graciousness. For I feel protected in This Presence.*

*Sexuality or the position of woman in Islam was not the subject that matter in Mauritius; we talked less or not at all about these topics. That which preoccupied the Muslims there, was how to increase their knowledge on the five pillars of Islam (elementary), the faith, prayers, fasting, alms-giving and the pilgrimage. At 11 years of age, I witness the construction of a great mosque in my village, directed by my uncle, and my grandfather on my mother side guided me in religious songs; two mains influences in my life in this Islamic way and still no sexuality. In reality, for me sexuality was part of me and this did not prevent me from living my religion at the same time, as I realized that God asked for nothing (else) in the Quran except to be grateful to Him. At 15 years old, I took up a fundamentalist way influenced by the wahhabism and that which questioned by sexuality; then I take conscious of the coldness that triggered, that which disturbed me a lot for (there was) too much restrictions.*

*At 17 years old, I choose finally a way that is more flexible and tolerant to all warming confessions, the Sufism. That would bring about a new quest for self and that which emphasized on the relationship between God and Me before all. Sufism had much influenced many Mauritian Muslims and hence my contact with it was not difficult. At 20 years of age, I came in France for my studies where I noted a conflict between sexuality, Islam and origins and the lack of information on these subjects as well as an absence of any*

*organization as a reference for everyone who sees in them a source of anguish, incompatibility, insecurity and doubt on the trio mentioned above.*

*For me, these are debates that question my own identity, for we see lots of critics that sprout according to different regions and cultures; and this change in surrounding where sexuality is more or less ignored (Mauritius) and where sexuality is stressed (in France) motivated me to come to this meeting.*

*J. C. is now a member of HM2F.*

### **The testimony of S, rationalization one's own represented identity...?**

For some, Islam is not an axiological reference. Despite, the cultural heritage which impelled many French of north African origin to puzzle over in a rational manner, on what lied objectively those prejudices displayed nowadays which are sometimes like a challenge to the public order, and that which the sexual minorities had to pay for.

That is how S confer the reasons for his academic engagement on this problematic of homosexuality among the French of origin or of Muslim confession :

*"...I'm S, student of Master degree of clinical psychology and psychopathology. I live in the 16<sup>th</sup> and I'm from Paris. My father is Moroccan and my mother is French.*

*My intention in this beautiful, humanly and interesting organization is to share ideas of experiences, time of friendliness...and why not participate in helping this organization to allow those homosexual brothers of all confessions to get an answer, a help, a support for this engagement known as homosexual identity...thus my approach is also academic in a way where I would like to have the testimonies of people who found themselves in one of the 3 categories that I had defined in my research (to be homosexual, Muslim, north African and of male gender).*

*Homosexuality is a matter of concern for all of us.*

*From the mist of time, everywhere, the earth had bore homosexual men and women and that regardless of the culture, religion, country or of colour skin. Homosexuality was present in other epeope long ago without any hostilities as it is in this era. We estimate at about 6% to 7% of homosexuals in France. This may seem less, but enough for homosexuality to be subjected to retaliation of the society. There is still more people who have prejudices hygienic nature or clerics who preach loud and high the term "against-nature".*

*Despite the wrong things that had been said on done homosexuality “ as they said, had cross times and had take gradually the position for which it has the right to claim.*

*Marcel Proust said: “to love a young man at the time of Socrates was like having an extra matrimonial relationship, and then to be engaged to another woman”.*

*Heterosexuality and homosexuality get over the language of the common only in the first quarter of the century. Before that time, if words are the vector of concepts, we did not conceive a polarized social world between “homosexuals” and “heterosexuals”. In the medieval age for example, the word “sodomy” referred to a series of sexual practices considered as sins, that which comprise masturbation, fellatio, anal intercourse, and bestiality and coit interruptus. In other words, any acts that did not have the purpose to procreate...*

*Suicide is a social fact regardless of country or culture.*

*But, people trivialize this quest for identity (gender during adolescence), thinking that every homosexuals have choose to be thus. We often heard “he has not chosen the simplest choice”. As if during adolescence one will give you the choice of being a homosexual or a heterosexual, as it is for making the choice between a diesel car and a petrol one. As far as, the condition for the homosexual adolescent remain one of the last taboos of our society at the cost of a greater rate of suicide and a fortiori attempted suicide and of depression compared to that of the heterosexual community. Suicide is the second cause of mortality among the youth of 15–24 years old and the first cause for the 25–36 years old. Moreover, and according to researches, the level of suicide and attempted suicide among homosexual adolescent or bisexuals is between 6 and 14 times superior to those of the heterosexual community of the same age. The main reasons of this painful report differ considerably. On one side, there is a socio cultural context that is discriminating, a pejorative image of homosexuality, homophobic talks and acts. Thus are many causes of unease and sufferings of young gays and lesbians. On the other side, the absence of treating the question of homosexuality during schooling, the hetero centrism, the failing of a visible gay adolescent community and the refusal of his own existence does not provide an secured environment likely to prevent suicides, depressions, risk behavior, aggressions and homophobic comments. On account of this, adolescents show a high risk of psychological crisis, related to the discovering of their homosexuality, to the rejection by the family, to harassment or to homophobic aggressions which some are victims of and finally the infection to HIVs or other STD. and without going too far, we note that there is a minority of young gays and lesbians who come to term with themselves and live freely their homosexuality at the cost of being rejected by their comrades, homophobic discourses or acts and to be cut off from the family. The adolescents learned to accommodate to their homosexual orientation*

