

THE UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY

The Story of Lot and the Qur'ān's Perception of the Morality of Same-Sex Sexuality

by

Amreen Mohamed Jamal Ebrahim

A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES

IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE

DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS

DEPARTMENT OF RELIGIOUS STUDIES

CALGARY, ALBERTA

NOVEMBER, 1997

© Amreen Mohamed Jamal Ebrahim 1997



**National Library
of Canada**

**Acquisitions and
Bibliographic Services**

**395 Wellington Street
Ottawa ON K1A 0N4
Canada**

**Bibliothèque nationale
du Canada**

**Acquisitions et
services bibliographiques**

**395, rue Wellington
Ottawa ON K1A 0N4
Canada**

Your file Votre référence

Our file Notre référence

The author has granted a non-exclusive licence allowing the National Library of Canada to reproduce, loan, distribute or sell copies of this thesis in microform, paper or electronic formats.

The author retains ownership of the copyright in this thesis. Neither the thesis nor substantial extracts from it may be printed or otherwise reproduced without the author's permission.

L'auteur a accordé une licence non exclusive permettant à la Bibliothèque nationale du Canada de reproduire, prêter, distribuer ou vendre des copies de cette thèse sous la forme de microfiche/film, de reproduction sur papier ou sur format électronique.

L'auteur conserve la propriété du droit d'auteur qui protège cette thèse. Ni la thèse ni des extraits substantiels de celle-ci ne doivent être imprimés ou autrement reproduits sans son autorisation.

0-612-31294-1

Canada

ABSTRACT

Discussion of the morality of same-sex sexuality in Islam is beginning to come to the forefront. It is a controversial topic that evokes differing views in Islam and, as such, needs to be addressed and understood. This study narrows the scope of the investigation to the use of moral terminology in the Lot story and elsewhere in the Qur'ān. The method of semantic analysis that shall be applied is similar to the one espoused by Toshihiko Izutsu.

In order to acquire a better understanding of how same-sex practices are qualified morally in the Qur'ān, same-sex activities shall also be looked at in comparison to other opposite-sex and non-sexual practices. It is my contention that, in the Qur'ān, same-sex practices are viewed no different from certain opposite-sex and non-sexual activities.

PREFATORY NOTE

In quoting from the Qur'ān, I will give my own translation of the Arabic terms that shall be analyzed. In general, however, I adopt Qur'ānic passages from Arthur J. Arberry, The Koran Interpreted, and where necessary, modify Qur'ānic passages with my own translations. I will also use Arberry's verse numbering, following that of Flügel.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all those who have helped me on the long road to the final completion of this thesis. In particular, my thanks goes out to my Supervisor, Dr. Andrew Rippin, who in all aspects of my thesis has constantly guided, supported, immensely assisted, and patiently contributed to my learning experience. I cannot thank him enough for the confidence he has shown in me. I would like to thank the staff of the Department of Religious Studies, in particular the Head, Dr. Wayne O. McCready for his unwavering support and encouragement, as well, Dr. Irving Hexham who has always taken an interest in my academic career.

My thanks is extended to Nicholas Heer, Professor Emeritus, University of Washington, who has been most helpful. I especially appreciate his patience, his support and his feedback, both in reference to my thesis and, in particular, to my use of Arabic.

Thanks as always to Shamsheer whose love, friendship, and support I am privileged to have and who made this goal possible in the first place. As well, of course, I thank my family for their love, patience and dedication. As importantly, I also wish to thank Faustina whose love, friendship, patience and support have made the harder parts of this journey that much less difficult.

The light is finally at the end of this tunnel....

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to:

SHAMSHER

whose generosity knows no bounds,

MY LATE FATHER

whose kindness and gentle ways I shall always cherish

MY FAMILY

who have always been there for me,

FAUSTINA

who never ceases to amaze me

and to

FREEDOM

TABLE OF CONTENTS

APPROVAL PAGE	ii
ABSTRACT	iii
PREFATORY NOTE	iv
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	v
DEDICATION	vi
TABLE OF CONTENTS	vii
LIST OF TABLES	ix
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION	1
CHAPTER TWO: THE QUR'ĀNIC LOT	13
CHAPTER THREE: PRIMARY ROOTS	27
SHHY	28
FHSH	33
JHL	39
SRF	46
THR	50
CHAPTER FOUR: SECONDARY ROOTS	60
'DW	60
RWD	64
FDH	68
KHZY	69
FSQ	70
JRM	72
FSD	74

SW'	76
NKR	79
KHBTH	82
ZLM	84
GHBR	87
 CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSION.	 93
 BIBLIOGRAPHY	 106

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1.2 26

Table 2.3 59

Table 3.4 92

CHAPTER ONE INTRODUCTION

Islam is very clear about homosexuality, says Abdullah Hakim Quick, head of Islamic Social Services and Resources in Toronto....Homosexuality, he says, is 'considered deviant behaviour punishable by death' under Islamic fiqh (law). The only way out is repentance and a conversion to straight behaviour....He says that there is no reform position on the question of homosexuality....¹

Furthermore, Quick said that Islam's ban on homosexuality comes from the Biblical story of Lot, which, also appears in the Qur'ān. In a seminar entitled "The Homosexual Challenge and the Islamic Response",² in Quick's own words:

...the Islamic position comes straight out of the Qur'ān from the time of Lūṭ *'alayhi al-salām* [peace be upon him] and his society where it is classified by *Allāh subhānahu wa ta'ālā* [may Allah be praised and exalted] as one of the most dangerous crimes that could exist....

Quick said that although Islamic law is to be carried out only in an Islamic state, he emphasized that:

...the punishment is death and we will not change. They can change this society [i.e., Western secular society] but we're not going to change our society [i.e., Islamic society]....

According to Quick the Islamic society in his words is:

...geared towards...normalizing relationships with male and female, and then the parents and the children, and then building units out of that....And we're not forcing everybody to be a part of an Islamic society. Some people might not want to live in a society like that. I fear for the people in this society....

¹Zuhair Kashmeri, "Islam's Hidden Homosexuals", *Now*, p. 12.

²Quick, "The Homosexual Challenge and the Islamic Response". Transcribed from a tape-recording.

When we read anecdotes like this, what is it that goes through our minds? Is what traditional Muslims say true, that "Islam is very clear about homosexuality"? And that it is "one of the most dangerous crimes" deserving of punishment by death? That the ban on same-sex sexuality is from the Biblical story of Lot which also appears in the Qur'ān? Is there indeed no chance of a "reform position" on the question of homosexuality? Is the only way out either repentance and "conversion" to heterosexual behaviour or total rejection of the Islamic society? Do we even think of queer Muslims (we know they exist) and the struggles that they have to face in fighting not only for their sexual rights but for their rights to religious belief? Do we consider their attempts to hold on to Islam rather ironic, given the fact that their values have been totally rejected by traditional Muslim sectors?

