



# GREEN BOOK



Queer Muslims  
A sociological reality



TOME IV

17th of May 2013

الكتاب الأخضر

HM2F - an initiative of the citizen network for a truly  
inclusive Islam of France & secularism respectful of all beliefs

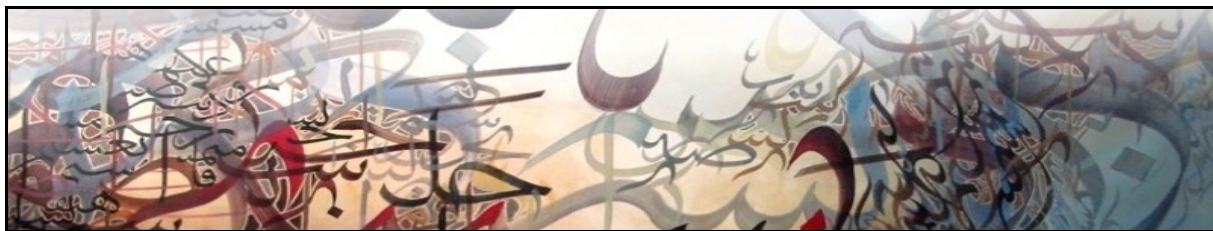
World Day against  
homophobia, lesbophobia,  
biphobia & transphobia

Miembro de la Federación LGBT y miembro del Centro LGBT de París  
Coordinador Internacional de la conferencia inclusiva, CALEM  
Miembro de la Red de Víctimas de la Discriminación, RAVAD

 **CALEM**  
Confederation of Associations LGBT European & Muslim

In collaboration with our brothers & sisters of INIMuslim - our  
Inclusive Muslim European network's program - and our  
sister organizations LGBT or European or Muslim:  
<http://www.calem.eu/INIMuslim-international-network-of-inclusive-Muslims.html>





NEVIN ÖZTOP<sup>1</sup> - “Freedom for LGBTs, Banning for Headscarves?” - مقدمة<sup>2</sup>

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The annual CALEM Conference of 2012 was held in Paris with the hosting of HM2F (Muslim LGBTs of France). The event has coincided with the discussions on gay marriages and equal adoption rights for LGBTs in France. On 18 November, the second day of the conference, the “Holy Alliance” of orthodox Muslim, Christian and Jewish groups organized a rally in downtown to speak up against reforms in France.



The first day of the conference has started with discussions on secularism as a tool to combat religious coercion and pressure as well as various existences of lesbians and trans women in the Middle East, the Balkans and as migrants in Europe.

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<sup>1</sup> Representative of KAOS GL - Turkish LGBT organization, Ankara ; leader of the RNAH (Regional Network Against Homophobia); editor-in-chief of Kaos GL Magazine - <http://www.kaosgldergi.com/anasayfa.php>

<sup>2</sup> Thanks to our sister organization from Amsterdam for the use of their image: [info@stichtingsecretgarden.nl](mailto:info@stichtingsecretgarden.nl)

## Remaining critical of religions at all times

Nevin Öztop, who has participated in the event on behalf of Kaos GL, spoke in the panel, “Lesbian and Transgender Muslims: Secularism as a double chance against double discrimination”. Öztop spoke on her personal experience on being raised in a Sunni Islam-dominated country and being active in the LGBT movement: “I came out twice in my life. Once as a bisexual woman, and once as a non-believer. If you ask me which one was harder, I would surely say the second, without thinking twice.”



Commenting on Islam’s aspects in Turkey, Öztop added “I come from a technically secular country which is governed by a conservative Islamic government; however the very same country is banning headscarves in public services. At the same time, every ID has a box which is almost immediately filled in with the word “Islam”. This makes Turkey a sadly ironic country, and surely far from being called anything but a secular state.”

## “Freedom for LGBTs, But Banning for Headscarves?”

Öztop then commented on conservative voices that use LGBT reality to cherish their discriminatory agenda, “Conservative media and some so-called human rights defenders often use the banning of headscarves in order to justify their desire to siege the lives of LGBTs from school, work and life in general. They question how universities can be closed to women with headscarves but remain open to LGBTs. Well, we say, ‘Open the university doors to both lesbians and women with headscarves!’



Showing solidarity with conservative women is important, despite the support we may never receive from them. We do politics for the freedom of bodily rights, and for the freedom of what to wear and what not. For that reason, having the right to wear something on the head is the same with having the right to love whoever you want and existing whichever body you find the most fit.”

“I believe, when it comes to religion, there cannot be a winner or a loser in a real sense. For that reason, I believe religious discussions –such as the coexistence of LGBT and Islam- shall take place first among religious believers before it reaches the LGBT community itself. It should be the Muslim feminists and Muslim human rights defenders discussing this among themselves, as religion –Islam, in this fact- can sometimes be not only homophobic and transphobic but also sexist.”



## **“Gays can shoot straight too!”**

Öztop then added comments on the importance of remaining questioning towards our values to not create other dogmas: “Remaining critical of beliefs is important, as religions are a dynamic and moving and living chain of morals. Dogma wants to freeze life; however, even if the holy text remains the same, the reading and interpreting of it shall evolve with time. We can try to exist in every sphere of life, including religion, marriage, or sometimes even in the army, but it is important to not get trapped in the conservative and sometimes sexist and nationalist policies of the state discourse. In the US, LGBTs who wanted to “serve” in the US Army often used the slogan “Gays can shoot straight too!”. Therefore it is important to keep questioning the moral values we believe in, so that we do not end up perpetuating the same discriminatory policies.

## **Serbia, Bosnia Herzegovina and Albania at the Conference**



Biljana Stankovic from Novi Sad Lesbian Organization in Serbia took place at the panel “Lesbian and Trans Initiatives in Europe”, and spoke on the importance of distancing from hatred and militarism: “How can we exist, and at the same time resist to all kinds of militarisms and nationalisms? Our organization is open to all inclusive ideologies, and to all women who are everything and anything but heterosexual.”

Marina Barreiro from Sarajevo Open Center in Bosnia and Herzegovina spoke on the aspects of religions, in particular Islam, in the Balkans countries. Barreiro spoke on the remaining scars of war times, and the complexity of politics in Bosnia Herzegovina.

Kristi Pinderi from Pro LGBT Albania spoke on the lack of recognition of lesbian existence in Albanian history and current society. Pinderi also spoke on the conservative Islamic and Christian policies that oppose to LGBT reality.

Participant from The Black Pride, an organization who advocates for the rights of black LGBTs in the UK, spoke on the co-existence of the identities of Muslim and LGBT: “Movements are born out of frustration. As a lesbian, I was forced to play a happy married woman, and now I am a proud Muslim, lesbian, black woman with 2 children.”

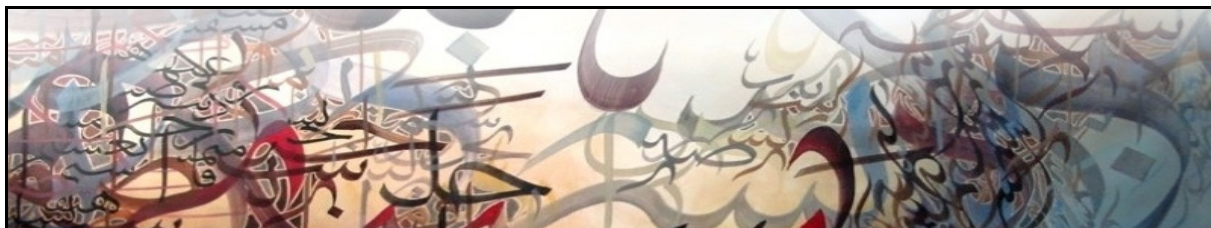
The conference ended on November 18th with workshops on HIV/AIDS, discussions on migration and criminalization of homosexuality in various countries<sup>3</sup>.

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<sup>3</sup> Report posted by Nevin Öztop, one of the Paris CALEM 2013 colloquium, on KAOS GL website -

<http://www.kaosgl.com/page.php?id=12770>





## Kristi Pinderi - Albania



Kristi Pinderi is a human rights activist and a reporter. In 2010 he was part of the working group that drafted the first ever anti-discrimination legislation. This law made Albania one of the few countries in the South East Europe region to protect homosexual, transgender and other sexual minorities from discrimination. He is co-founder of The Alliance against Discrimination of LGBT and has been heavily involved with Pink Embassy, a leading LGBT organization supported by the international community in Albania. During the last couple of

years, he has represented the LGBT Movement in Albania by participating in many TV debates on national television. He is one of the key organizers of events which will mark the International Day against Homophobia in 2012. In 2012 he filmed the first short documentary for LGBT underground life entitled "Hidden among us," scheduled to be aired on influential Top Channel TV later this year. Most recently, he announced the establishment of the organization Pro LGBT (United for LGBT Cause in Albania) and is serving as its Executive Director while continuing to write for Shekulli online.

It is hard to start first. The girl supposed to come over was not able to come over. She tells her first lesbian experience as a child. She now is 25 yo. She is the only public lesbian in Albania. She answer to a stereotype and she is proud of it. In 2012 she came out in TV. There was a journalist saying: if my son were to be gay: I would kill him. So she took the microphone and explained why the gays had to hide so that they would not die. The reason why we wonder, "how can I be an activist in Albania" -> well the first time I met a lesbian was in 2009 – which is late.

LGBT people have been – for many years – not just hidden, but not self-accepted. Some historical facts tell us how people did not accept as a possibility that lesbian girls would exist. Archive: let's analyze the past. In Africa, sodomy laws, from the British Empire, inducted that homosexuality was connected to communism. Which is not true. Those documents never criminalize the lesbians. Men having sex with men had to go to jail. Not men. I am processing my opinion. Sexual act of penetration is important for some people. The first lobbying of the female movement, was not very organized as today, but achieved women vote in 1920.

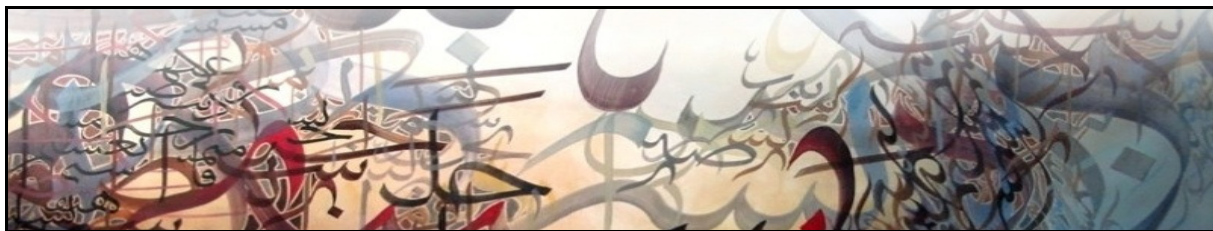
Question of heritage, Some women changed their lifestyle to appear as a man, in order to inherit from her parents. So appeared woman that talked like men, that smoked like men,

that were never married, they had strong personality. They still are in some big cities. And the other question is why don't they change their style today, as in heritage, is now possible. The goal of the family, is to keep family's heritage. The family did not force them. It was their own choice and decision. During communism, everything was documented, even though it was not told. There were never track of lesbian. Only thing: pornographic pictures in 1988. How can a nation not have a trace of this kind of people?

But we know: Those unmarried ladies, would always be friends with another unmarried lady. Do whatever you want in your home when your husband is outside. Do whatever you want. With whomever you want. But make sure nobody knows. Scanderbeg is a national hero. In the Balkans, was born in an orthodox community, and then was raised as a Muslim. Then declared him as catholic for power matters. Some radical branches of the Muslim community and the Catholics struggle against the LGBT community.

*Anecdote of an LGBT event 30 people bike. Not protest against that evil religious environment. We accept not a child to be effeminate. But if a girl was masculine, the family and society would accept. Due to an ambient heterosexism tolerant only in this sense.*





## Chapter BLACK - فصل أسود

### *I'm a gay Muslim and I want to die*



Dear Cary,

I have wanted to end my life for some time. I even tried once. I took well over 100 pills of Tylenol. Yeah, I was afraid. I was horribly stupid and downed the pills before driving off with my car to some deserted parking lot where the pills could finish me off. Something didn't strike my mother right about how I was leaving the house. She stopped me and I was interrogated. I continued

denying that I did something. Well, they had reason to suspect. I had been quite depressed and sad for a long time. But that really wasn't a cry for help. I had made my decision but it was reversed. I felt violated. I was kept in the psych ward for a few weeks before they would let me go. It might help to add that I am a gay. And my family is Muslim. I had been made fun of for being gay by my siblings nearly my entire life. Of course I continued denying it until I couldn't anymore. They would f\*\*\*\*\*g make fun of me for hours because of the fact that I am gay. I was a teenager when I started to realize that I was actually gay, I was horrified by it. I spent so many f\*\*\*\*\*g hours praying that God turn me straight. It was so uncomfortable when my siblings would make fun of me. I had no choice but to deny it, but at the same time, I was also uncomfortable lying. I was the oldest brother and I would be the one made fun of for my gayness. It stung. It was painful. My mother didn't speak to me for two weeks after I came out to her and I kind of hate her. I don't really know if I was sexually abused, but I am pretty sure I was. I hardly ever talk about this to anybody, but I started to recover memories of this stuff after I hit puberty. For a long time I thought that I became gay because I was sexually abused by a teenage boy whom I didn't know. And this was my mom's fault. She would never pick me up from school on time and I would wait around the school for hours, sometimes as long as until 6 even though my school got out at 3. Then, on top of it, they lie to me about my grandmother.

