

Islam and Homosexuality

What does Islam say about homosexuality? There are many who think they know that there can only be one answer. If you ask a traditional Muslim scholar he (or she) will most probably tell you that Islam condemns homosexuality, that is sex among males or among females, and considers it both a sin and a crime. The reason for this, the scholar will probably say, is that the Qur'an – the Koran – declares homosexuality a crime, something that is forbidden and will be punished by God, and that this becomes clear from the story of Lot (*Lut*, in Arabic), which is retold in the Qur'an again and again.

Not only “Islamist” groups within the Muslim World or fundamentalist sects within the Muslim community somewhere else in the world, but even quite moderate groups hold this view. Just in order to quote an example from my own country (Germany): there is a kind of Islamic handbook that discusses different aspects of Islam and of Muslim life in the West, published by the *Deutsche Muslim-Liga* in Hamburg. In this book you read: “the conduct of a homosexual goes against all moral values our religion stands for [...]; adultery is a grave sin, but homosexuality, i.e. practising it, is even more grave. GOD condemned and punished the People of Lot, who were the first to practise homosexuality...” (Abdullah Leonhard Borek, ed., *Islam im Alltag: Eine Handreichung für deutschsprachige Muslime*, [n. pl.]: Al Kitab Verlag, 1999, p. 182).

The last point quoted refers to the Qu'ran, or at least what it is thought to contain. – But what does this sacred scripture, which is, in Muslim faith, a revelation of God to the Prophet Muhammad, really say? How was it in history? What do today's Muslims have to say on the topic and – *are there* gay and lesbian Muslims?

The essay which is to follow here will cover the following topics:

The story of Lot in the Qur'an

What does this have to do with being gay or lesbain?

Doubts: a Qur'anic legal prescription directed against homosexuality? – A comment on *Surat an-Nisa'* 4, verses 15-16

The sayings attributed to the Prophet Muhammad: homosexuality in hadith

Are the sayings attributed to Muhammad authentic?

Stoning and burning: on some aspects of classical Islamic criminal law

How was it really in history?

“Youths Handsome As Pearls” in Paradise

Homoeroticism in the Sufi world

The ‘depths’ of popular faith: “eating pork makes you homosexual”

Islam according to Saudi Arabia

Love and partnership – considering *Surat ar-Rum* 30, verses 21-22

Faith and Islam – a theological reconsideration

What I want is to point out to Muslims that there *can* be a new way, a new spur on the old, trodden path, that it is possible that there will be a for some of them – for many of of us – a new, individual *islām*, a new “submission”, which will enable homosexual believing (*mu'min*, *muslim*) people to accept themselves as **gay and lesbian Muslims**.

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See the complete **German** version of the essay here:

Andreas Ismail Mohr

Islam und Homosexualität – Eine differenzierte Betrachtung

http://www.ismailmohr.de/islam_homo.html