Do we believe that those who are queer and claim to be Muslim as well have to give up Islam? And that queer Muslims who do not agree with this have to continue to be ostracized not only by the traditional Muslim society, but often, as a result, by their own families? Whom do we empathize with? Can we even give a clear-cut answer to these questions? An attempt to try to answer all these questions would truly be a feat. Perhaps by going to the core, we might be able to see for ourselves whether or not same-sex sexuality is permissible in Islam, whether indeed there is a basis in the Qur'ān for making a judgement on this. How do we even begin to look into this in general terms? How do we start exploring this?

One of the ways we can examine the stance of same-sex sexuality in Islam is to look at the story of Lot in the Qur'ān. After all, the Qur'ān is for Muslims the Divine Revelation from God, believed to have been disclosed to Muḥammad orally through Gabriel. It is revered and regarded as being authoritative in terms of how Muslims should conduct themselves. However, before turning to the Qur'ānic rendition of the Lot story, we need to first look very briefly at the story of Lot in the Hebrew Bible in Genesis chapter 19, the apparent source of the original story.

In Genesis 19:29, Lot is explicitly portrayed as a survivor of the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah. Prior to this destruction Abraham, Lot's uncle, is visited by

messengers of God who tell Abraham that they have been sent to investigate the inhabitants of Sodom and, if need be, to destroy them for their sins. Abraham pleads with God not to destroy the righteous along with the wicked, asking God to destroy Sodom only if God does not find a minimum of ten righteous people. God accepts Abraham's request.

When the messengers come to Lot and become his guests, the men of Sodom go to Lot's house wanting to "know them" (i.e., the messengers of God). In Genesis 19:8, Lot goes out to the men and pleads with them, saying that he has "two daughters who have not known a man". The men become angry with Lot. They turn on him and attempt to break the door. The messengers pull Lot back into the house and, in turn, strike the attackers with blindness.

As the assaulters remain in darkness, the messengers tell Lot that they are about to destroy the cities and that he should flee with the rest of his family. Lot's son-in-laws do not take Lot seriously when he tells them to get out of the city. Lot is left with his wife and two of his daughters and is told to hurry to the mountains and not to look back. Lot tells the messengers that he is unable to escape to the mountains in time and that he is likely to survive only if he flees to a small town that is nearby called Zoar. After receiving permission to go to Zoar, Lot and his family escape; during the trip Lot's wife turns to look back and is turned into a "pillar of salt".

While Lot and his two daughters are reaching to safety, Sodom and Gomorrah (including the remaining inhabitants) are destroyed. Scared to live in Zoar, Lot and his daughters settle in a cave in the mountains. Lot's daughters, fearful that there are no other men to continue their progeny with them, make Lot drunk and they "lie with him". Both of them conceive children, Moab and Benammi; the former becomes the father of the Moabites and the latter becomes the father of the Ammonites.

Many, if not most, Biblical commentators (in common with Islamic commentators much later) interpret the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah as a demonstration of God's wrath toward sexuality, especially, same-sex sexuality. The use of terms like "sin of

Sodom"³ and "sinful city of Sodom"⁴ are indicative of this. The conception of same-sex sexuality as being the actual taboo seems to stem in part from a traditional interpretation based on the inference of the Sodomites demand that they wanted to "know" Lot's guests and arises from the suggestion that "know" means to have a sexual encounter of some sort.⁵

Some form of sexual knowledge may possibly be indicated in the story of Sodom and Gomorrah. However, there seem to be ambiguities with reference to linguistic considerations, particularly in the interpretation of the term "know". It is very likely that these ambiguities require careful analysis, especially in terms of how they have been used within their given contexts. This needs to be done before one can ascertain the actual stance of the destruction of Lot's people in the story of Sodom and Gomorrah. An examination of this kind is a formidable task at the very least.

Since our own onerous assignment is to better comprehend the Islamic narrative of the Lot saga, we should expect that, in the Qur'ān as well, what would be required would be a careful contextual analysis of this story. Considering that our primary focus is to investigate, as the title of this thesis suggests, the Qur'ān's perception of the morality of same-sex sexuality, there are a number of sources that deal extensively with the Qur'ān which can aid us in this endeavour. One such example is Toshihiko Izutsu's Ethico-Religious Concepts in the Qur'ān, which is of primary importance to our own analysis.

Izutsu focuses on terms which he classifies as being "ethico-religious" in nature. This category of terms, according to Izutsu, involves human characteristics which, for

³For example see Edward A. Malloy, Homosexuality and the Christian Way of Life, p. 188, Derrick S. Bailey, Homosexuality And The Western Christian Tradition, p. 2 and Robin Scroggs, The New Testament and Homosexuality, p. 13.

⁴For example see Immanuel Jakobovits, "Homosexuality", Encyclopaedia Judaica, 8, 962.

⁵As examples, see "Homosexuality", The Encyclopedia of Judaism, 353, Jakobovits, "Homosexuality", Encyclopaedia Judaica, 8, 962, Greg L. Bahnsen, Homosexuality: A Biblical View, p. 33, Scroggs, The New Testament, p. 73 and Bailey, Homosexuality, p. 2. In contrast, there is also the belief (e.g., Bailey, Homosexuality, pp. 3-5) that it is difficult to interpret the actual meaning of "know". Yet others (e.g., Patricia Beattie Jung, Heterosexism: An Ethical Challenge, p. 67 and David F. Greenberg, The Construction of Homosexuality, p. 136) suggest that the Lot story could be about rape or even inhospitality.

Muslims, are meant to be simultaneously religious and ethical. Muslims believe that since God is ethical in nature, God deals with human beings in an ethical way. Similarly, it is a believer's duty to respond in an ethical fashion to God's actions, which, at the same time, is a practice of one's religious convictions.

Izutsu writes that "ethico-religious" concepts in the Qur'ān can be approached in a number of ways. For example, we could start by looking at "the elaborate systems of Islamic law" which, he suggests, have over time, regulated human conduct; however, we will find "that we are led back to the Qur'ān as the original source of all these commands and prohibitions".⁶ He further emphasizes that his undertaking is different from other similar works. This is due to his "analytic method" of "linguistic analysis" which he applies to Qur'ānic data in order to "make the Qur'ān interpret its own concepts and speak for itself".⁷

In reference to our own study, like Izutsu, we need to deal with Qur'ānic terms that have an ethical and moral connotation. Our understanding, as, indeed, our use of "ethical" and/or "moral", has to do with describing specific terms from the Qur'ān which represent certain human actions that are frequently perceived as involving what is believed to be God's meritorious judgement on these actions.