Most of my relationships with men had been secret from my family. I was still a virgin at the age of 21. Notwithstanding my attraction to men, I was still disgusted by the thought of having sex with a man. The most I could muster up at this point was to bring myself to kiss a guy. Then I met this 40-year-old man on the Internet. He was handsome and well-built. I started to like him. I hung out with him and I would even drink with him. He ended up raping me. He tried to have sex with me that night. I said no repeatedly but I still slept over at his

place. Yeah, it was a stupid idea. But then I woke up to the feeling of him inside me pumping away. I said nothing. I continued to pretend that I was asleep. I couldn't stop the tears from flowing, but it came and I cried in silence as best I could.

I don't really enjoy sex. I don't really trust anybody. I am f\*\*\*\*\*g emotionally needy. I will meet a guy and expect him to love me but then I end up getting hurt. I've become a master at masking my feelings. I kind of hate this man. I kind of want to see him die of AIDS and see him suffer therefore I keep in touch with him just to see how miserably he is suffering. Believe me he is suffering. He is now in his 40s and he has to move back with his parents. I never mention to him, the fact that my first sexual experience, as an adult, was a rape. A rape he committed. He went to jail for burglary and s\*\*t and it took him three years to extricate himself of that. It made me happy in a sadistic way. Now this man is moving to where I am studying law because that is where his family lives. I kind of want to ingratiate myself to his family and somehow cause him maximum suffering.

I hate my older sister too. She once told me that it's OK if I am gay and all but that I need to keep it under wraps. I once got into an argument with my brother over the use of an iron, and he started cursing at me. My sister intervened and she told him that this was no way to treat one's brother. She asked him if that's what Islam teaches him as to how one should treat one's brother. And my brother's reply was that "Well, he's a f\*\*\*\*\*g faggot! So it doesn't matter."

When my family moved to America, I was 12 years old. I was really close to my grandmother. She was, as I would say the closest person in my life. When my mother used to beat me, she would intervene. I liked staying at her house because I felt loved.

When she died, I was already two months into law school. My f\*\*\*\*\*g family decided that it was best not to tell me because I was unstable and had attempted suicide just a few months before. So they did not tell me about my grandmother's death when she died, but rather two months later when I returned home for Winter Break. This is all just the tip of the iceberg.

I know that partly this shit happens to me because I make poor decisions, but then there are so many things that I didn't do anything to deserve. Why should I forgive anyone? I was punished many times for having done nothing wrong and many people in my life have been so cruel to me. On the surface, things seem so beautiful. I am called by my sisters to be their ideal brother. My mother loves me. But I don't really care about them anymore. They accept me now all right but it's b\*\*\*\*\*t. I nearly killed myself and they're all just afraid that if they utter a dissenting or hurtful peep, I might actually go ahead and kill myself and they probably figure they don't want to live with that kind of guilt. And even if they do truly accept me, it's because they saw me suffer for years. The last two years of my undergrad, between the time when I was 21 and 23 (I am 27 now), I nearly spent every night, crying and scheming to kill myself. I paid a steep price to have their f\*\*\*\*\*g acceptance. Had I been flip and told them, hey mom, dad, I am a faggot and proud of it and if you don't accept that then that's your problem, they'd probably disown me.

For years I was afraid that my father would send me to Saudi Arabia to be stoned to death or be thrown off the top of a cliff or a building — well, that's the punishment for being gay in Islam, or so I learned at our mosque.

And all of this just scratches the surface. I am sick of life. F\*\*k! My life is so depressing. I hardly have anyone that I can call a friend ... that I could turn to, to discuss my most painful memories. I don't think I am capable of a happy, satisfying life. My anger and resentment knows no bounds. Sometimes I point out to my family how cruel they had been to me at times, even if they didn't mean it, and I get the standard discussion on the virtues of forgiveness.

I no longer believe in forgiveness and even if there is such a thing as forgiveness, I don't want to forgive. I tried to kill myself once. The suicide attempt was physically and mentally painful and I just don't have the courage to do it again. I don't want happiness. I just want to be free. It took me six years to get to a point where I could muster up the courage to off myself the first time, to set myself free. But I can't do that again. My freedom is in death, but that's not an undertaking I have the energy for. I don't want a violent end. I don't want a painful end. This society won't let me have a peaceful end because I can't just go to the doctor and ask for a prescription that would sweetly ease me into nonexistence. I feel trapped alive. I don't care if my life will get better or there is much happiness in store for me. I don't care. Happiness means nothing to me.

## **Trapped Alive**

Dear Trapped Alive,

What I want to do here is argue for your life.

My argument is that a part of you wants to live and knows that things can be OK. A part of you, a deep part of you over which you have little or no conscious control, nonetheless exists and stands ready to help. This part of you knows how to heal. I will argue that we are capable of healing if we can find refuge.

I believe this based on my own experience of rage and depression and helplessness, and also on my experience healing physically from cancer surgery. I myself have healed both physically and mentally.

One part of this argument involves the simple proposition that there was a time when everything was OK.

There was a time when I was a child with no problems; there was a time, when I was born, when I was just coming into the world to see what it was like and all I had to do was breathe and eat and s\*\*t and learn to walk around, and there was nothing wrong with that world. There was nothing wrong with me. It was just a matter of learning the world's characteristics, its behavior, so that I could navigate it and experience it with a minimum of pain, so that I could avoid death by drowning and death by being run over by a car, so that I could avoid being bitten by dogs. There was no real problem; it was just a matter of surviving this new physical world.

We do not want to die as children because there is so much wonder in being alive. As we explore this marvelous world we occasionally are injured. We are constantly healing from injury. We don't know how to do this. Our bodies do this. We have occasionally unbelievable pain and we cry; we get burned or break bones and it is unbelievably painful and we cry. The crying seems to help. We feel better afterward.

Why don't we cry more?

Why don't you cry? Why don't you let this pain and fear come up and cry about it right now? We know how to do this as children. You know how when you cry you feel

stronger? When we cry, as children, we summon all this energy and strength; we make amazing howls; our crying can be heard for blocks. It is a life-affirming thing that we do; we say f\*\*k you I am the most important person in the room right now; we put everything we have into it, all our life force.

There is enormous life force in crying. Or we can stifle it and slowly strangle ourselves. This life force we have when we are coming out of the womb, this searing, all-encompassing thing to which we give every ounce of our being: It is there in us every day or we would walk off piers and into buses, having no care for our lives. So in thinking about your letter I found I had to take a walk on the beach and the following is a record of my thoughts on that walk.

I'm looking at the remains of a seal, dead on the beach. The sky is gray, the waves are big and the remains of the seal are flat. Here are the teeth. Here are the big molars of the seal. Here are vertebrae. Here is a long, curving, white bone. Here is what looks like a joint bone, a little cup into which a corresponding bone will fit. But the remains of the seal are flat. There is no mounding up of a body. It is just a flat bunch of bones and skin on the beach just lying there. No form. No form to it, no shape, no structure. Some teeth. It is connected just by tissues, scraps of dried, decaying skin. It is connected just by proximity as if the parts had been dumped there together piece by piece randomly. It has come apart. We know it has come apart because it's dead. When we're dead we come apart.

But while we're alive there is an animating force that holds us together. That animating force is at work every second. That animating force can come into conflict as we clench against pain, as we turn our attention to our wounds as if we could heal them ourselves.

We have no capacity to heal our own wounds. All we can do is to wait for this animating force to heal us. Our sole purpose when injured is to find, within our routines of work and family, a setting in which we can heal.

This is not made easy by the culture we live in. It is not given to us. But certain settings — church, psychoanalysis, time spent in monasteries and ashrams — these are settings arranged so that this dynamic, holy force that is in us, this animating force, can work its slow magic.

Whether we are suicidal or depressed or addicted, the only thing we can do is find settings in which that healing, animating force can work its slow magic. We cannot go in there with wrenches and fix ourselves; we are not surgeons of our own souls. We are merely keepers attempting to do the feeding and the caring. So in your suicidal, mad, pained state, seek out settings, in which there is no harm, settings in which you can be still and allow this animating, healing force to work.

How do you do this? You seek places — ashrams, temples, healing waters, rivers, oceans, forests, mountains, deserts, places where the earth is still, where this animating force is at work bringing tiny seeds to germinate, bringing the merest speckles of water to the tiniest of mouths. That's all you can do: In a sense, give up. Surrender. Give up everything you think is going to fix you and simply know that as a newborn you came into this world fighting for life, fighting for air and breath and light, and you were amazed, astonished, you couldn't believe your good fortune to be out here breathing and eating and s\*\*\*\*\*g and walking.



You had enormous good fortune to be born. You knew when you took your first breaths what was what; there was no mullah; there was no Islam; there was only the breath. You knew instinctively how to live: Just breathe. Just suck it in. Just suck in that air. Just fight for breath and life. Ball up your tiny little fists and cry out and let the world know you are alive and you matter and must be cared for. Cry out! Scream! Cry! Beat your fists! Beat your little fists! Just try to live, try to be here in this glorious universe, out of the womb into this glorious and strange place.

You've had misfortune. You've been told lies. You've been told lies. You've been tortured. You've fallen into the hands of the enemy. You've fallen into the hands of betrayers. But you are a soul on a journey.

Who knows where you came from but you were born! Something happened! You came into consciousness! You are a person! You are a person with the gift of life. You were brought to a place from which you eventually will depart, with gratitude. But for now, you've been brought here. To what purpose? How do you find out what you are supposed to do with this gift you've been given? Is it something you are supposed to carry somewhere? Are there instructions? Ask yourself, what am I to do with this life? What is it for? Can you give this to another person? Can you give this life to someone? Can you give this love that as a child you had? As a child you are born innocent and loving. You have this love. What are you to do with it now?

You have a choice. It's not gone, that miraculous life you had in those first few grasping breaths. It's not gone. That's the same life. You're the same person who came out of your mother's womb and saw this miraculous and strange planet.

And now you've been harmed. Trusted hands have turned against you. This happens in life, in the journey. We find ourselves in the hands of the enemy and we are mistreated. But that does not mean that our only option is to kill ourselves. Why? Why would we kill ourselves? Would that punish our enemies? Would it help us to heal? No.

Instead, when we find this impulse coming up to kill ourselves, it is a signal to seek refuge from our enemies so we can heal. Seek refuge and heal. That is what it means.

Do not pretend that you will heal if you do nothing and change nothing. You are a wounded man, bleeding, bedraggled and imprisoned. You must escape and seek refuge so you can heal. Then if you seek refuge and begin to heal in stillness, a voice will come. You will hear instructions. Someone will appear and say, come this way, do this, we have something for you. It always happens. It won't be a voice in your head. It will be someone showing up. It always happens in all the old stories. They call these people angels or emissaries or whatever, but you never know when it happens because they are disguised. It is not going to be a guy with a name tag on his lapel that says, "Hi, I am your Angel Bob and I'm here to give you instructions." But someone will show up if you wait in stillness. You will sense something in your belly or in your spirit. You will sense that this person has something. It might be love, it might be help; you might merely feel mild interest and curiosity, but something will come, if you can find stillness and refuge. If you can begin to heal, someone will come along. That is how it happens.

There is some journey written out here. You may meet your end trying to follow the journey. But from the moment you are born, all you see before you is the journey: What's next, what's next, what's next, what has happened to me and what's next.

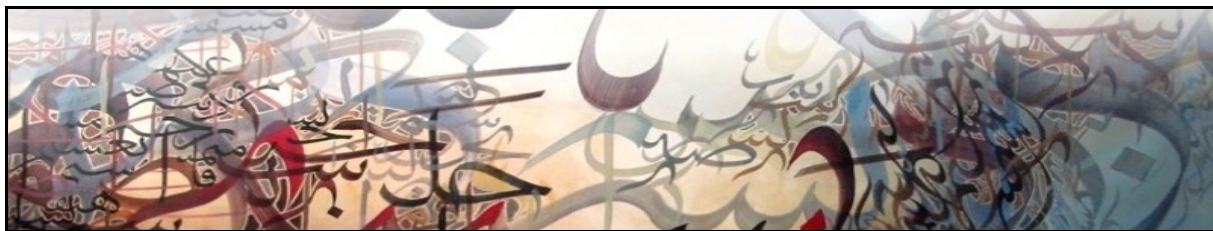
So having seen that dead seal, what once was a beautiful, strong, fast-swimming, sleek, acrobatic seal, now a little pile of trash on the beach a scattering of bones, rubbish, I think to myself, I prefer this to being a pile of rubbish.

When we die we are nothing but a pile of bones. That's all it is. We dress it up. We dignify it with a funeral pyre or a coffin so the image in the eyes of those who live on is an image of stateliness or grandeur. But for the person who dies, this beautiful sleek, powerful, animating force leaves and what is left is a pile of random rubbish. I think I prefer this, whatever this is.

Whatever this is, however painful this is, I think I prefer this to that pile of rubbish and bones. So that is what I say to you: You are wounded and in need of healing. Seek refuge wherever you can find it — in a church, in the forest, in a monastery, in a healing group of survivors of sexual abuse, in the rooms of a 12-step meeting, in working with a caring psychotherapist: Seek refuge and healing. There is a will to live within you. You can live and be happy. You can be healed<sup>4</sup>.

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<sup>4</sup> Cary Tennis writes Salon's advice column and leads [writing workshops](#) and [retreats](#). Testimony published online - [http://www.salon.com/2012/11/01/im\\_a\\_gay\\_muslim\\_and\\_i\\_want\\_to\\_die/](http://www.salon.com/2012/11/01/im_a_gay_muslim_and_i_want_to_die/)



## Chapitre GRIS - فصل رمدي

### *Homosexuality: a theological challenge<sup>5</sup>*



The title certainly appear as provocative but it is a measure of the discussions currently underway in France and in the rest of Europe or the Muslim world, on the recognition of gay marriage in particular, but also homosexuality more general

### **About the authors**

#### Omero Marongiu-Perria and Michael Privot

Omero Marongiu-Perria is a sociologist of ethnicity and religion (Maghreb, Islam). Specialist in public and diversity management policies. Michael Privot, Islamist Co-author with Cedric Baylocq of "Tareq Oubrou, Occupation Imam", Albin Michel, 2009.