*stop by step. To attain their goal, they need to accept themselves as being gays or lesbians by destroying the myths prevailing in the society. Then, they need to set up a significant relationship with friends with peers, gays and lesbians among other things, and eventually love relationship. This search for relationship is important in order to be able to achieve a good self esteem. Finally, they have to learn how to interact with their surroundings people, family members, at school or at work. Because of this interiorized homophobia, they adopt frequently a bad attitude to their sexuality. It is to direct them to a stage of negation or rejection of their homosexuality to a stage of critical analysis to the attitude of the society. For, the problem does not come from themselves but from the society and the opinions it has of them.*

*What about the Maghreb?*

*Homosexuality is stricken in Maghreb by a double shame (Hchouma) and Illegality (Haram). Religious and family rituals and faith are enough reasons to reject their homosexuality which is classified as western. One need to know that in the Maghreb, the family concept is present and honored. The Maghrebi have this idea that accepting the development of the gay culture, is like the lost of ethic, familial and religious values. Consequently, some parents come to think that it is France that had turned their sons homosexuals because the west had lost its religious and family values as family ...hence, homosexuality in the Maghreb is in itself not the real problem of sexual orientation, but what is really the cause of the problem is the inability to accomplish one's duty the so-called socio-sexual that the society is committed to and required of to the males. For what is important, is the marital and reproductive status. In fact, according to hawa djabali (exiled Algerian writer), there is only one real acknowledge case of homosexuality. It is only the married man who sleeps with young men only if he is active. We attribute somehow, but in a discreet way an overwhelming sexuality, and are even admired provided that it remains within private frame. We never talk of what happen in the hammams and yet everyone knows that men among themselves do practice some sexual activities.*

*Whether one's confession be Christian, Muslim, and protestant or atheistic, homosexuality can be accepted or rejected according to one's own will. Everyone develop his own way, accept as he wished his religion, there exist not a homosexuality but many homosexuality. That of everyone or not one for all, even if we all fight for the same cause, we are all different that is common point. Thank you everyone and especially hm2f."*

*S is now a member of hm2f, we hope that all of us will be able to benefit from his researches.*

All HM2F's testimonies are available, in French - [http://www.homosexuels-musulmans.org/plan\\_du\\_site.html](http://www.homosexuels-musulmans.org/plan_du_site.html)

## بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

« Allah is the Light of the heavens and the earth . The similitude of His light is as a niche wherein is a lamp . The lamp is in a glass . The glass is as it were a shining star . ( This lamp is ) kindled from a blessed tree , an olive neither of the East nor of the West , whose oil would almost glow forth ( of itself ) though no fire touched it . Light upon light , Allah guideth unto His light whom He will . And Allah speaketh to mankind in allegories , for Allah is knower of all things. » (Quran : 24.35)

***Nobody could forbid the Light of human diversity to accomplish the project of our Lord.***

***Allah SWT sanctified diversity in the Qur'an saying:***

« O mankind! Lo! We have created you male and female, and have made nations and tribes that ye may know one another. Lo! The noblest of you, in the sight of Allah, is the best in conduct. Lo! Allah is Knower, Aware »

(Qur'an, 49.13).



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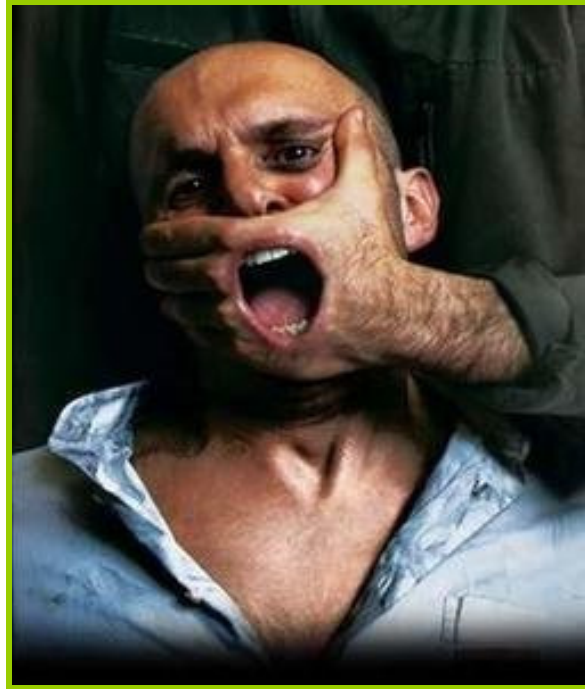
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*May grace be addressed to our beloved Lord, Allah SWT.*



الحمد لله ربي العالمين



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