Since our main focus will be to look at the Lot story in order to understand the Qur'ān's perception of the morality of same-sex sexuality, we need to investigate core terms from specific Arabic roots which appear in the Lot story and elsewhere in the Qur'ān. Even though Izutsu deals with much of the vocabulary of the Lot story, he does not address the question of sexuality specifically.

While we are interested in the legitimate question of whether there is a specific word in the Qur'ān attached to same-sex sexual practices, our overall goal, to reiterate, is to discover the Qur'ān's perception of the morality of same-sex sexuality. We need to attempt to discover the nature of the moral judgements within the Qur'ān by raising questions about

⁶Izutsu, Ethico-Religious Concepts, p. 3.

⁷Izutsu, Ethico-Religious Concepts, p. 3.

the Qur'ān's perception of sin. The question that needs investigation is whether the specific moral terminology used within the Lot saga as well as in the rest of the Qur'ān provides a direct link to attitudes toward same-sex sexuality.

In the endeavour to try and understand the Qur'ān's overall perception of the morality of same-sex sexuality, we need to better understand Izutsu's method of semantic analysis. Izutsu asserts that even though the simplest way to know the meaning of a foreign word is to suggest an equivalent term in one's own mother-tongue, or as he says to provide a "word-word" definition, it is also the least reliable method.

Izutsu feels that translations can be used as guiding tools, but certainly not for a correct and unbiased interpretation of the Qur'ān. Outside of personal issues becoming incorporated into translations, he feels that words used as translations of a native language get "transmuted" and almost ruin the actual meaning of the Qur'ān. He feels that, even though observers may have the best of intentions when reading an original text, they sometimes unconsciously understand and therefore translate the moral codes according to their own concepts which have been fostered by their mother tongue.

In addition, Izutsu cautions that, in some instances, a transposition of a single word to another is almost impossible. Sometimes there are words which are typically ingrained into the life and manners of that very culture, becoming difficult if not impossible to transpose from one language to another. He cites three examples of this in Classical Arabic, *jahl* from the root JHL being one such case.

Izutsu writes that, previously, even Arab philologists had considered the term *jahl* to mean the exact opposite of *ʿilm* (from the root 'LM) or "knowledge" and consequently translated it to mean pre-Qur'ānic "ignorance". In fact, the most important derivative of this word *Jāhilīyah*, which Muslims used to denote conditions prior to the rise of Islam, was therefore understood and translated as the "Age of Ignorance", i.e., in specific reference to the ignorance of God. This however, was prior to Ignaz Goldziher's demonstration through his study Muhammedanische Studien, published in 1888. What Goldziher did was to collect:

a large number of important examples of the actual use of the root *JHL* in pre-Islamic poetry, subjected them to a careful analysis, and reached the remarkable conclusion that the usual traditional opinion about *jāhiliyyah* was fundamentally erroneous. *Jahl*, according to his conclusion, is not the opposite of *‘ilm*; in its primary sense, it stands opposed to *hilm*, which denotes 'the moral reasonableness of a civilized man' (Nicholson [R. A. Nicholson, A Literary History of the Arabs, 1953]), including roughly speaking such characteristics as forbearance, patience, clemency, and freedom from blind passion. If we add to these another important element, 'power'...the picture is complete. In later usage, and sometimes even in pre-Islamic poetry, we find *jahl* used as the real antithesis of *‘ilm*, but only in a secondary and derivative sense; its primary semantic function is to refer to the implacable, reckless temper of the pagan Arabs.⁸

Izutsu emphasizes that in order to avoid the danger of distortion due to "word-word" definitions, measures have to be taken to go one step further and transform a "word-word" definition into a direct "word-thing" definition. According to Izutsu, a "word-thing" definition can be obtained, for example, by gathering specific terms from the Qur'ān in one place, comparing them and checking them against one another in order to reasonably hope to get an original "word-thing" definition of a foreign word.

In reference to our own analysis, we need to keep in mind that the terms from the roots that we shall analyze may have been perceived (whether correctly or incorrectly), as contributing to the moral fibre of the Lot story. Since we want to comprehend the perception of the morality of same-sex sexuality in the Qur'ān as a whole, we must, as Izutsu suggests, carry out a method as does he, of semantic analysis. It should be mentioned that, certainly, while Izutsu does not deal with the moral question of same-sex sexuality, he does nonetheless provided us with the method of how to go about investigating this topic on our own.

In order to begin this procedure, for each of the Arabic roots that we shall analyze,

⁸Izutsu, Ethico-Religious Concepts, p. 28.

we first need to translate the terms from their respective roots, i.e., in Izutsu's words, give a "word-word" definition knowing that this is merely the initial step of our analysis. We then need to attempt, as Izutsu suggests, to transform the "word-word" definition into a "word-thing" definition. In doing so we may at the end of our examination, suggest a different and more accurate meaning of a given root.

In order to transform a "word-word" definition into a "word-thing" definition, we need to collect as many important examples as possible of uses for each of the roots we shall look at in the Qur'ān and subject them to a thorough scrutiny. It is by proceeding to carry out such a form of contextual interpretation that we can hope to come to a conclusion about the meaning of words belonging to the roots in question. We also need to keep in mind what Izutsu highlights, that, in some instances, it will be difficult to obtain a totally accurate transposition of a word, simply because of its history in the life and manners into that very culture. This is an important point since we shall be looking at terms from the root JHL for example.

Another source which is relevant to our purpose since it deals with the Qur'ān in light of ethics is S. H. Al-Shamma's thesis, The Ethical System Underlying the Qur'ān. Al-Shamma deals with Qur'ānic ethics as having either "negative" or "positive" qualities. In his first section, he deals with the former, i.e., negative ethical terms or vices (e.g., pride, indecency, greed and hatred) that, according to him, the Qur'ān "considers as vicious" and in the second section deals with the latter, i.e., what he refers to as positive ethical terms (e.g., piety, humility, chastity and justice) or "Qur'ānic virtues almost directly opposing the vices".⁹ Al-Shamma suggests that the vices in most instances are "Jahilite" and the virtues are "purely Qur'ānic".

In his search for the "moral philosophy of the Qur'ān", Al-Shamma discusses specific Qur'ānic passages that cluster around certain roots. He begins his work by providing meanings of terms from certain roots, he gives a commentary and discusses the passages in chronological order. He arranges his passages according to either the three

⁹Al-Shamma, The Ethical System, p. I.