The title certainly appear as provocative but it is a measure of the discussions currently underway in France and in the rest of Europe or the Muslim world, on the recognition of gay marriage in particular, but also homosexuality more generally.

In this regard, retrospectively the extent of slip is measured attitudes raising recalling that just a thirty to forty years Islam was seen, known and practiced as the most "gay-friendly" world religion of monotheism, the conversion of figures such as Maurice Béjart and Vincent Mansour Monteil. Undoubtedly, everyone is free to their opinion about it, and Muslims have every opportunity to contribute to the debate. However, it is clear that a very simplistic argument is being developed in the ranks of the followers of the three monotheistic revelations, against a background of exegesis for less oriented to their scriptural sources.

<sup>5</sup> Article published by [Omero Marongiu-Perria et Michael Privot](http://oumma.com/15178/lhomosexualite-un-defi-theologique) | 21st of December 2012 on Oumma.com - <http://oumma.com/15178/lhomosexualite-un-defi-theologique>

Whether you are for or against the relationship or gay marriage is one thing, but it takes the guise of a semantic diversion of religious texts to accuse homosexuals of potential or actual deviance of society is another. It is therefore necessary to put the terms of the debate in their proper place so that believers, specifically Muslims to respect us, can form their opinion in the light of the diversity of theological approaches to the issue. The following development is part of this period.

## **The people of Lut, or gay as the figure of evil**

The condemnation by the Koran of the homosexual relationship is shown by the vast majority of preachers and religious references as a non Muslim debatable commonplace. The backstory, remembered as a leitmotif, is that the story of the prophet Lut and the visit of the angels who annihilated his city to punish the people of their homosexual practices, considered as an extreme perversion.

However, a thorough review of the Qur'anic passages relating to this story raises many questions. Of the sixteen [1] passages mentioning Lot and his city, it is mentioned by name five times, the story is mentioned nine times in a succinct manner, and seven passages [2] provide important enough detail to understand the context and moral of the story. From there, one may ask what the meaning of the dialogue between Lot and his people is, when he “offers” them his daughters under the purity of behavior attributed to prophets in Islam.

One can also question the theological or metaphysical deduction of the attitude of the Prophet, among other questions. We focus here on the third question, relating to the "sin" as is; what is, or rather what exactly is the deviance committed by the people of Lot? To this question, the Muslim exegetes and theologians have made a set of responses from the "reconstruction" of the context of the story, because you cannot deduct directly above verses it is the homosexual relationship as such has been the vehicle of the divine punishment.

This is the crux of the interpretive history and the legal rules that was forged by the teachers of the law. We find a very informative synthesis in Abu 'Abdullah al-Qurtubi [3], the illustrious Muslim scholar of the 13th century: it built any interpretation of sodomy as the main source of perversion of the people of Lot and of divine retribution.

From there, the term describing, in Arabic, the homosexual relationship (liwât or qawmi fi'l-LUT) is the same one used to describe sodomy, homosexual (Luti) being assimilated to the people of Lot. Al-Qurtubi also relies on the concept of turpide (fâhichah) mentioned in verses 7/80 (to describe the practice of the people of Lot) and 17/32 (to describe the illicit sexual relationship between pubertal persons or zina) to move forward four arguments:

- First, it equates homosexual relationships to zina, or unlawful sexual intercourse (fornication or adultery), positioning it a cut above in terms of sin, and affirming that the people of Lot was the first to practice sodomy;



- He then rejects the interpretation that the people of Lot, was punished only for their unbelief and not for their actions, arguing that the Qur'an explicitly mentions the acts that these people have committed;
- by extension, it considers that the people who did not practice condoned sodomy, that is why they are being embraced by the divine punishment;
- Finally, it supports the Koranic interpretation by a series of prophetic sayings about condemning so uncompromising and highly virulent practice of the people of Lot.

Al Qurtubi gives us, in his exegesis, a widely shared by scholars and theologians of Islam position. A century the distance, Abul Fida Isma'il ibn Kathir [4] will resume the same approach in his monumental history of the world [5], the passage relating to Lot [6], and the caption on the Sultan al-Walid ibn 'Abd al Malik, citing the fact that sodomy is a scourge that now affected all social classes in Muslim societies, religions including men [7] and by encouraging the Muslim is in preserve - as otherwise there finally is nothing new under the sun.

All Muslim theological and legal literature on the homosexual relationship is irrigated by the prism of departure concerning the interpretation of the punishment of the people of Sodom and Gomorrah because of their perverted sexual practice.

The consensus now claimed by many Muslim religious leaders on the subject, however, raises questions because, as mentioned above, a comprehensive approach to Qur'anic passages relating to the story of Lot does not lead to the conclusion that it is the homosexual relationship, directly described as perverse behavior deserving of punishment.

By reading of these passages, it is clear that these individuals practiced a sexuality at least unbridled in their "club" (Nadi), of orgiastic definitely trend, in addition to their exhibitionism and they especially committed gang rapes, particularly against travelers who approached or penetrated in these two cities. "It is in this sense that Lot encourages them to return to a healthy practice by offering his daughters in marriage to notable (according to exegetical interpretation), as fears for the integrity and life of its guests, the case of the angels appointed to chastise his people.

It is interesting to see how the interpretation process adopts a mode of perception of the figure of the prophet, embodying good and therefore cannot take his daughters as fodder for his people, while reducing the context of the story to the practice of sodomy and homosexuality.

## ***Islamic law and the recognition of homosexuality***

Assuming that homosexuality is intrinsically perverse, the idea of global perversion of homosexuals by society is widely shared in the mental universe of Muslims in the exegetical and legal production. However, early Muslim theologians and jurists were asked to discuss the construction of meaning that has posterioride historical experience of the early Muslims.

Indeed, in addition to the "silence" of the Koran implied homosexual relationships as such, the contemporaries of the Qur'anic revelation and the Prophet himself did not mention situations regarding this relationship. Supporters of the firm condemnation of all homosexual relationships are based, in turn, on a set of statements attributed to Muhammad and the first caliphs of Islam in which they have explicitly ordered for the death penalty against anyone having had an active or passive homosexual relationship.

It should be noted here that, beyond the fact that there is no prophecy about the two mentioned in the most authentic collections documented among Muslims, namely the collections of Bukhari and Muslim, one tradition is mentioned in four collections of prophetic traditions [8], the text of which is as follows "Whatever you take in the act comparable to that of the people of Lot act, kill both the active and the passive partner. "

This tradition does not have the degree of authenticity required for use in the law or exegesis. As for the dozens of other traditions referring to the behavior of the people of Lut or citing specifically to sodomize his or her partner, mentioned in the works of Islamic law, exegesis or exhortation, they are either not authenticated or completely apocryphal.

Yet the doctrine adopted by the majority of Muslim jurists on the right will give a true value these traditions by their mere numerical weight. In other words, their number and circulation certify their authenticity, even if the analysis reveals their invalid character, in terms of the chain of transmission and / or text. Add to this the fact that many religious references and Muslim preachers build their speech by drawing books exhortations which circulate profusely a number of apocryphal traditions.

Among the best known are found the famous Book of major sins, composed by Imam Shams ad-Din adh-Dhahabi, composed of 70 chapters each intended to represent a capital sin. The majority of the traditions used in this book are apocryphal. The Arabist Muslim neophyte can not access a French translation for which the editor, certainly in the interest of saving time and money, simply eliminated footnotes and pages explaining the apocryphal character of the tradition. One can easily imagine the consequences ...

That said, it is based on the condemnation of homosexuality that will profile two major positions in the Muslim jurists. The first is commonly adopted by Maliki scholars, Shafi'i and Hanbali, who see homosexuality as worse than adultery and fornication, deserving the death penalty, except in cases of "repentance." From an interpretation of divine punishment, they consider that the two homosexuals should be thrown from a height (mountain, building, etc..), Or be crushed under a pile (wall, stones ...). We are of course here purely speculative since no field specific situation has occurred in the prophetic era.

The second position is shared by Abu Hanifa [9] and Abu Muhammad Ali ibn Hazm al-Andalusi [10], the case is interesting because the two characters are the leaders of the two schools considered, methodologically, as more antagonists of Islam. Abu Hanifa is indeed the representative of the "school of interpretation" (ar-Madrasat ra'y) and Ibn Hazm is the representative of the "literalist school" (az-Madrasat zhâhiriyya). Both times to reject the majority interpretation of the Koranic story of Lot and all mobilized prophetic traditions they consider apocryphal.

Their position is down to the fact that the divine punishment mentioned about ancient peoples is linked to their disbelief and not to a specific behavior, if Muslims are required to

perform any dishonest trader (in the example of the punishment of the people of Shu 'ayb), any person who shot the animal others (the example of the punishment of the people of Salih), etc..

The argument must be taken seriously, especially when you know the totalitarian excesses that may have been generating some radical readings of religious texts. Moreover, in the absence of explicit scriptural sources, the practice of sodomy within the discretion of the judge field (ta'zir) and not strictly defined legal punishments (hadd) [11]. Among the arguments advanced by Ibn Hazm to relativize the "consequences" of homosexual practice, it cites the fact that it does not affect the tracing of descent point that experts in Islamic law strongly obscures.

### ***Some ideas for a contemporary theology of the issue***

The statement of exegetical and legal differences, that has been made over, above all, intellectual and doctrinal speculation of theologians and doctors of Muslim law, without necessarily real influence on the social life of the companies concerned. Contrary to a widely shared by the religious references and common representation of contemporary Muslims, the history of Muslim societies and governance in Islamic lands were freed from the early theological and legal primacy.

By cons, from the beginning of the expansion of Islam, Muslim jurists and theologians will demonstrate both an ability to take into account social realities in the development of rules of law, but also a remarkable ability polemicist. Compared to the philosophical and legal debates in the Muslim Middle Ages, contemporary Muslim theological production is really pale.

For example, in light of the data of their time and experience of the early Muslim community, Muslim jurists have integrated in their doctrinal corpus individuals and situations considered unusual. Similarly, we cannot do without a historical and critical approach to theological and legal discourse on this classic and its associated elements.

Mention may be made on the license granted to the effeminate (mukhannath) or the fact that it was homosexual relations between adult men who drew the ire of the foremost jurists. Homosexual relations between adolescents and an adult man and an adolescent (Adonis, çabiy) were barely covered, away from the apparent contemporary uniform condemnation yet articulated as the essence of classicism in the matter.

Theology as the law cannot be abstracted from social, economic and material production. These constructions, as subtle as they are, are the result of reflections of human beings bundled in their history, context, power specific relations, as they can manage their own contradictions and interests. These are not always distinguishable from reading their work, but undeniably present, that does not detract from their merits.

As such, it would be interesting to note a few things that any contemporary theological approach to the issue of homosexuality and therefore gay marriage should consider. First, the

question of the fitrah, or the first kind of man: there are many who use this argument to condemn homosexuality.

God created all living things around a male and female whose union is for procreation principle, the original nature of man, a sort of spiritual source code, can therefore not be heteronormative, in 'like all living things. However, it appears more and more that homosexual behavior are also widely shared throughout the animal world. [12] The latter, a point of view of a "Muslim", however, is governed solely by the fitrah of each species without that there can be any "deviation" has posteriori the source code, either by education or society.

Therefore, even if it is for the human being to rise above his animal nature as spiritual journeying by most spiritual and Islamic legal schools, the argument fitra like evidence and basis of the heteronormality may be, at least, reconsidered. Also, it is significant that the debate about the permissiveness of homosexuality focuses solely on the issue of male homosexuality reduced to sodomy. The history of the people of Lut, already are required to exercise a considerable exegetical twist to make the paradigm of universal condemnation of homosexuality. Therefore, if the ban was so absolute, it is surprising the deafening silence of the divine female homosexuality no analogy can approach the male homosexuality based on the story of Lot.

However, in the light of divine justice as exemplified in many parts of the Qur'anic discourse, both women and men are duly mentioned on compensation, positive or negative. Therefore, it is legitimate to question the fact that in the collective unconscious Abrahamic in general and Muslims in particular, female homosexuality is such a "non issue."

This automatically implies rethinking the construction of heteronormative discourse based on representations of masculinity and femininity much deeper, especially about the issue of phallic penetration in a body, feminine as masculine. According to contemporary theological approaches, should she not question the underlying psycho-anthropological presuppositions in heteronormative discourse rather than seen as a natural given and not cultural?

More simply, if we must deduct the divine silence about female homosexuality that it is allowed, then the female sex marriage should be allowed also. Which begs the question, even more emphatically, the true foundations of condemnation of male homosexuality and gay marriage, at the risk of the aporia.

For another confusion also waives the interpretative matrix formed by and around the history of the people of Lot, and directly related to the issue of marriage is that of confusion between homosexuality and homophily (attraction / Love for a person of the same sex, without sex), the two are not synonymous, nor cause and effect.

On the contrary, the disconnection between the two is more or less radical. In the absence of sexuality conditioned by the need to reproduce the issue of the relationship or marriage between persons of the same sex, she is considered in a different light? If so, this implies to reconsider the very institution of marriage and its deeper meaning - in the classical period, but still. In this regard, are we not facing landslides impressive sense?