Meccan periods or the Medinian period which he further sub-divides.

Al-Shamma writes that sometimes it is difficult to determine whether certain Qur'ānic passages are ethical, political or religious as these three concepts are often intertwined. Another problem he feels that one should keep in mind when dealing with the Qur'ān is the lack of "authentic pre-Islamic literature". Furthermore, he states that the Qur'ān "abounds in synonyms and what might be termed semi-synonymous expressions".¹⁰ Al-Shamma notes that the study of the Qur'ān is made that much more difficult because of the presence of certain Qur'ānic words which have a multiplicity of meanings.

In reference to our own approach, many of the words from specific roots that we shall analyze may not only be "positive" and/or "negative", but may also be "neutral" in nature. This means that they might support neither a negative nor a positive disposition. In wanting to discuss relevant Qur'ānic passages, as do both Izutsu and Al-Shamma, we shall look at words in light of the roots as they appear in the Qur'ān; however, our intent is different from theirs. Neither Izutsu nor Al-Shamma really deal with the Qur'ān's perception of the morality of same-sex sexuality in light of the Lot saga, an aspect which is crucial to our own study.

We shall not use chronology to date the Qur'ānic passages. This is because chronology is not relevant to the primary objectives of our study. We are after all, concerned more with what the Muslims make of the Qur'ān and the Islamic basis for coming to a moral decision about same-sex practices. In order to know what Muslims get from reading the Qur'ān, it does not matter if there is or is not a chronological progression of thought within the Qur'ān.

Since the actual point of our study is to understand how same-sex sexuality is qualified morally in the Qur'ān, all passages no matter what time frame they belong to, need to be given equal credence. Despite its informational value, listing chronological data would be of little benefit to our aim, as, in all likelihood, its use would cause us to diverge from our focal point of study.

¹⁰Al-Shamma, The Ethical System, p. 136.

It is likely that in carrying out a detailed examination of words from certain Arabic roots, there will be something distinctive to say about many of the words under these roots; however, some of the roots will probably end up having similar if not the same conclusions. In order to avoid being repetitious, we shall have to condense those roots which bring us to the same conclusions without necessarily documenting all of the procedures used. Though there will be crucial terms that insinuate an obvious same-sex sexual connotation in the Lot passages, and therefore are worthy of scrutiny, there are probably other less crucial words that highlight mainly opposite-sex and/or non-sexual connotations. While we will look at the latter, the former will be accentuated.

There are only a handful of books one can refer to that centre on same-sex studies in relation to Islam; however, more works are coming to fruition on this subject. One such book is Sexuality and Eroticism Among Males in Moslem Societies, edited by Arno Schmitt and Jehoeda Sofer. This book is an anthology of essays which looks at same-sex experiences between males in specific Muslim countries.

In the anthology, Jeffrey Weeks notes that the term "homosexuality" is itself a nineteenth century term, the use of which, as understood today, does not preclude the existence of same-sex activity prior to this time. He states that:

homosexuality, like all forms of sexuality, has different meanings in different cultures--so much that it becomes difficult to find any common essence which links the different ways it is lived, apart that is, from the pure sexual activity itself.¹¹

Weeks goes on to emphasize that in Muslim countries, the concept of the "homosexual" is non-existent, unless, it has been adapted from the West. There is no such thing as "exclusive" homosexuality, nor is there a "gay way of life".¹²

¹¹Weeks, "Forward", Sexuality and Eroticism, A. Schmitt and J. Sofer, eds., pp. ix and x.

¹²In a more recent publication by Arno Schmitt, "Some Reflections", Bio-Bibliography of Male-Male Sexuality and Eroticism in Muslim Societies, no. 1, p. 15, Schmitt repeats this idea, that in certain Muslim societies despite the presence of male-male sexuality "...there are no 'homosexuals' - there is no (indigenous) word for 'homosexuality' - the concept is completely unfamiliar".

In Muslim societies, since there is no concept of the "homosexual" as is understood in the contemporary Western world and, as such, "no gay way of life", the term "homosexuality", therefore, does not fully represent the practice of same-sex activity in these societies. This is even more so true in prior times. As a result, because contemporary Western attitudes of "homosexuality" bear little resemblance to the activities of Lot's people in the Qur'ānic rendition, it is with this in mind that we need to use the term "same-sex sexuality" instead of "homosexuality" in our study.¹³

Schmitt suggests that in general, the Arabic term *liwāt* from the root LWT, which is often thought to mean "homosexuality" is incorrect.¹⁴ Charles Pellat, equates the term *liwāt* to mean "sodomy" (with both men and women) noting that it appears to be related to a verb *lāta*, which he says, means "to attach oneself, to join oneself onto". The term *liwāt* appears in his words to be "a *maṣḍar* of *lāta* or *lāwata*, denominative [i.e., is derived from the noun or name] of Lūt, i.e., Lot".¹⁵ In other words, *lāta* and *lāwata* are both derived from the name Lūt.

The aim of our study will not be to ascertain the source of the Arabic term *liwāt*, which is a non-Qur'ānic term, even though *liwāt* may be linked to the doings/activities of Lot's people (*'amal qawm Lūt*) as has been suggested by those like Schmitt and Pellat. Our

¹³See also Wayne R. Dynes and Warren Johansson, "Homosexual (Term)", Encyclopedia of Homosexuality, Wayne R. Dynes, ed., 1, 555-556.

¹⁴Schmitt repeats this point in "Some Reflections", Bio-Bibliography, no. 16, p. 15, stating that, "There is no indigenous word for 'homosexuality'. *Liwāt* which is often translated as such, means something else. Although its quranic origin (derived from *Lūt*, who condemned the practice of 'his' people) would have allowed for the meaning 'sexual activity between men' the main meaning in classical Arabic actually is 'pedicatio', i.e. 'buggering'. Normally it refers to bugging of boys, but the concept/word includes bugging of men and women...." Likewise, James T. Monroe, "The Striptease That Was Blamed on Abū Bakr's Naughty Son: Was Father Being Shamed, or Was the Poet Having Fun? (Ibn Quzmān's Zajal No. 133)", Homoeeroticism in Classical Arabic Literature, J. W. Wright Jr., and E. K. Rowson, eds., p. 116 states that, "the term *liwāt* may cover some but not all homosexual or heterosexual activities, and that it cannot therefore be equated exclusively with homosexuality, for which there is no precise term in the Classical Arabic language".

¹⁵Pellat, "Liwāt", Sexuality and Eroticism, Schmitt and Sofer, eds., p. 151. In a note at the bottom of the page, Schmitt writes that Pellat's article also appears anonymously in its original form as "Liwāt", The Encyclopaedia of Islam, V, 776-779.

main focus will be to look at the Lot story in order to try and determine the use of certain words and to see how they have been applied elsewhere in the Qur'ān. In this way we shall better comprehend the Qur'ān's overall perception of the morality of same-sex sexuality.

According to Jehoeda Sofer, "Most Islāmic jurists parallel sodomy (*liwāʾ*) with fornication [*zinā*], albeit often with a different punishment".¹⁶ In our analysis, it will be relevant to determine how same-sex sexuality in the Qur'ān does indeed compare with other opposite-sex sexual acts like fornication and adultery as well with non-sexual acts.

Maarten Schild suggests that in the Qur'ān, in addition to the Lot passages, verse 19 of *sūrah* (chapter) 4 is a condemnation of "homosexual behaviour".¹⁷ In trying to determine the moral stance of same-sex sexuality in a scriptural and/or textual study such as the Qur'ān, even though passages like Qur'ān 4/19 allude to a possible same-sex innuendo, majority of the interpretations of same-sex indiscretions are to be found essentially in the Lot passages of the Qur'ān.¹⁸

The questions which we posed earlier cannot be answered by simply turning to a book that already exists. In referring to works undertaken by Izutsu, Al-Shamma and Schmitt which have contributed greatly to our own study, there are many questions that remain unanswered and which we need to tackle in our own study. What needs to be done now is to build upon these works.

Our first step is to turn to the Lot narrative in the Qur'ān in order to determine which specific roots to analyze. In doing so not only will we acquire a better understanding of the story itself but will be able to ascertain which specific terms need to be studied elsewhere in the Qur'ān as well. This is necessary if we are to try and understand better the Qur'ān's overall perception of the morality of same-sex sexuality.

¹⁶Sofer, "Sodomy in the Law of Muslim States", *Sexuality and Eroticism*, Schmitt and Sofer, eds., p. 132.

¹⁷Schild, "Islam", *Sexuality and Eroticism*, Schmitt and Sofer, eds., p. 181.

¹⁸Q.4/19 shall be dealt with in the FHS section.

CHAPTER TWO THE QUR'ĀNIC LOT

Of the one hundred and fourteen *sūrahs* in the Qur'ān, there are passages in fourteen *sūrahs* that make reference to Lot. They are Qur'ān 6/85-87, 7/78-82, 11/73 and 11/79-84, 15/58-77, 21/70-71 and 21/74-75, 22/43-44, 26/160-176, 27/55-59, 29/25 and 29/27-34, 37/133-138, 38/11-14, 50/12-13, 54/33-40 and 66/10. The last passage, Q.66/10, refers to "Lot's wife" rather than to Lot himself.

Many of the prophet stories in the Qur'ān are told in a similar way.¹ Like other prophets, Lot is commissioned, he attempts to warn the people, he is rejected, those who reject his message are punished, and the prophet and his faithful are saved. Whether same-sex activity is the sole cause of this destruction remains to be seen. In Qur'ān 7/78-82, "The Battlements" (*A'rāf*):

¹As shall be seen in the SRF section, while passages like Q.51/32-37 possibly refer to Lot, he is not directly mentioned. Even though Q.51/32-37 is similar especially to verses 58-60 of the Lot *sūrah* 15, this is an example of how in the Qur'ān, on one level the stories of the prophets are indistinguishable from one another. Also see prophet stories like that of Hūd (e.g., Q.7/63-71, 11/52-63 and 26/123-140) who is sent to the people of 'Ād who disbelieve in his message and are destroyed, Sālih (e.g., Q.7/72-77, 11/64-71, 26/141-159 and 27/46-54) who is sent to his own people of Thamūd who also disobey him and are destroyed, Shu'ayb (e.g., Q.7/83-91, 11/85-98 and 29/35-36) who is sent to the people of Midian who like other disbelievers are destroyed, Noah (e.g., Q.7/58-62, 11/27-51 and 26/105-120) who is sent to his people who disbelieve and are drowned, whereas he and other believers are saved, Abraham (e.g., Q.21/52-73 and 29/15-26) whose rejection by his people make them "losers" (as in Q.21/70) and Moses (e.g., Q.7/101-170, 11/99-101 and 26/9-68) who is rejected by those like Pharaoh who suffers for his disbelief. In referring to these and other stories, W. Montgomery Watt, "Stories of punishment; al-mathāmī", Bell's Introduction to the Qur'ān, pp. 127-135, writes that stories of Hūd, Sālih and Shu'ayb are among those that belong to "Arabian tradition" and stories about Noah, Abraham, Moses as well as Lot he states on p. 131, with some differences are often, "parallel to Biblical stories". Watt also states on p. 133 that, "At certain points the details of the stories appear to be adapted to the experiences of Muḥammad and his followers. The stories were presumably already familiar to the Muslims, and the main points are told briefly. In many suras the stories are then filled out by accounts, varying from version to version (but often similar in the same sura), of what was said by the messenger and by his opponents. In these accounts there are parallels to what is elsewhere set down as having been said by Muḥammad and his Meccan opponents. There is thus some justification for thinking that other details in the stories may reflect what was happening to Muḥammad...." Watt further notes on p. 135, that the general scheme of the Qur'ānic stories are basically the same, i.e., a messenger is sent to a people, they reject his message, whereby, the people are punished for their disbelief.

And Lot, when he said to his people, 'What, do you commit indecency [*fāḥishah*] as never any being in all the world committed before you? See, you approach men lustfully [*shahwah*] instead of women; no, you are a people that do exceed [*musrifūn*].' And the only answer of his people was that they said, 'Expel them from your city; surely they are folk that keep themselves clean [*tāhir*]'! So We delivered him and his family, except his wife; she was of those who tarried [*ghābirūn*]. And We rained down upon them a rain; so behold thou, how was the end of the sinners [*mujrimīn*]!

When Lot reproaches his own people for committing "indecency" (*fāḥishah*), for approaching other men "lustfully" (*shahwah*) instead of going to women, for being among "those who exceed" (*musrifūn*), his concerns are rejected. "His people" respond by threatening to expel him from the city for being "clean" (*tāhir*). Those who reject Lot are destroyed by a rain for being "sinners" (*mujrimīn*) whereas the prophet and his family, except for his wife who was among those that "tarried" (*ghābirūn*), are delivered to safety.