For example, in the classical Islamic tradition, marriage has always been considered a contract ensuring the rights of all stakeholders involved in a potentially reproductive sexual relationship between two individuals [13]. The reproduction of the species, the maintenance of society and the established order were not explicitly on the menu for the classic wedding jurists.

The fact that these dimensions today, go before the contractual considerations suggest that fundamental changes have taken place in the Islamic episteme on the issue of marriage. This makes it even more down the entire paralleling between simplifying the story of Lot, his interpretation of the classical period and contemporary interpretation, any attempt to establish a sense continued likely to create, in truth, deep-against direction.

As noted above, the Qur'anic discourse seems less emphasis on the allegedly homosexual practices of the people of Lot, to justify the divine punishment on the people of Lot attempting on physical integrity of there hosts, thereby violating the sacred dimension of hospitality. It would be interesting to apply here also change the Qur'anic paradigm of creation as a generator of divine wrath.

It would not be because of his homosexuality but his desire to reverse the order of things and breaking all social conventions of the cardinal divine prerogatives, the people of Lot deserved their punishment. This, deeply moving in the same direction, and this episode makes futile, any analogy with homosexuality, in contemporary society.

Indeed, the demand for equal rights for homosexuals, in which simply put the issue of civil marriage, a secular and republican act in essence, only a limited number of people, 10% of the population according to the most optimistic sources. These people do not fit in, in any way. Research shows the profound reversal of the social order.

Homosexuals claim the contrary the true recognition of their specificity, nothing more. Also, even though some would like to express their rejection of homosexuality and everything related to it, the history of the people of Lut does not seem to be a theological certainty that they would find it there.

In addition, the question of divine justice is highly placed, especially if a step back is made with respect to the issue of homosexuality, an approach for a related topic, or that of intersex people with sex unknown [14]. It is indeed very easy to label homosexuality a perversion, illness, mental disorder or other bypass, returning in the field of individual choice and thus making the individual responsible for his fate.

From there, either the individual chooses his perversion, God creating a pure prioriles humans or the individual chooses not to go against its perversion or not to treat their mental illness. The advantage of these approaches is that it is superficial and carefully avoids any questioning of the "divine will" and destiny, that God cannot want for one of His creatures that he/she is naturally inclined to a supposedly leaning against nature.

But what then of the case of children born of indeterminate sex at birth - on account of a thousand - are neither clearly male or female, or even with both sexes. This raises the question definitively socio-cultural constructions of gender and sexuality in its various facets, gay, straight or otherwise. This is just the surface of the complexity of this issue, because what interests us is that God Himself arbitrarily imposes a non-negligible number of

individuals with complex choices regarding gender, sex and sexuality. These can lead to situations involving homosexuality all part of the "natural" because it is under the divine plan.

Beyond these many theological dimensions, the additional interest of this question is that it definitely ruins any attempt to reflect "theological" based on the consideration of homosexuality as an individual choice, against or outside the "natural" order of things.

For if some aspects of homosexuality are outside the natural order of things that the majority of are heterosexual, then metaphysics, theology, and anthropological Muslim jurisprudence is imperative to take account of right and provide answers to the expectations of sincere believers who live with much suffering of the tension between spirituality and having their sexuality imposed on them by the patriarchal controlling heteronormative and theological traditions.

All these elements are by no means an exhaustive list of projects to undertake a theological and normative approach to a more inclusive and balanced position of homosexuality in Islam and, more broadly, in the Abrahamic monotheisms. In our opinion, a radical theological reform is needed, which can no longer be swept away with a wave of the hand.

The risk would be to see Muslims in a growing fracture, including the creation of niches made legitimate by the need for a secure and peaceful space for Muslim homosexuals, among others, who wish to practice their faith in peace. This will happen if they confront Muslims clutching almost pathologically to heteronormativity and refusing to consider other theological and anthropological possibilities.

### ***For a calm debate***

There are real phantasmagorical representations of homosexuality among Muslims in society. Some are convinced that homosexuals form battalion's species ready to spread at breakneck speed in the company to bring its loss against any objective data.

As proof, the adoption of gay marriage by Belgium and the Netherlands for several years did not have any impact on the heterosexual marital practices of the people of these two countries, nor any moral decline accelerated as fear opposition to marriage for all.

Therefore, it is rather in the context of a multicultural society, committed to the defense of the public most exposed to racism and discrimination in which should be sought the increasing visibility of claims taking into account individual circumstances and groups. Homosexuality, among others, is part of this dynamic, and the phenomenon affects both cultural identities, social as religious affiliations. From there, in the context of a democratic society, everyone is free to adopt and to advocate a specific position on homosexuality as on gay marriage.

## Notes

[1] Cf Quran 6/86, 7/80, 11/70 et 11/77-83, 15/59-77, 21/71, 22/43, 26/160-175, 27/54-58, 29/26 et 29/28-35, 37/133-136, 38/13, 50/13, 51/32-37, 54/33-39.

[2] These passages are: 7/80-84: "And Lot, when he said to his people: " Will you come to a turpide (fâhishah) where none of the world, has preceded you? Really, you'll desire to men instead of women (shahwatan min Dunin-Nisa ')! You are rather a people transgressing beyond bounds (musrifûn)! "And the answer, the people did nothing but say" Expel it from your city! These people really, who boast of purity! "But We saved him and his family, except his wife, who was among the laggards (Nominal ghâbirin). And we've sent on them, rain. Just look what happened to criminals! " ; 11/77-80: "And when Our messengers came to Lut, he set just because of them, and his arm felt the tightness. But he says: "This is a terrible day! "And his people, they came to him, excited for him before they practiced evil deeds. He said, "Oh my people here are my daughters: they are purer for you .. So fear Allah and do not disgrace me by my guests. Are there not among you a man well directed? They said, you know very well that we have no right to your daughters! And, in truth, you know what we want. "He said," If I had power against you! Or if I could find asylum in strong support! " . ' ; 15/67-71: "And the people of the town came to him, smelling the good news. He said, "They are guests, really: do me no scandal. And fear God, and do not throw me in ignominy. "They said," Do we not forbid you had to take care of the worlds? "He said," Here are my daughters if you are doers. " " , 26/16 & 165-166: " When Lot their brother told them, "Do you not behave in piety? [...] Is it between all the worlds you go to the males and leave aside what your Lord has created for you, wives? No, but you people are transgressors! " . ' ; 27/54-55: "Just Lot, when he said to his people" You come to the turpide? So you see clearly! Really you will turn to men instead of women? No, but you people are ignorant! " . ' ; 29/28-29: "And Lot, when he said to his people," Truly you commit an indecency which none of the world has preceded you. What! Go to males, cut paths, commit culpable in your club? " . ' ; 54/36-37: "It certainly had warned our input. But they began to dig these warnings. And certainly, they made him the court about its guests. Then we blind their eyes. "Taste My punishment, then, and My warnings! " "

[3] Abu 'Aabdillah Muhammad ibn Ahmad al-Ançarî al-Qurtubi (1214-1273) is famous, among other things, for his Qur'anic exegesis entitled The sum rules of the Qur'an (al-Jami' li-ahkâmîl-Qur'an).

[4] Abul Fida Ismail ibn Kathir (1301-1373), is a direct student of Ibn Taymiyyah. His Quranic exegesis is considered one of the great classics of the Sunni exegetical literature.

[5] *Al-bidâyah wa-an-nihâyah*, editions ihyâ at-turâth al-'arabî, 1993

[6] Cf *Al-bidâyah...*, *op.cit.*, tome 1, pp.207-211.

[7] Cf *Al bidâyah...*, *op.cit.*, tome 9, p.184.

[8] Cf the *sunande* :

- Tirmidhi, chapter of legal punishments (hudud), No. 1456, sub-section (24) The sentence for homosexuality;

- Abu Daud, Chapter legal penalties, No. 4462, under section (29) About one who behaves like the people of Lut;
- Ibn Majah, chapter legal despeines, No. 2561, under section (12) The one who acts like the people of Lut;
- Dârqutnî Chapter legal penalties and blood money (diyat) No. 124/3, about 140.

[9] Abu Hanifah An-Nu'man ibn Thabit (702-767) [9] is the theological founder of the Hanafi legal school.

[10] Ali ibn Hazm al-Andalusi (994-1064) [10] is considered as the main and most famous representative of the legal literalist school of Sunni Islam.

[11] See Al-Muhallaa bil-Athar, Abu Muhammad Ali ibn Hazm al-Andalusi al dar al kutub 'Ilmiyyah Chapter penalties at the discretion of the judge (ta'zir), volume 12, issue No. 2303, pp. 388-397.

[12] See, inter alia, Thierry Lodé, *La guerre des sexes chez les animaux*,

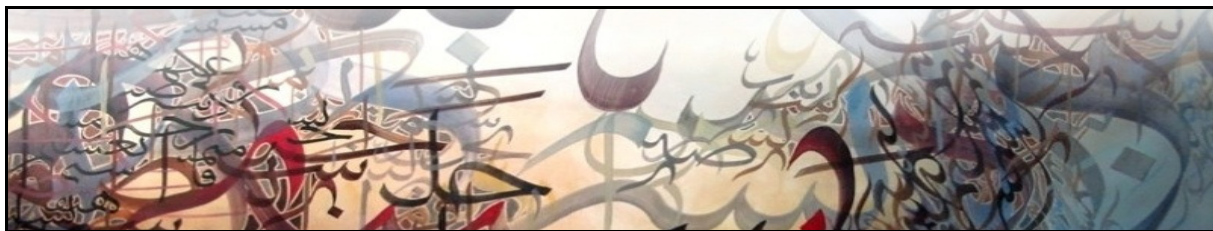
Odile Jacob, 2006; Bruce Bagemihl, *Biological Exuberance: Animal Homosexuality and Natural Diversity*, St. Martin's Press, 1999.

[13] In the books of classical jurisprudence, marriage is only discussed in terms of contracts.

[14] For popularized approach to the issue, cf <http://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Intersexuation>

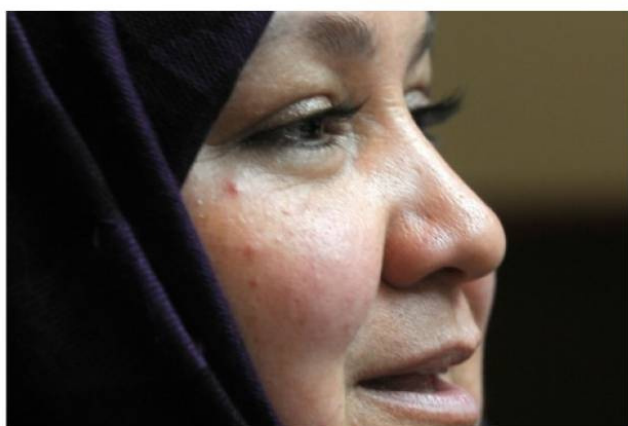
On notera que classical Islamic law had already addressed and taken into account throughout the Arab world for hermaphrodite about the person or indeterminate sex.





## Chapter WHITE - فصل أبيض

### *Homophobia, Activism and Islamic Feminism: A networking experience for Inclusion<sup>6</sup>*



I want to thank the invitation of Calem and each of its members for the opportunity to share with you today some South American reality about the rights of LGBT people both inside and outside the Islamic community.

#### **1.Discrimination Framework of LGTB people in Latin America.**

Latin America is a continent marked by inequality and structural violence, which is expressed in all areas: from the daily episodes of domestic violence, to armed conflict, political exclusion of the poorest, to hate crimes grounded on sexual orientation.

It's not a secret that Latin American societies are built on strong androcentric and ethnocentric roots, with all the consequences this has for women and minority groups, including LGTB.

The situation of LGBT people is different in each Latin American country, despite discrimination is rampant due the patriarchal foundations of social organization. This time I'll describe in a short two illustrative cases that seem to be diametrically opposed: Argentina and Chile. **Argentina** is considered an example of inclusion policies towards LGBT people.<sup>7</sup>

Citizenship policies for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people in Argentina are the most advanced in Latin America, after the legalization of same-sex marriage, which also includes all rights of adoption on July 15, 2010. After the legalization of gay marriage, Argentina became the first country in Latin America, the second in the Americas, and the tenth in the world to do so.

Sexual activity between same sex individuals in Argentina has been legal since 1887. The age of consent is 15 years, for both homosexuals and heterosexuals.

<sup>6</sup> Vanessa Rivera D. (Nasreen Amina) ; presentation at the Paris CALEM 2013 colloquium.

<sup>7</sup> Federación Argentina LGTB

In 1997, the Association for Transsexual –Transvestite Identity was created to defend the rights of transgender people. One of its first victories came in 2006, when the Supreme Court overturned a lower court ruling that had declared that transgender people have no legal right to organize and fight for their rights.

On February 27, 2009, Argentina's parliament passed a law broad military reform. One provision of the law was the allowance of gays and lesbians serving in the military and prohibited discrimination based on sexual orientation in the military forces. The law came into force six months after the approval.

In 2007, the Supreme Court ruled that a 17-year-old, had the legal right to go through the process of sex change and have legal documents changed to reflect the operation.

In 2012, the Senate unanimously approved the "law of gender identity." This law granted to adults sex reassignment surgery and hormone therapy, as part of public or private health care. The law also allows changes in the genus name, image, or birth bill and vital records without the approval of a doctor or a judge.