In this narrative as well as in the rest of the Qur'ān, in order to obtain the Qur'ān's moral perception of same-sex sexuality, there are words from specific roots which are essential to analyze. In order to obtain some sense of the abominations in question, although all these highlighted terms from their respective roots FḤSH, SHHY, SRF, THR, JRM and GHBR, require an in-depth analysis, the word "lustfully" (*shahwah*) from the root SHHY, seems to suggest same-sex content. At this point, however, it is unclear what the other words imply, especially, since an analysis also needs to be carried out in the rest of the Qur'ān. Apart from this Lot passage, there are other similar passages. For example in Qur'ān 27/55-59, "The Ant" (*Naml*):

And Lot, when he said to his people, 'What, do you commit indecency [*fāḥishah*] with your eyes open? What, do you approach men lustfully [*shahwah*] instead of women? No, you are a people who are ignorant [*tajhalūna*].' And the only answer of his people was that they said, 'Expel the folk of Lot from your city; they are men that keep themselves clean [*tāhir*]'! So We delivered him and his family, except his wife; We decreed she should be among the tarried [*ghābirūn*].

And We rained on them a rain; and the rain of them that are warned, is indeed evil [sā'].

Here too, Lot rebukes "his people" whom he calls "ignorant" (*jāhil*) for committing "indecentcy" (*fāhishah*) and for approaching other men "lustfully" (*shahwah*), instead of going to women. Once again, Lot's people respond by threatening to expel him and his followers from the city for being "clean" (*tāhir*). The people are destroyed by an "evil" (*sā'*) rain whereas the prophet and his family, except for his wife who has been fated to be among those who "tarried" (*ghābirīn*), are delivered to safety. In this passage also, the word "lustfully" (*shahwah*) seems to have a same-sex implication while the intimation of the other words is unclear. In addition to the roots JHL and SW', the roots FHSH, SHHY, THR and GHBR, which already appear in Q.7/78-82, need to be analyzed further in this Lot passage, as well, in the rest of the Qur'ān. In another Lot passage, Qur'ān 26/160-176, "The Poets" (*Shu'arā'*):

The people of Lot cried lies to the Envoys when their brother Lot said to them, 'Will you not be godfearing? I am for you a faithful Messenger, so fear you God, and obey you me. I ask of you no wage for this; my wage falls only upon the Lord of all Being. What, do you come to male beings, leaving your wives that your Lord created for you? Nay, but you are a people of transgressors [*mu'tadūn*].' They said, 'If thou givest not over, Lot, thou shalt assuredly be one of the expelled.' He said, 'Truly I am a detester of what you do. My Lord, deliver me and my people from that they do.' So We delivered him and his people all together, save an old woman among those that tarried [*ghābirīn*]; then We destroyed the others, and We rained on them a rain; and evil [*sā'a*] is the rain of them that are warned. Surely in that is a sign, yet most of them are not believers. Surely thy Lord, He is the All-mighty, the All-compassionate.

In this passage Lot tells the people that he is a Messenger of God and that they should fear God. He chides them for going to men instead of going to their wives. He refers to them as transgressors (*mu'tadūn*). In return, his people threaten to expel him. Lot asks for God's

help upon which he and his devotees are delivered to safety as the others, along with an old woman who was among those who "tarried" (*ghābirīn*), are destroyed by a rain which is described as acting "evilily" (*sā'a*). In this passage there is no word used, in a sexual sense, to refer to the men who "come to male beings"; however, the practice of same-sex activity is implied, whereas the significance of the meanings of the other words remains unclear. Even though it will be necessary to look at the root 'DW, also necessary are the analysis of words from the roots GHBR and SW', which also appear in the previous Lot passages, Q.7/78-82 and/or 27/55-59 and elsewhere in the Qur'ān. In looking at the Lot passage, Qur'ān 29/27-34, "The Spider" (*'Ankabūt*):

And Lot, when he said to his people 'Surely you commit such indecency [*fāhishah*] as never any being in all the world committed before you. What, do you approach men, and cut the way, and commit in your assembly dishonour [*munkar*]?' But the only answer of his people was that they said, 'Then bring us the chastisement of God, if thou speakest truly.' He said, 'My Lord, help me against the people that work corruption [*muḥsidīn*].' And when Our messengers came to Abraham with the good tidings, they said, 'We shall destroy the people of this city, for its people are evildoers [*ẓālimūn*].' He said, 'Lot is in it.' They said, 'We know very well who is in it; assuredly We shall deliver him and his family, except his wife; she has become of those that tarry [*ghābirīn*].' When that Our messengers came to Lot he was troubled [*sī'a*] on their account and distressed for them; but they said, 'Fear not, neither sorrow, for surely we shall deliver thee and thy family, except thy wife; she has become of those that tarry [*ghābirīn*]. We shall send down upon the people of this city wrath out of heaven for their ungodliness [*fīsq*].' And indeed, We have left thereof a sign, a clear sign, unto a people who understand.

Here, Lot accuses "his people" of committing "indecency" (*fāhishah*), of approaching men and of cutting the way as well as of committing "dishonour" (*munkar*) in the assembly. In response, the people challenge Lot to bring God's chastisement upon them. Lot asks for help against "his people" whom he says are "working corruption" (*muḥsidīn*). The messengers who are sent, tell Abraham that they will destroy the "evildoers" (*ẓālimūn*),

delivering Lot and his family to safety, except for his wife who will be among those that "tarry" (*ghābirīn*). When the messengers approach Lot who is "troubled" (*sī'a*) for them, they reassure him and tell him to leave, again reiterating that his wife will be among those that "tarry" (*ghābirīn*). Lot's people are threatened with destruction because of their "ungodliness" [*fisq*].

In this passage why the people "approach men" is not clear. A look at the significance of the meanings of specific words in the Lot passages and in the rest of the Qur'ān may help clarify this uncertainty. Terms from the roots F_HSH, GHBR and SW' which have appeared in Q.7/78-82, 26/160-176 and/or 27/55-59, need to be analyzed together with terms from the roots NKR, FSD, ZLM and FSQ. In another Lot passage, Qur'ān 11/79-84, "Hood" (Hūd):

And when Our messengers came to Lot, he was troubled [*sī'a*] on their account and distressed for them, and he said, 'This is a fierce day.' And his people came to him, running towards him; and erstwhile they had been doing evil deeds [*sayyi'āt*]. He said, 'O my people, these are my daughters; they are cleaner [*aṭhar*] for you. So fear God, and do not degrade [*tukhzū*] me concerning my guests. What, is there not one man among you of a right mind?' They said, 'Thou knowest we have no right to thy daughters, and thou well knowest what we desire [*nurīdu*].' He said, 'O would that I had power against you, or might take refuge in a strong pillar!' They said, 'Lot, we are messengers of thy Lord. They shall not reach thee; so set forth, thou with thy family, in a watch of the night, and let not any of you turn round, excepting thy wife; surely she shall be smitten by that which smites them. Their promised time is the morning; is the morning not nigh?' So when Our command came, We turned it uppermost nethermost, and rained on it stones of baked clay, one on another, marked with thy Lord, and never far from the evildoers [*qālimūn*].

Lot feels "troubled" (*sī'a*) for the visitors. He offers his daughters as being "cleaner" (*aṭhar*) to "his people" who have been committing "evil deeds" (*sayyi'āt*) urging them with the words "do not degrade" (*lā tukhzū*) his guests, i.e., the visitors. In response, "his

people" tell Lot that he knows what it is "they desire" (*arāda*). The visitors interject and tell Lot that they are messengers, asking him to leave with his family. They warn that none of them should look back with the exception of his wife who will be smitten or stricken. The "evildoers" (*ẓālimūn*) are destroyed while Lot and his family are saved.

In this passage there is no reference made to the same-sex activity of the people; however, an offer of Lot's daughters is made. In order to understand this passage better, the meanings of all the terms highlighted need to be clarified in the Lot passages and in the rest of the Qur'ān. In particular, terms from roots like SW', THR and ZLM which occur also in Q.7/78-82, 26/160-176, 27/55-59 and/or 29/27-34, as well as those terms from the roots KHZY and RWD need to be analyzed. As for the Lot narrative, Qur'ān 54/33-40, "The Moon" (*Qamar*):

The people of Lot cried lies to the warnings. We loosed against them a squall of pebbles except the folk of Lot; We delivered them at the dawn--a blessing from Us; even so We recompense him who is thankful. He had warned them of Our assault, but they disputed the warnings. Even his guests they had solicited [*rāwada*] of him; so We obliterated their eyes, saying, 'Taste now My chastisement and My warnings!' In the morning early there came upon them a settled chastisement: 'Taste now My chastisement and My warnings!' Now We have made the Koran easy for Remembrance. Is there any that will remember?

In this account, Lot's people are accused of not heeding his warnings. As a result except for Lot and his followers, they are destroyed with "a squall of pebbles". Lot is recompensed with safety for being "thankful". The people are accused of wanting "to solicit" (*rāwada*) Lot's guests. As a result, their eyes are "obliterated" and they are chastised. Here, the only root that may imply same-sex content and which occurs as well in the Lot passage Q.11/79-84 and elsewhere in the Qur'ān, is RWD. In the Lot passage, Qur'ān 15/58-77, "El-Hijr" (*Hijr*):

He said, 'And what is your business, envoys?' They said, 'We have been sent unto a people of sinners [*mujrimūn*], excepting the folk of Lot; them we shall deliver all together,

excepting his wife--we have decreed, she shall surely be of those that tarry [*ghābirīn*].' So, when the envoys came to the folk of Lot, he said, 'Surely you are a people unknown [*munkarūn*] to me!' They said, 'Nay, but we have brought thee that concerning which they were doubting. We have come to thee with the truth, and assuredly we speak truly. So set forth, thou with thy family, in a watch of the night, and follow after the backs of them, and let not any one of you turn round; and depart unto the place you are commanded.' And We decreed for him that commandment, that the last remnant of those should be cut off in the morning. And the people of the city came rejoicing. He said, 'These are my guests; put me not to shame [*tafḍahū*], and fear God, and do not degrade [*tukhzū*] me.' They said, 'Have we not forbidden thee all beings?' He said, 'These are my daughters, if you would be doing.' By thy life, they wandered blindly in their dazzlement, and the Cry seized them at the sunrise, and We turned it uppermost nethermost and rained on it stones of baked clay. Surely in that are signs for such as mark; surely it is on a way yet remaining; surely in that is a sign for believers.

Upon being asked, the envoys tell Abraham that they have been sent to "sinners" (*mujrimūn*) and that "the folk of Lot" will be delivered, except for his wife who has been decreed to be among those who "tarry" (*ghābirīn*). Lot tells the messengers, when they come to him, that they are "unknown" (*munkarūn*) to him. He is told by the envoys to flee during the night and not to turn around. A confrontation takes place between the inhabitants of the city with whom Lot pleads, telling them (*lā tafḍahū*): "not to shame" and "do not degrade" (*lā tukhzū*) him. Here too he offers his daughters to the city folk who are ultimately destroyed with "stones of baked clay". Apart from the root FDH, terms from the roots JRM, GHBR, NKR and KHZY appear elsewhere in Q.7/78-82, 11/79-84, 26/160-176, 27/55-59 and/or 29/27-34.

In reference to the Lot passages, Qur'ān 6/85-87, "Cattle" (*An'ām*), 21/74-75, "The Prophets" (*Anbiyā*), 29/25 and 37/133-138, "The Rangers" (*Sāffāt*):

Q.6/85-87:

Zachariah and John, Jesus and Elias; each was of the righteous; Ishmael and Elisha, Jonah and Lot--each one We preferred above all beings; and of their fathers, and of their seed, and of their brethren; and We elected them, and We guided them to a straight path.

Q.21/74-75:

And Lot--to him We gave judgement and knowledge; and we delivered him from the city that had been doing deeds of corruption [*khābā 'ith*]; they were an evil [*saw*] people, truly ungodly [*fāsiqūn*]; and We admitted him into Our mercy; he was of the righteous.

Q.29/25:

But Lot believed him; and he said, 'I will flee to my Lord; He is the All-mighty, the All-wise.'

Q.37/133-138:

Lot too was one of the Envoys; when We delivered him and his people all together, save an old woman among those that tarried [*ghābirūn*]; then We destroyed the others, and you pass by them in the morning and in the night; will you not understand?

In these four accounts, like other chosen believers e.g., Zachariah, John, Jesus, Elias, Ishmael, Elisha and Jonah, Lot is referred to as being "righteous" and as one of the elected. He is depicted to be a believer who in Q.21/74 is given "judgement and knowledge", is referred to as "one of the Envoys" in Q.37/133 and together with "his people" is delivered to safety in Q.21/74, "from the city that had been doing deeds of corruption [*khābā 'ith*]". Reference is also made to the people who are described as "evil" (*saw*) and "of the ungodly" (*fāsiqūn*) and who together with an old woman among those who "tarried" (*ghābirūn*) are destroyed.