Chile is a country world renowned for its significant social inequalities and a brutal culture of discrimination.<sup>8</sup>

With regard to LGBT people, the X Annual Report on Human Rights of Sexual Diversity says that complaints and discrimination cases rose 34% in 2011. Since 2002 there have been 66 complaints for physical abuse of civilians, which affected about 250 people. They are brutal cases of homophobia and transphobia. Of 837 complaints in that period, 17 are ferocious murders. Teasing, sanctions, harassment, evictions, bullying, beatings and crimes due to sexual orientation still happen. 37 felonies have been reported 200 against LGBT students (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender. According to MOVILH, only 7.4% have formal complaints.<sup>9</sup>

Consensual relationships between same sex are legal in Chile since 1998. The current law against sodomy has set the age of consent for homosexuals in 18, whereas for heterosexuals is less than 14.

In January 2004, the Chilean Supreme Court suspended Judge Daniel Calvo from his position on the Court of Appeals of Santiago, after media reports about his private life, revealed that he visited a spa frequented by homosexuals.

In 2010, the Chilean government launched a public service announcement that spousal abusers referred to as "maricón"(fagot), local expression used to refer contemptuously to homosexuals, prompting outrage from gay rights advocates at home and abroad.

Recently, the Inter-American Court of Human Rights (IACHR) condemned Chilean State as "internationally responsible for violating the rights to equality and non-discrimination established in the American Convention on Human Rights." This harsh sentence originated with the Supreme Court ruling in May 2004 that stripped, because of their sexual orientation, to Judge Karen Atala of custody of his three daughters.

The corollary of discrimination based on gender and sexual orientation was the brutal murder of young man Daniel Zamudio in March 2012. Daniel, a young gay man, was beaten, maimed and his body marked with swastikas with broken glass overnight. He agonized for several days in the hospital until he died. The event caused such an impact on Chilean society, which brought urgency to the adoption of anti-discrimination law that had been sleeping more than seven years on the desks of Congress.

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<sup>8</sup> Fuente: Fundación Iguales

<sup>9</sup> MOVILH : Homosexual Movement for Liberation and and Integration

In Chile, although there are LGBT groups and organized movements, citizenship is not like that of heterosexual citizens, since they cannot marry. The last national population survey, conducted in 2012, showed that in this country there are 35,000 same-sex couples living together, confirming the importance of the adoption of the Draft Agreement on Family Life (AVP), currently pending in the Congress.<sup>10</sup>

The Chilean public opinion has shown substantial support for civil unions for same sex people: 65% in favor of legalization in 2004, although only 24% supported the adoption of children for homosexual marriage. In 2009, 33.2% were in favor of gay marriage, with the support of 26.5% for the adoption by same-sex couples.

## **2. Reality of LGBT people in the Latin American Islam**

Given the situation described above and the deep patriarchal roots of Latin American society, it is not surprising that Islam, although recently appeared in public perception, has found its most conservative, misogynist and homophobic, a favorable ground for development

The interpretations of the Koran and the Sunna that restrict the participation of women and LGBT people in the life of the Islamic community are nurtured from the discourse of exclusion and subalternity that exists already in Latin America. In this continent of "Manly Man Male" there are no spaces for equity for women and gays, or anyone who questions the StatusQuo of gender roles and sexual orientation.

The Latin American Islam, both Sunni and Shiite version has a homophobic official discourse, though not always obvious, which denies the possibility of homosexuals to be Muslims unless they "repent" or hide their condition. This "preaching of discrimination" reflects, at the same time, the official discourse of the society and reinforces sexism from the establishment, which facilitates the reproduction of stereotypes by the media and people, as well as providing a justification for hate crimes since it develops a standardized reasoning for exclusion and violence.

This argument is not unique to Islam but represents the official position of the Monotheistic Churches regarding LGBT inclusion. The Chilean Catholic Church, for example, has officially declared homosexuality-and thus to gay-and outside of human nature. Regarding the latter, I think it's very important to understand that there is no difference between punishing the condition of a person and the person him/herself. When talking to prohibit or punish homosexuality, we are talking to prohibit and punish people. Therefore, expressions like "I'm not homophobic, but a homosexual cannot be a Muslim" or "I do not defend homosexuals but condemn homophobia" are not expressions of tolerance and inclusion and should not be valued as such, but as hypocrisy.

## **3. Homosexual Muslims in Latin America in their own words**

To illustrate this, I invite you to read some testimonials about LGBT Muslims and their struggle for inclusion in Islam that I collected during my research for this meeting:

"From a young age I recognized as homosexual and never felt included in luteran religion, which my family belongs to. My parents do not know I'm gay and I've had a couple of romantic relationships in my life. I had some months reading about Islam on my own, when I dared to approach a mosque to speak to the Sheikh. One of the first things I asked was about homosexuality. He said a person could not be gay and Muslim, and had to choose. I do not understand how I can do that. I did not choose to be gay, I'm gay. I cannot separate my life from my spirituality. In the end I decided to continue studying Islam on my own. While I

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<sup>10</sup> INE : National Institute of Medition and Statistics

identify as a Muslim, I do not like to participate in the community, because I feel I would be lying to myself and others, unable to be who I am. "

*Hassan, 27, Uruguay.*

"I fear the reaction of the community if I say that I am gay. I'm afraid of violence. In this country being publicly gay is exposing your life. More if you are a Muslim and do not belong to a privileged social class. You can be attacked by one thing or another. The mosques do not help. The Imams are as homophobic as politicians and the average citizen. I know that this is not Islam. I know that Islam is peace, freedom, mercy. But what would happen to me if I come out and I have no support? There is a lot of hypocrisy. Nobody admits homophobia but nobody does anything to prevent it either. Silence is acceptance. It's not fair. "

*Yasser, 21, Chile.*

"Some people of my trust know my sexual orientation. Several of them are progressive Muslims. Like me, are excluded from community life. Mosques are places of meeting for very conservative people. I suffer a lot for being Muslim and gay, I tell you honestly. Sometimes I wonder why people are so evil. Sometimes I wonder what I'm f... doing in Islam? Why is there so much bitterness? I worry that in Islam intolerance and violence against gays are institutionalized and those attitudes are seen as desirable. "

*Rahman, 20, Mexico*

"Discrimination is everywhere. It is not easy to come out because life can change for the worse. From what happened to Daniel Zamudio, I think two, three, thousand times. And I dare not. I do not want to see my family suffering. You may think that the spiritual life can give you some peace but it is not. Until now, that is heterosexual privilege. I believe in God with all my heart, I believe that accepts me as I am, but the reality is different. In reality there are people who bring their prejudices to socialize as if they were religion and religious doctrine. "

*Fouad, 24, Chile*

"You know where I've been able to express myself freely about my sexual orientation and my religion? In social networks. I found many people on Facebook with the same problem: They have no one else to talk to but those who do not know them. My way to survive in the community is to fully comply with the stereotype of Muslim women. Thus, as described Salafi books: With hijab, abaya and gloves. "

*Amal, 32, Argentina*

"Being gay in a Muslim context is not easy, even in the West where there is relatively more open mind on the issue. I realized I was gay since age 12, at age 19 I had my first homosexual experience and just a couple of years ago I began to be open about my orientation with some friends and family members.

There was a time when I depressed so much, I thought that Islam was not for me, but researching online in forums and contacting some gay Muslims and activists from around the world could change my picture ... now I know there have always been homosexuals in the Muslim world, currently very persecuted, but previously known and even respected, and this it makes me wonder what has happened in recent decades with the social environment of the Muslim world? Despite repression and homophobia is a very interesting series of factors I have noted that homosexual life can be tolerated and accepted by Muslims with striking naturalness".

*Yussuf, 21, Mexico*

How true is that LGBT cannot be Muslims? When this is said, what is being said is that they are not humans. All mankind is the community of Allah and all Creation is a Mosque. There is discrimination to deny human nature just because it does not correspond to the cultural constructions based on the dual-gender sex. There's dehumanization in denying, for the same reason, the right to establish a relationship with the divine as they are. These attitudes are a source of violence. If we are believers in Islam as an ethic of peace, then a strong position against discrimination of all kinds is to be a duty for every Muslim.

#### **4. Islamic Feminism and LGBT Inclusion**

From Islamic feminism has always existed a collaboration and support to our LGBT brothers and sisters and their struggle for an inclusive Islam. In my opinion, this fight for Islam is not only for inclusion of LGBT but for and in collaboration of everyone who feels excluded or reject the "preaching of discrimination".

Before Allah there are no humans more legitimate than others. As Muslim feminist I disagree with the approaches to LGBT inclusion from a minority and subalternity vision.

On one hand, the idea of minority shifts the burden of responsibility for the lack of opportunities to exercise their rights to those who are discriminated, instead of putting it where it belongs, that is, on the system that defines the "majority" of androcentric and heterocentrist criteria.

I think women, black people, indigenous, LGBT, among other groups, do not have to use anymore this "minority" idea to talk about ourselves and our struggle. We have to get it out from the description of our identity and position in the world. Don't take as valid the exclusion terms of Patriarchy as if we belong to. We are a minority because there is a system that has decided so, without question or include us. Is not we don't have a voice, is that we are not heard. We are not a minority, we have been minoritized and this is what we must condemn.

In the other, regarding the condition of subalternity fro LGTB, I think from Islamic feminism we have to take a coherent position, firm and public against homophobia and transphobia. I say this based on an input received from RO BA (pseudonym on Facebook) a Spanish activist who argues that homophobia exists in the conceptualization of LGBT inclusion from some Islamic feminists: "... after make clear that there are for the persecution of homosexuals, because there is nothing in the Koran or the Sunna to endorse that behavior, it's explicitly said, however, homosexual practices are clearly forbidden in the Koran and therefore are not recommended . "11

And she adds: "...others, when asked whether the relationships between people of the same sex are legitimate or not, are silent and argue that in Islam it is not allowed to make judgments about things happening in the inner life of people that it belongs only to Allah."12

Islamic feminism, like all kinds of feminism, should be subjected to ongoing analysis in regard to LGBT inclusion. There are always shades of opinion, but I think reclaiming the inclusion of homosexuals from a status of "anomaly" is not acceptable, because such concepts are those that define the symbolic framework that allows violence.

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<sup>11</sup> She refers to what is said in "Islam and Human Rights" by Yaratullah Monturiol

<sup>12</sup> Is what she has seen in social networks and online discussions



Put the discussion on LGBT rights in Islam on the scrutiny of its existence as persons, is obnoxious. Discrimination against LGBT and the homo and transphobia that comes from it, are not an issue of sexual orientation, but a cultural and social challenge.

Regarding transgender people, I worry about the emergence of a new approach that excludes them from feminist struggles for gender equality, denying them their right to construct their identity. This is the position assumed Feminist organization held in Chile in November 2012, which admitted no feminist men, or anyone outside the binomial woman / vagina.

Something similar was reported during the course of the Meeting of Women in Posadas, Argentina, that is described as a Feminist instance. However, participants reported cases of discrimination against transgender people.

The latest on this topic is RadFem2013, an event to be held in London in June 2013 that will bring together "radical feminists" who argue, among other things, that transsexuals "should not exist". Feminists and Trans activists groups have denounced this event and the websites Pretendbians, RadicalHub and GenderTrender, run by members of the organization for being used as a platform to promote hate speech and harassment towards transsexuals.

### 5.Horizontal and Inclusive Activism

What I described above led me to develop from the beginning of my conversion to Islam an horizontal activism, based in the conviction that what I had done so far in favor of women's rights and LGBT I could do it within Islam and vice versa: For me there is no difference between the personal and the political, or between the public and private. The social oppressions affect personal experiences, including the spiritual one.

Therefore, during the last few years I have been working together with non-Muslim women's groups , Queer, immigrant and refugee organizations, community media and citizen initiatives around axes where oppression become intersectional and shared.

We recognize that while it is important to visualize the different scenarios, and specific contexts from which various groups are pushing social change towards a greater equity and social justice, we must base our joint struggle in the right of every human being to define, develop and be recognized in its subjectivity. It is the recognition of subjectivities that leads to empowerment and equity.

Three factors allow us to coordinate our work and make it productive: **Horizontality**, this is the recognition of all legitimate experiences of oppression as equal and the assessment of individual and collective capacities to respond to it. **A multidimensional perspective**, since each of us owns and shares with others more than one factor of exclusion (for example, "Muslim" who is a woman and has an informal work, "The African" who is a lesbian and immigrant, etc..) Finally, the **non-categorization as minority** as it is a label that we do not recognize, because it comes from a speech that does not represent what "we say" but "what patriarchy says about us."

Our strategy is simple: Identify our skills and empower ourselves from it. Establishing a networking of this type allows the access to various communication and education resources, psychosocial support, among others, which are otherwise difficult to obtain. Information technologies and social networks are key in this regard, by enabling us to connect with others who face the same problems and the solutions we can share, because as Paulo Freire said: "We all have something to teach and learn; between all know everything." <sup>13</sup>

As an example, I can mention the case of a young gay Muslim converted who had trouble for "coming out" and tell the family. To this conflict were added their own

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<sup>13</sup> "Pedagogy of the oppressed"

insecurities. We spoke with this person from the perspective of an inclusive Islam, using what Calem holds in the Green Book. Meanwhile, we contacted a LGBT group in his city, for this young should receive advice regarding their rights as citizens and responsible sexuality, and psychosocial support to address the issue with his family. As we were concerned also for his socio-economic means, we got him to be admitted to a training program for employment in his district. We've helped him to find tools for his strengthening as a person and we have won a collaborator in our chain.

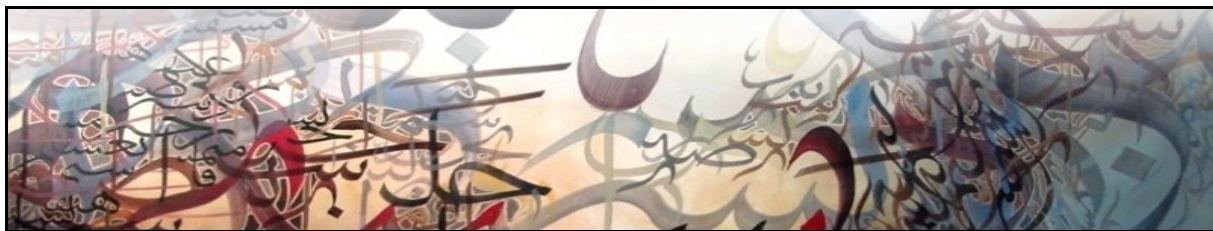
We are not an organization, but a group of people who love our particularities and do not want to disappear behind a structure. We are people aware of their oppression and their capabilities and we make them available to others so they can also be aware of. We act personally and without seeking public recognition because we only do what everyone should do: Be responsible for your part in building an equitable society.

Activism against social injustice is a duty for Muslims as we are commanded to fight injustice, denounce and reject with all our heart. This is an inescapable ethical commitment because of our responsibility on the part of our rightful Caliphate that have been entrusted to us by Allah, which is not limited to the Muslim community specifically, but must extend to all others.

As a Muslim, my decision to get involved in LGBT rights activism is because I have always believed that one person can make a difference and that revolution begins to take an active stand against hatred and for peace. Peace cannot exist without social justice. Peace is the end to discrimination. Peace is the firm and continuous desire to put all our ability to build a coexistence based on equality and diversity.

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## الشهادات - TESTIMONIES

### *ZamZam, my confidential story - Spain*

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As you all know, this last time has meant big changes for me, and if you have received this letter, it is because I consider it very important and I want to share with you, my experiences and stories that happen to me on a daily basis.

One night I was in a nightclub, as any guy my age and I was all alone. I looked around me and just watched the people, I thought about my life and how empty it was as well as the purpose of my existence.

I used to waste my time and money in the clubs and pubs, taking refuge in alcohol to escape my many sentimental failures, and of course absurd had taken my empty and useless way of life.

He had a history of experiences made sweats that if I had killed it because it made me stronger. He had been brought up in a Roman Catholic family with all that that means.

My parents taught me bona fide religion, but more based on people's love and respect for others, from an early age I felt what Catholics call a vocation to the priesthood, spent several years studying for that, but I was the possibility of questioning anything, accepted everything by doctrine of faith and made me understand that if I doubted, it was blasphemy.

From very small looking to the creator of the cosmic order, of all that is and who made it possible for human beings have consciousness and intelligence. It is possible that life consists only of eating, sleeping and biological acts. Well then what would be the difference between humans and animals? I could not live like this.

From an early age I realized that I'm gay, that's my human nature which was never meant as a burden, one of the things I always knew and learned from my parents was honesty with myself and if possible with everyone else.

From there my spiritual vacuum was so big that I did not realize until long after the nonsense that I was trying to fill it with, the things of this worldly life that made no sense and that made me feel more empty, dissatisfied and unhappy as a result of it.

I wandered through life as just physical, but I was not done as a complete human being, and had the urge to give myself a reason to live beyond biological acts which led me to fall in social movements and radical actions who did more to confuse the present moment he

was living, but I also recognize that I denied all this, but it was stages of growth I went through.

I could not satisfy my spiritual hunger with what I knew, because I could not build on something that was full of contradictions due to the disruption that the Scriptures had suffered throughout history by the human hand. It could not be logical to base my spirituality in a book made by humans, fallible and imperfect. The fact that they pray to others, other than God, and in many cases giving equal importance to that of the Creator and pray before images whether painted or carved, seemed like some of the most grotesque and absurd things to do.

I knew someone in my father's family had emigrated from Syria many years before and that his original surname was ZamZam زمزم. I was always attracted, especially to the Arab world, culture, religion, history, contributions to science, architecture, and ways of life, but it seemed so distant to me that I never had the idea of what it really is. I had a number of preconceived ideas that made it possible for me to consider it as a possibility for how I want to be.

Following in my relentless pursuit traveling to Arab countries seeking, not sure what, but on December 11, 2006 I decided to enter a mosque for the first time in my life. I wanted to know how I would feel in there. It was at the Blue Mosque in Istanbul, Turkey, I remember flying in fever but had traveled the same. At 5am I awoke to the deafening Adhan and I could not sleep anymore. I will remember that day and all the details of it until the day I die. I cannot explain in words, what I felt just by entering inside.

Unable to capture on paper what happened inside me. My skin and my hair stood on end of deep emotion especially in two situations: in the call to salat ("Al Adhan") and at the time when everyone said "Ameen".

Anecdotally, every time I asked for documentation, a purchase, or was at an airport, people were surprised by my last name.

I started researching about Islam on the Internet, its history, meaning, beliefs, pillars, and doctrine of faith. I read every document and every time I got hooked, even more. I found out what the meaning of Zamzam is. "Zamzam is a well of holy wáter, located on the campus of the Shrine Al-Haram in Mecca, a few yards from the Kaaba, 35 meters deep, restored and expanded its campus today and topped by an elegant dome. The legend says it was brought forth by the angel Gabriel, to quench the thirst of Hagar, wife of Abraham, mother of Ishmael, and the same when they were wandering in the desert to die of thirst. Its water is considered curative and miraculous: all pilgrims take water from this well to their countries of origin. Obtained from <http://es.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zamzam>

Above all, I understood that Islam is a way of life rather than a religion, a complete system for human beings in all their potential and it made me happy. To get to discover the true and only Islam, I had to reject all the enormous lies and stupid topics associated with it, that I have been led to believe since my childhood. When I realized this, I felt a great sadness inside me and a big disappointment, because society had manipulated me for not letting me see reality.

At first, I read the Koran translated into Castilian I found on the net and I was fascinated, but I became paradoxically more aware of spirituality and relationship with God



and did not know whether I was right or wrong with what I felt. I was dying to meet people who could help me in my search and could not find anyone, for the fear that they might discover that I'm gay.

I kept traveling. In Egypt, I marveled at both the pyramids and the Arab world itself. I bought several chilabas and started wearing them. I did not see the point, but at the same time, I liked it as it was comfortable and I care little about gossip.

I traveled to Morocco and there it was more difficult because they have a law that says that anyone who is not Muslim cannot enter the mosques, but I was sure I wanted to be but did not know how. In Fez, I was very stubborn and I got into a mosque but some people approached me, I tried to speak in Arabic and French and did not know what to answer, I tried to say, 'me Muslim, me non-Arab, me zamzam "until someone understood me and threw me out. I returned from Morocco with the idea firmer than ever to be a Muslim.

After many phone calls I contacted one person whom I will call Abdel (I reserve the right to say who he is). I started asking the typical things often asked by the ignorant. My resistance was very large and answers received a scathing attack on my part.

Given my attitude, I always remained calm and serene. It is very important to not give up. I always believed to be right and let in a time before attacking again. Actually my attacks were only forms of resistance to the truth, because we all know that recognizing the truth is not easy. Slowly but surely, i grew more and more interested while still keeping my rebellion. I never confessed that I'm gay.

On May 25, 2007 I took my shahada

**Lā 'ilāha 'illā-llāhu Muhammadu Rasūlu-llāh.**

**There is no god but Allah and Muhammad is his Prophet**

I'll remember that day as one of the happiest days of my life, I had to contain myself but mourned like a child because I had the belief that Arabs are little men who mourn in public. I felt a great relief inside me knowing that I had finally found what I was looking for.

After a while I started to stop eating and drinking unhealthy substances, because something inside me had changed and I felt a really natural repugnance toward those things.

No doubt, to me, we are all born Muslims (but then our parents taught us other paths) and I felt I actually just went back to my state of primeval purity with which I was born, I went to get my Islam. So I like to say that I converted to Islam. The conversion word cannot be used in any case, it is more appropriate to use the term recovery of "Din" (= philosophy of life), embrace Islam or enter Islam.

It is for this reason that the conscious self, my body spontaneously rejected substances and habits which I used to partake in. Many Islamic customs was owned by me for my entire life already. It was hard for me to change, because basically, I was another man.

## **SIMPLY WHAT HAPPENED IS THAT FOR ISLAM TO FIND ME I HAD TO FIND MYSELF**

I thought of God as being unique and not a trinity. I believed that God has no gender or number, for it is the Arabic word Allah which cannot unfold in the plural, dual, male or female, because it encompasses itself to a concept of the absolute. Nor did I believe that he could be represented as an old Caucasian man with a big white beard, as in the paintings of some churches.

Until now I had not told anyone I'm gay because I did not want to lose what I was discovering myself and could not answer to thousands of questions and not have anyone understand them.

I began to meet a whole new world every time I caught more wonderful people who gave everything of themselves to me to learn and consolidate my faith in Allah.

Trying to learn as fast as possible (and anxiety I always went hand in hand), I met with people at all the best possible mosques, learned to pray in Arabic and see the world with different eyes, my style and way of life were changing radically and I liked it.

Paradoxically many who called themselves friends radically rejected me and could not understand that I have found in Islam, a way of life, that is very beneficial to me in many ways and especially the inner peace that I have and the joy of living.

Each passing day was a different experience and more enriching and I opened their eyes to a reality I wanted to share with everyone.

Until a certain Sunday, July 1, 2007 where all Muslim brothers spent the day at Boadella Pond, near Figueres and I got a better idea which was to try and swim across the lake, I went for a shore where no one saw me I started my journey, 100 meters, 200 meters, 300 meters and I started to lose direction and sense of direction, I was feeling tired and sleepy and I could not go further, I just floated (for someone who is overweight, hehehehe) because it was not my day. Screaming for help was no use as no one would listen or they simply did not understand me, after about half an hour later a canoe came to my rescue, I came to the bank in a panic attack that cost me to come to. I thought thousands of things. More than that, I kept telling myself that I was building a way of life based on a lie to others.

I spent a Sunday very frightened by the shock and knowing I had to face my truth with the possibility of losing a lot.

I called the phone number and I did stay on the phone long enough to receive an answer because I wanted to focus on my ideas. On Monday afternoon I called Abdel and told him that I need to talk to him privately. It was very important what he had to say and he was probably not going to like anything.

On the Tuesday I started telling the following story:

"There was a scorpion and a frog on the bank of a river, the frog asks the scorpion if he could cross to the other side of the river to which the scorpion replied that he could not because surely among the hincaría crossing he will sting and they both will die drowning. The nonconforming frog said, "I pray to God that nothing happens." He climbs on the scorpion and start to swim, the frog midstream, feels like nails will stinger him and while he took his last breaths, he asked, Why did you do that? I have prayed to God that that should not happen, to which the scorpion replied, "well I am, it is my nature."

My nature is that I'm gay in the same way that you are heterosexual, and I do not see it as an aberration, or genetic disorder or any of those things. I have embraced Islam and do not want one part of myself contradicting the other. That was my conclusion Abdel told me that of course we will never understand, after a two hour intense chat, I asked if it changed their attitude, I regretted and hated my actions and could not return. That night I wrote my farewell letter.

Querido Abdel:

This is the letter I never thought I'd write but recent circumstances force me to do so.

Before I have no words of thanks to you and your family for having me in your home and to help me embrace Islam the way you did, I think I will never let go of Allah and what all this means to me. I believe that our God crossed so we could learn from each other, although I must admit that I had the best of me.

You are a person of great heart who lives for Allah and that is more rewarding than any human being beyond race, religion or creed. I've learned from you to renew my faith to Him and make my life as best as possible, to trust my brothers and know that all is not lost in this world as westernized as we live, there are still people for whom it is worth fight and live and if those thoughts or actions we make thinking Allah, the closer we are to Him.

My personal life and I told you it is very difficult to understand, but this is the reality, I cannot turn away from Islam but not leave my nature either, I do not lie or cheat or say the lip service that you can change when it suits you, I like the sincerity of the people and the courage to face a painful truth but whatever.

But also it's all delivered with respect to customs and moral codes and I'm not one to question them, but do not let others question me.

It is now that I part from your community for the good of everyone, especially because you want to weigh on sentiment that you could make me a good Muslim. It really hurt me to know that you felt bad when I told the truth. I swear that I never meant to make you feel bad.

There is still a long road ahead and it scares me more than having to do it alone, the world at large does not have to know or much less tell you that I am a Muslim and my human nature is different, that will be between Him and me. Islam is difficult to understand for all of us living in this world and bastardized too confusing to follow the mass.

I have many things to ask and to show me, but that's life and do not despair when we get out of hand so we cannot understand, but as I always say, "He knows everything and sees everything"

I have much to tell you and always appreciate your advice and explanations, and above all the strength that I heard when I told you the truth, I did not expect less from you. With respect to the others, tell them that I have been very shocked by the experience on Sunday and I need my time to think things through and emotionally steady myself and spend the time to forget, I think the output will be more acceptable to all.

I do not like goodbyes, but this is almost one, just want you to know you can count on me for anything you need, the family or the community, will always be at your service. I salute you wholeheartedly.

### **ZamZam**

After receiving this letter Abdel calls me, rejects and despises the hard way that a human cannot be happy with all the gossip scattered throughout the Muslim community at your fingertips.

I could not believe what was happening to me, had regained my faith and before long was back to feel the bitter pain of betrayal, but I had learned from previous experiences and this time the FE would be above all things.

I began to suffer from "ostracized síndrome". The internet was in its peak and became my best friend, shielding me with anonymous and fake profiles. I went poking little by little in Islamic Forums (WebIslam - Muslim Women - etc) somehow to find people who were in my same situation, I received lots of indirect attacks but this further reinforced my belief that I was not the only one. I then found Leo on a different Muslim worldwide LGBT association. Al-Fatiha in USA the pioneer of all, Imaan in London, The Inner Circle in South Africa and HM2F in France, and contacted them immediately, the language barrier in communication was there. I started to translate all documents and essays that I could get my hands on, but the messianic work began to bear fruit from the people met in anonymity like me, who felt and feel the same force within Islam and who are homosexuals and also Spanish speaking, Alhamdulillah. It from here, with all the sharing together, that the organisation AMHO, an organisation for LGBT muslims, was created. The exchange of information and assistance we were providing each other was very helpful.

In March 2008, I went for the second time to Egypt and Egyptian friends contacted me to make my achievement as a new Muslim official by providing me with a document issued by the Islamic University of Cairo and signed by the same Tantawi. Narrated entirely in my story the 2nd Trip to Egypt.

When I returned to Barcelona and no one in the Ummah could refuse my site as a Muslim one despite the rumors that had spread much more than what I thought it would, but I was willing to face all the consequences whatever. With the help of some friends, we had planned for journalists to go to the mosque which I had missed and go at any price. That same May 25, 2008 a few hours of fajr in Argentina, someone called me to tell me that my brother Paul of only 27 years had been run over and killed by a drunk driver. It was one of the hardest days of my life, I kept mourning and mourning and I wanted to travel as soon as possible

since I live in Spain. My father forbade me to travel, because of family issues, and I was coming down and I could not recover. That was the beginning of two more chaotic and rampant years. I cursed myself many times and so many things I did, my life made no sense whatsoever, I felt like I could've given my whole life to Pablito so that he did not have to die.

One day I can not remember how or where I got a parable that I read:

One night in a dream I saw that Jesus walked  
along the seashore under a silvery moon.  
I dreamed I saw my life in heaven represented  
in a series of scenes that quietly watched.  
Two pairs of footprints in the sand firm were falling  
while with Jesus I walked, as friends, talking.  
I looked at these tracks attentive reflected in the sky,  
but I noticed something strange, and I felt great sorrow.  
I noticed that sometimes, when he noticed the footprints,  
instead of seeing the two pairs saw only a couple of them.  
And I also noticed that only one set of footprints  
mostly warned my nights without stars  
In the hours of my life full of anxiety and sadness  
when the soul needs more comfort and strength.  
Sad I asked Jesus, "Lord, have you not promised  
that in my hour of distress you would walk with me always?  
But I note with sadness that in the midst of my complaints,  
the more I feel the suffering, I see only one set of footprints.  
Where are the other two stating your company  
when the storm hits life mercilessly?  
And Jesus answered me with tenderness and compassion:  
"Listen, my son, I understand your confusion.



I always loved you and still love you,  
and in your hour of pain  
I'll be always by your side  
to show you My Love  
But if you see only two footprints in the sand while walking,  
and you don't see the other two that should be noted,  
it is that in your time grieving, when your steps falter,  
no traces of your footsteps because I carry you in my arms ".

There was a before and an after reading that, that had permeated my heart, it was destroyed and battered, and I could feel His presence in my life. Bismillah ir-Rahman ir-Rahim - God the Merciful the Compassionate, the phrase that was repeated more times after embracing Islam came into my head, but I had no strength to apologize. Al-Rahman - Al-Rahman - Al-Rahman - I repeated again and again endlessly, and this because the year 2010 I started sosegarme physically and spiritually. I could not change my thoughts, but my conduct, after all humans are cognitive behavioral, cognitive because it takes knowledge and behavior because it depends on a behavior that is in your control to change. However, this time I was to take things more calmly for the long-term benefits. I had visited specialists of all kinds, and all for self-destructive behaviors. Now I must learn to live again and was very clear that I would be without lies or concealments, if at the time I had gotten into the closet for Muslims who did not suspected or knew of my sexual identity, that had to end.

I gradually and patiently began to regain myself and re-established ties with the LGBT Muslims whom I had met two years before and returned to resurrect the idea of the group, but this time with anonymous presence in social networks and that's where we put the AMHO name, LGBT Association of Homosexual Muslims because I JUST LIKE HOW ALLAH LOVES YOU ALL.

Our work in social networks was constant yet gradual, we founded our website with our own domain and host [www.amho.es](http://www.amho.es) Google servers. Many media outlets echoed our cyber presence, but did not grant interviews to anyone. WebIslam People could contact us and after many talks and then I revealed my true identity because of my friendship that I have with Abdennur Prado for several years. I asked them to never reveal it to anyone as it was not time to 'live' in public, we know that they were pressured throughout by many in the Islamic community, but WebIslam and all his people kept their promise.

We could not attend the 2010 CALEM because of problems when we flew to Paris even though we confirmed our presence and for Calem 2011 in Belgium I could not go because of work, also this time I took the opportunity to read widely and draw our future work plan as we wanted to do our best.

In early 2012 we decided that this would be the year we would give our OUTING and we knew it would be big, we sought a symbolic date and shuffled it for Eid AL Fitr but when the time came, we realized we lacked many things to polish and decided to move the date to EID AL ADHA.

We wanted to be covered legally and establish ourselves as an Association and enroll in the Registry of the Government with all the paperwork and legal requirements, and we did. We made contact with a journalist from El Periódico de Catalunya and had an interview for more than 45 minutes to be published on that Friday, October 26, with a full-page cover photo.

We also had a Press Conference to summarize in the following Press Release:

### **The LGBT cabinet opens to let out to Muslims**

### **LGBT Muslims opt for dialogue with the entire Muslim Community**

### **A Taboo, at least give LGBT Muslims face**

Friday October 26, 2012 was a day of great importance for two groups that have not always had good relations, AMHO. Homosexuals Musulmans Association of LGBT (Registered in the Generalitat de Catalunya and a legal personality in the process) is established as the only association of its kind in the context Catalan, Spanish and Spanish-speaking.

The Act was introduced by Xavier Jucla, renowned journalist specializing in LGBT themed work and took place at the Foundation chaired by its Presidet Enllaç Ignasi Pujades and ZamZam, Abdel Jhalil AMHO Secretary General who addressed the authorities of the Generalitat de Catalunya and Barcelona City Council, representatives of the following associations (in strict alphabetical order) Aleix Llibertats Aguilera Sexuals Ambit of ICV, Rodrigo Araneda, president of L'Association ACATHI Catalana per a la Integració d'Homosexuals, Bisexuals Immigrants i Transsexuals Eric Bertram, of Democratic Convergence of Catalonia and Convergais, Zam Cifuentes, president of Tranz & persons and members of the executive committee of the FET (Federacion Estatal de Transexuale), Maria Pia Duran, Amnesty International, Latifa El Hassani, Muslim, i membre of l'entitat Noucatalans lligada CIU, i Fernández Gabriel Diaz, Stop AIDS Gerent, Xavier Florensa is responsible Politiques Coordinator d'per a Persones LGBT Republican Left, Armnad Fluvia, Patro sóc Enllaç Foundation founder Jordi Petit, official representation Sabadell City Council-Department of Civil Rights and Citizenship, Emilio Ruiz Perez, President of the Casal Lambda, Ruben Tosoni, Manager Prevenció area GAG i Salut i ACATHI, and joined FAGC AMHO Front d'Alliberament Gai de Catalunya and FELGT, state Federation of lesbians, gays, transsexuals and bisexuals.

Assalamu Alaikum, good day and Eid Mubarak!

Firstly, I want to thank the Foundation for having given this space for our first public appearance since as you say, you are intended to protect the welfare of LGBT people and their environment in situations of vulnerability and dependence.

Authorities of the Generalitat de Catalunya and Barcelona Ayuntamiento, Associations, News Media, General Public.

AMHO is the quiet voice and the cry of despair of every Muslim LGBT, that have always existed within the Islamic community, and is a reality in our closet tucked away with seven keys, always denied, we have been condemned and even killed, using religion as a pretext never substantiated. AMHO Musulmans Association of LGBT homosexuals is the only association in the context of the Spanish-speaking world and born from the void of information regarding Muslim people express the belief in God and that we are lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender. More than 14 years Muslim LGBT associations are working in different parts of the world, HM2F in France, The Inner Circle of South Africa, Imaan in the United Kingdom, and Al-Fatiha of USA, but none of them are Spanish-speaking, and that's where the idea was born for AMHO to come into existence four years ago, AMHO stands as a mark of identity:

### **I love the same way that Allah loves us all and all alike**

Anonymity was our best defense, we were building something and did not want to lose him for nothing. We dived to work on social networks, discussion forums and especially literature search, study the Koran, the words and deeds of the Prophet Muhammad, etc., and came to a conclusion that is our slogan

"We are all created by Allah,

If you deny who you are you're attributing a failure to Him

And Allah is perfect in His Creation

You cannot stop being who you are "

LGBT Muslims always go down two possible paths: to deny our sexuality, to live without being rejected by the religious community, but with internal contradictions and problems that entails, or else, abandon religion, faith and then live out their sexuality without guilt, without the oppression of sin or haram.

But since AMHO urges that if you can be a Muslim Homosexual and have a full life like any other Muslim and therefore targets we have set ourselves normalize the situation of LGBT people within Muslim communities, open society to the reality of Muslims LGBT, based on principles of democracy and equal rights for everyone, without discrimination on grounds of religion, race, origin, social status, gender or sexual orientation, to promote respect for homosexuality, bisexuality and transsexuality in all areas of the Muslim community, and work to achieve full equality of rights and obligations of LGBT and for this we have created a private and confidential emotional support containment and Muslims led to LGBT. In this I am very aware and sharp: as Secretary General of AMHO, I must protect the identity of the

members of the association for their personal safety. It is and remains unanimous policy of the Association to maintain the anonymity of all the people who compose it. The fact that I've decided to go out in public on behalf of the Association does not mean it's going to take them out.

We're not here to argue or to participate in absurd debates that only seek confrontation and generate more hatred between people. On the contrary, we believe in dialogue as the main source to establish bonds of communion. The Prophet Muhammad was the example of a human being who was honest, just, merciful, compassionate, truthful, trustworthy, and brave. Moreover, it was in all his actions and dealings, he was very aware and fearful of God. "The best among you are those who treat women better" Narrated by Ibn Majah, # 1978, and Al-Tirmidhi, # 3895. It was women who decided to stand up to Islamic hierarchies. It was they who asked that as it might Allah al Rahman al Rahim, God the Compassionate, the Merciful, has allowed inhumane and degrading treatment towards women, and it was when they said they had to re-examine the Quranic teachings and found that all times Islam Essence speaks of equality of all human beings. And so we have, for example, in the Spanish State, held now in its fourth edition of the International Congress on Islamic Feminism organized by the Catalan Islamic Board and Union of Muslim Women of Spain (Umme). Now it is the time to turn to LGBT Muslims.

And finally I want to quote one aayah of the Quran

Sura 48: 10. "Those who swear fidelity. The hand of Allah is over their hands. If one breaks his oath it is actually detriment. If, however, true to their covenant with Allah, He will give a great reward. "

Assalamu Alaikum Wa rahmatullahi Wa Barakatuh - And peace, mercy and blessings of Allah be upon you.

After the sharing of words, the media presented the questions they believed were necessary and each representative of Associations. They were served with excellent pasta, catering of Arabs and Pakistanis as AMHO's gift to celebrate EID AL ADHA (Feast of Sacrifice).

**I'm not an artist, but if I was and could capture and convey how I feel about Islam, all Muslims would understand.**

**ZamZam<sup>14</sup>**

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<sup>14</sup> General secretary of A.M.HO., the Spanish queer Muslim organization.



I am a Turkish lesbian and have come out. For years I have led a double life without being noticed. When I was 20 years old, I broke this vicious cycle, and fought hard ever since my existence. I decided to leave

my parents' house and hit the rocky road of confrontation with my environment.

I had no other choice because I knew how my parents feel about the subject of homosexuality. It was a great shame for the reputation of my family and they put me out. They had no room for a lesbian daughter in their life.

But it's also my life! My sexuality! Why can't they accept me as I am? But because of our culture, I can't expect support for my lifestyle. Open homosexuality often means a "catastrophe".

### **The all-important question: why me?**

My parents' house was not strictly religious, but very traditional. We are Sunni and on the outside we look like a modern family. But as in many Turkish families there is a traditional division of roles with us. The tasks of men and women are clearly defined.

My parents are originally from the Aegean. We are a large family and many of our relatives live in Izmir and the surrounding area. My parents met and married in Hamburg, both grew up in Germany.

The biggest challenge in my life is to accept my sexual orientation as it is. Today I am 32 years old and I catch myself every now and then with the question: "Why me?"

### **As a child I discovered my lesbian guidance**

On my first physical contact with a girl, I was only 11 years old. Her name was Pelin and she was only a little older than me. Her family lived in our neighborhood and we would often visit them. Our families got along very well, so I could spend time with Pelin.

One evening we sat in front of the TV and watched a Turkish movie. Sex scenes in the movies, were rare back then, but every now and then you could catch sexual acts. We fooled around and acted out the scenes. We touched. It was all harmless and innocent. It felt good.

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<sup>15</sup> Testimony available online, on Cerap Cileli blog - <http://www.cileli.de/2013/03/mein-name-ist-bahar-und-ich-bin-eine-lesbische-muslimin/>



These fleeting touches and childlike curiosity kept for over a year. It was our big secret, because if someone had caught us, I did not know what would have happened. I just knew we had nothing good to expect.

Unfortunately, we were caught canoodling by Pelin's little sister. I remember so well as if it were yesterday. We had incredible anxiety. Pelin was panicked that our parents would come to know of it. We talked to a nurse and she kept it to herself. However, we paid a price for her silence. They "extorted" us. They were always trying to tell on us if we do not fulfill their wishes.

When I was about 13 years old, the day drew away at the time Pelin's family came. My world just fell apart. Now I was alone again. Alone, with these strange feelings.

## **My self-doubt gnawed me**

It kindled in me. I doubted myself and did not know who or "what" I am. I began to feel like I am in the wrong body. I was a boy trapped in a girl's body? I noticed that even my body language and attitude changed. I bent my shoulders, hid my breasts. My clothes always resembled that of a boy. I even began to walk like my male classmates. I was not sure what it was.

Experience with Pelin were nice but I did not understand. Until my coming-out, I have never talked about it. I was embarrassed. The idea for me to be a lesbian was so absurd and outlandish.

My Muslim-Turkish embossed milieu had always declared homosexuality as unnatural. Whenever I inquired, they said: "That's the way." Thousands of questions shot me through the head for years, questions that tormented me. If a woman loves another woman, is that a crime against Allah? If my homosexuality is an unforgivable sin, how great would be the punishment for such an offense? What do other Muslim women who are lesbian feel and think?

Fear to be punished by Allah and to damage the honor of the family, I would not allow myself right to my feelings as I often witnessed in our culture, gay and lesbian victims of violence. I had such terrible anxiety!

## **Experience with Turkish Muslim women have greatly influenced me**

When I made my "first steps," I had intercourse with lesbians and heterosexual Turks. Being a lesbian was and is held in a different form with them. It is a double burden. Our relationships are always hidden and accompanied by the risk of disclosure. It is always there, like a shadow, and the punishment of exposure is high.

A particularly harrowing love affair I had with Ebru. After sex she always demanded that we undergo a religious ablution and then pray. She explained that it is forbidden, what we

are doing. To live in homosexuality is a sin. If we repent of our sins, God would be just and forgive us and cleanse us. Ebru has never managed to come to terms with herself.

In another stage of life I got to know Acanthus. From a one-night stand blossomed a 17-month relationship with. However, the delicate flowers were eaten away at the roots of self-hatred. Because they could not accept that she is a lesbian and slept with a woman, she behaved like a patriarchal macho.

Cennet hit me, locked me up at home and took my liberty. She was insanely jealous. She always made as if she was straight and never admitted to herself that she is bisexual.

## **The everyday life of an outed Turkish woman is hell**

Every day a new battle begins. In society, we are regarded as inferior beings, and even as "pedophiles" and families shun us. I had so often threatened with the police to finally find peace.

When my secret relationship with Nurcan, a 19-year-old Alevis adherent who was engaged to her cousin, flew, I was threatened heavily by her family with death. For fear that anything happens to her, I sheltered Nurcan. Then her family stormed my apartment, beat me and threatened me with a knife for hours. "You fucking lesbian, you have not had a real man, right? Which thou shalt receive!" shouted their brother into my face.

The brutal beating resulted in bleeding in the abdomen, a black eye and bloody lips. My hatred for these inhuman views grew more and more.

After a few months Nurcan returned to her family. My life has been the only hell. She is imprisoned, beaten and constantly had to stop her education.

It is an incredibly strenuous act of living as a Turkish lesbian and certainly not easy.

## **A key problem is the secrecy and the lies**

I know many Muslim homosexuals. They are nationwide and also my whole circle consists largely of homosexuals. A number I cannot name, but there are a lot. Among them are some who have still not been outed.

The problem in the gay oriental society is that many, who live, make it secretly because they are afraid of what others or the family might think. They are afraid that they will be threatened in the name of honor / murdered or expelled from the family.

Of course there is a break with the family, of course, there are many problems. But we must explain to our families and countrymen, that homosexuality is not a disease.

We cannot hush up the issue and submit ourselves to the will of society. Otherwise, a lifelong game of hide and seek and the denial of one's own identity is inevitable.

As long as we, the gay and lesbian Muslims do not manage to respect our own lives, we can never ever expect it from others.

I want to be treated respectfully and honestly and not just tolerated. I want to be treated as due as every human being with dignity and freedom. I'm not mentally or physically ill.

I'm writing to any person before, he or she shall live, and I respect all life models. In turn, expect that no one imposes on me his or her life. Human rights also include the right to a free, sexual orientation.

I'm just a grain of sand in the Turkish-Muslim society. I have yet to make the impossible possible for me so I can live in peace and inner freedom.

**Discrimination affects us all!**

*Bahar M. aus Köln*



A good friend of mine and I were in a heated debate at Starbucks—naturally—over whether or not it's possible to reconcile Islam with the LGBTQ community. My friend Zara was outed by her strict Muslim Pakistani family at the age of 19 when they read through her diary while she was away at work one evening. The scene awaiting her arrival was ugly. No longer able to see a place for herself in Islam, she broke ties with her beloved religion—and with her family. Why do so many gay Muslims

self-segregate themselves rather than modify their interpretation of their faith to be more inclusive?

Back at Starbucks, Zara struggled to explain that letting go of her faith was the right thing to do. Irritation crept into my voice as I judged her for defending her family's stance against her "lifestyle choice." Don't get me wrong—Zara is not self-loathing by any means. She has lived her life openly and proudly for the past nine years. But whatever made Zara feel like she wasn't allowed to practice her religion struck sadness in her she has never been able to shake.

That fateful night began a torturous string of events for the next several years of Zara's life. After the witch hunt was over Zara remained under house arrest. She was only permitted to leave the house to attend school and finish her sophomore year. Her eldest and very pregnant sister escorted her to class each day, ensuring wayward Zara made it straight to class and back. Her days at home were spent enduring physical and verbal abuse. Soon enough Zara sought an opportunity for escape and took it, with only the clothing on her back and her cockatoo, Lily, who sat quietly perched on her shoulder. At a nearby fire station Zara called an old friend who not only picked her up from the station but also opened his doors to her, which she graciously accepted. With a police officer as her escort, Zara went back home to retrieve school books and some of her personal belongings. She departed her family's home with angry slurs, spitting and these haunting words, "Don't tell anyone you're related to us. And please God, don't tell anyone you're Muslim."

Though her family acted out of anger and confusion Zara has only compassion for them. She understands her family's upbringing and cultural background that feed their intolerance. Today, Zara has established a loving relationship with her family and visits them frequently. She has still denounced Islam, in part to obey her parent's wishes, and in part because she does not see a way to reconcile those aspects of her life – her sexual identity and Islam.

"There are people out there who think they can be Muslim and gay, and that's great. But to me, that sounds the same as people who claim Islam but still drink or don't practice it

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<sup>16</sup> Available on <http://www.shewired.com/lifestyle/2013/01/28/lesbian-muslim-unveiled-moving-forward-muslims-progressive-values>

properly,” Zara told me. “Islam has strict rules. If you follow them, you are Muslim. That’s it. There’s no other interpretation.”

It became clear to me why Zara’s family was so shocked at her coming out—she was the most pious of all her siblings and always took her religion seriously.

We dropped the argument and left Starbucks disgruntled but friends just the same. But I still couldn’t get past Zara’s dismissal of interpretation. Why shouldn’t interpretation of one’s religion be acceptable? Love for God is a personal expression and subject to the individual. I wanted feedback from a professional in the field, so I contacted [Muslims for Progressive Values](#), an organization based out of Southern California that is accepting of all Muslims regardless of their sexual orientation. They symbolize a progressive interpretation of Islam, one that fosters equality for all regardless of gender, race or sexual orientation. Unisex group prayers and sermons are often led by female Imams, something that is far too uncommon. I spoke with Ani Zonneveld, cofounder of MPV, who kindly took a minute from her busy schedule to break down what MPV represents and what Muslims can do to facilitate a more compassionate, forward, and inclusive future for Islam.

**For Muslims questioning their sexuality they are often apprehensive to ask for guidance from their Mosque. What are some avenues they can turn to for support?**

They can turn to us at Muslims for Progressive Values and access scholarly writings which will help them understand the story of Lot and other religious interpretations better. Relearning Islam empowers you.

**What does Muslims for Progressive Values offer gay Muslims?**

We offer an inclusive spiritual space where straight, gay and trans Muslims are welcome. It is important that LGBTQ Muslims feel a part of the larger community. Because of the prejudices and the unkind sermons targeting gays, it is understandable that many have self-segregated themselves from the community.

**Do you recommend gay Muslims to come out to their friends, family, or members of their religious community?**

I think they should come out when they are ready and feel empowered enough to do so. We feel MPV is a community that can help them to that empowered space.

**Is there a typical reaction for Muslim families when they discover a loved one is gay?**

It depends on the family. For some it doesn’t matter, they love their child just as much. For others, it’s a total rejection. What makes it difficult for parents is the stigma the parents are burdened with in their respective communities.

**How do gay Muslims hold on to their faith without denying their sexual orientation?**

The gays who are in that position are those who have sought out an alternative interpretation of Islam, one that doesn’t degrade them as a human being. The fact that the Quran doesn’t mandate a punishment for being gay, or that “men who do not desire women” are mentioned tells us that LGBTs are totally the norm. LGBT Muslims have a long way to



go toward understanding and believing this for themselves. Sometimes it doesn't matter how we console them they are still convinced they will be going to hell.

**Generally speaking, about how many gay Muslims do you think there are in the US today?**

Somewhere between 70,000 to 137,000.

**Do you think the majority of Muslim populations will ever be accepting of homosexuality?**

I hope so. If not accepting, they could at least get to the point of not hating! Here in the America Muslims face the issue of Islamophobia, prejudices against all things Islam. In my opinion, homophobic Muslims need to look at their own prejudices against "the other." The thing is, both LGBTs and Muslims are discriminated by the same folks. We should be working together in defending our rights.

**What advice do you have for Muslims who think they might be LGBTQ?**

Seek community support from us and from LGBTQ groups.

## بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

*“And surely We shall try you with something of fear and hunger, and loss of wealth and lives and crops; but give glad tidings to the steadfast”, Who say, when a misfortune striketh them: Lo! We are Allah's and Lo! Unto Him we are returning. Such are they on whom are blessings from their Lord, and mercy. Such are the rightly guided”<sup>17</sup>.*

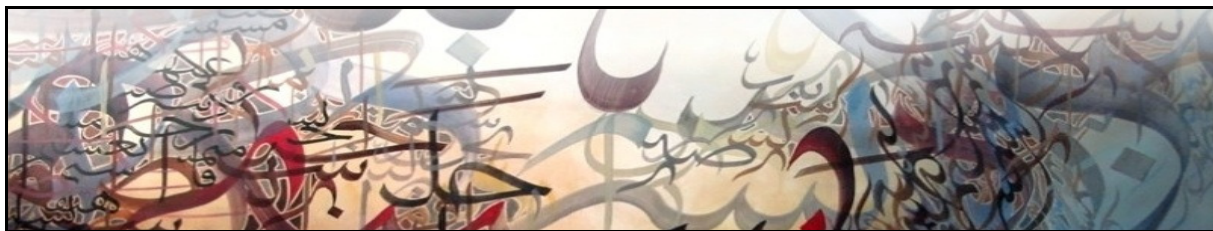


*“O People of the Scripture. Come to an agreement between us and you: that we shall worship none but Allah, and that we shall ascribe no partners unto Him, and that none of us shall take others for lords beside Allah”<sup>18</sup>.*

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<sup>17</sup> Qur'an: 2.155-157.

<sup>18</sup> Qur'an: 3.64.



## THANKS - شكرًا

*Islam* in Arabic means "be in Peace". Thus, may peace be on all individuals and institutional partners who participated directly or indirectly in the elaboration and dissemination of the Green Book<sup>19</sup>. Thanks especially to Qiyaam Jantjies-Zahed and Nab\*\* for their notes and translations; and to all the experts, activists and volunteers that sustain the CALEM INIMuslim's networking and program<sup>20</sup>.

***Thank you in advance to those who have the generosity to publish this GREEN BOOK - Tome III (free from all rights) on their website or their personal blog.***

Finally we thank the Lord, our beloved God.

الحمد لله رب العالمين

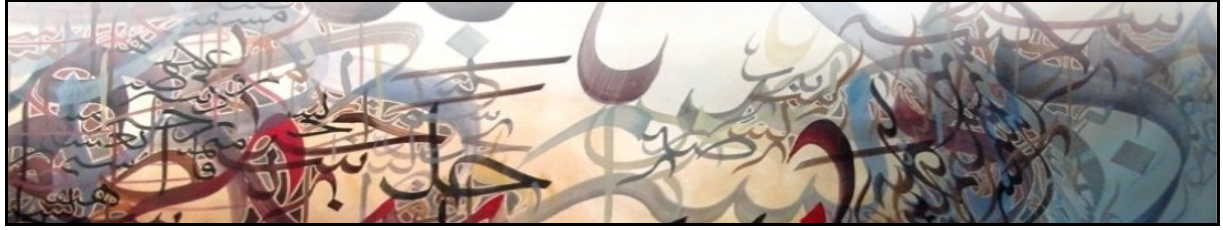


***Thanks to the CALEM informal confederation, the INIMuslim international network<sup>21</sup>, and to HM2F (Homosexual Muslims of France).***

<sup>19</sup> All the Green Books are available on the website of HM2F - [http://www.homosexuels-musulmans.org/Livres-Verts-contre-homophobie-islamophobie\\_\\_Green-Book-against-homophobia-islamophobia.html](http://www.homosexuels-musulmans.org/Livres-Verts-contre-homophobie-islamophobie__Green-Book-against-homophobia-islamophobia.html)

<sup>20</sup> <http://www.calem.eu/INIMuslim-international-network-of-inclusive-Muslims.html>

<sup>21</sup> INIMuslim : *International Network for Inclusive Muslims* - <http://www.calem.eu/INIMuslim-international-network-of-inclusive-Muslims.html>



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