Apart from the root KHBTH, the roots SW', FSQ and GHBR appear elsewhere in the already cited passages Q.7/78-82, 11/79-84, 15/58-77, 26/160-176, 27/55-59 and/or 29/27-34. Though these passages suggest no obvious sexual content, an analysis of these roots in the Lot passages and in the rest of the Qur'ān is necessary to help determine the

abominations of those who are destroyed. In the remaining six Lot references, Qur'ān 11/73, 21/70-71, 22/43-44, "The Pilgrimage" (*Hajj*), 38/11-14, "Sad" (*Ṣād*), 50/12-13, "Qaf" (*Qāf*) and 66/10, "The Forbidding" (*Tahrīm*):

Q.11/73:

And when he saw their hands not reaching towards it, he was suspicious of them and conceived a fear of them. They said, 'Fear not; we have been sent to the people of Lot.'

Q.21/70-71:

They desired to outwit him; so We made them the worse losers, and We delivered him, and Lot, unto the land that We had blessed for all beings.

Q.22/43-44:

If they cry lies to thee, so too before them the people of Noah cried lies, and Ad and Thamood, and the people of Abraham, the people of Lot, and the men of Midian; to Moses also they cried lies. And I respited the unbelievers, then I seized them; and how was My horror [*nakīrī*]! How many a city We have destroyed in its evildoing [*ẓālimah*], and now it is fallen down upon its turrets! How many a ruined well, a tall palace!

Q.38/11-14:

Cried lies before them the people of Noah, and Ad, and Pharaoh, he of the tent-pegs, and Thamood, and the people of Lot, and the men of the Thicket--those were the parties; not one, that cried not lies to the Messengers, so My retribution was just. These are only awaiting for a single Cry, to which there is no delay.

Q.50/12-13:

Cried lies before them the people of Noah and the men of Er-Rass, and Thamood, and Ad and Pharaoh, the brothers of Lot, the men of the Thicket, the people of Tubba'. Every one cried lies to the Messengers, and My threat came true.

Q.66/10:

God has struck a similitude for the unbelievers--the wife of Noah, and the wife of Lot; for they were under two of Our righteous servants, but they betrayed them, so they availed

**them nothing whatsoever against God; so it was said,
'Enter, you two, the Fire with those who enter.'**

In these passages, the envoys tell Abraham of their mission with reference to Lot's people. Abraham like Lot is also delivered to safety, while those unbelievers ("the worse losers" as in Q.21/70) like Lot's people, Noah's people, Sālih's people (i.e., people of Thamūd), Abraham's people, the people of 'Ād, the people of Tubba', the men of Midian, the men of the Thicket, the men of Al-Rass and the likes of Pharaoh, who have all "cried lies" to the Messengers are destroyed in Q.22/44, because of God's "horror" (*nakīrī*) at their "evildoing" (*ẓālimah*). Likewise, also put into "Fire" is Lot's wife who, like Noah's wife, betrayed her husband. None of these passages suggest sexual content. However, passages like Q.66/10 are especially useful in providing examples of those like Lot's wife, who, are destroyed for non-sexual abominations. In keeping in mind the rest of the Qur'ān as well, the only roots that need be analyzed from these references are NKR and ZLM which also occur in the cited Lot passages Q.11/79-84, 15/58-77 and/or 29/27-34.

In summary, the Qur'ān depicts Lot as being a believer, and along with others like Zachariah, John, Jesus, Elias, Ishmael, Elisha and Jonah is "righteous". He is portrayed as having been "elected", as having been given "judgement and knowledge" and as being "one of the Envoys". He is depicted as telling his people that he is a "faithful Messenger" and that they should obey him and fear God. He accuses "his people" of committing "indecentry" (*fāhishah*), of approaching other men "lustfully [*shahwah*]" instead of women", of going to "male beings" instead of to their wives, of approaching men and cutting the way,² of being among "those who exceed" (*musrifūn*), of being "transgressors" (*mu'tadūn*), of being "ignorant" (*jāhil*), and of committing "dishonour" (*munkar*) in the assembly, the meaning of which is unclear.

"His people", most of whom are not believers, threaten to expel Lot from the city taunting him about being "clean" (*tāhir*), challenging him to bring upon them God's chastisement. Lot, asks God to deliver him and his people or to help him "against the

²The use of "cutting the way" shall be briefly examined in Q.29/27 in the FHS section.

people that work corruption [*muḥsidīn*]" . The Messengers go to Abraham (who at first is fearful of them but is then reassured by the messengers) on their way to Lot. They tell Abraham of their mission to destroy the "sinners" (*mujrimīn*) and the "evildoers" (*ẓālimūn*). They also tell him that though they will deliver Lot and his family to safety, his wife has been decreed to be among those who "tarried" (*ghābirūn*).

When the envoys go to Lot, who fails to recognize them, he tells them that they are "unknown" (*munkarūn*) to him. They assure him and tell him that they have come with the truth. Lot is "troubled" (*sī'a*) on their account. "His people" who have "been doing evil deeds [*sayyi'āt*]" come to him and he tells them that his daughters are "cleaner" (*aṭhar*) for them. He tells them to fear God as well as "do not degrade" (*lā tukhẓū*) and (*lā tafḍahū*): "not to shame" him. The men reject Lot's offer of his daughters, telling him that he knows what it is "they desire" (*arāda*).

Lot becomes frustrated and the messengers tell him who they are and ask him not to be fearful. They tell him that they will deliver him and his family to safety, asking that no one "turn round" except for his wife who will be "smitten" or will be among those who "tarry" (*ghābirūn*). Together with his family Lot is delivered to safety (to a "land" that God has blessed). The fate of Lot's wife is repeated as she is decreed to be among those who "tarried" (*ghābirūn*). In two cases, it is an "old woman" who was among those who "tarried" (*ghābirūn*). Lot's wife is compared to Noah's wife, both of whom are referred to as "unbelievers", because they betrayed the "righteous servants", i.e., Lot and Noah. As a result, they are both punished by being out into the "Fire". Lot's own deliverance to safety is a blessing from God, due to Lot's thankfulness.

The "sinners" (*mujrimūn*) or "evildoers" (*ẓālimūn*), who are "evil" (*saw'*), "of the ungodly" (*fāsiqūn*) and who "had been doing deeds of corruption [*khābā'ith*]", who had "cried lies" like Lot's people, Noah's people, Ṣāliḥ's people (i.e., people of Thamūd), Abraham's people, the people of 'Ād, the people of Tubba', the men of Midian, the men of the Thicket, the men of Al-Rass and the likes of Pharaoh, who had wanted "to solicit" (*rāwada*) Lot's guests, i.e., the messengers, are made "the worse losers".

The "unbelievers" due to God's "horror" (*nakīrī*) are "respited" and destroyed for

their "evildoing" (*ẓālimah*) with "stones of baked clay", by a rain described as "evil" (*ṣūr*) or acting "evilly" (*sā'ā*), by a "wrath out of heaven for their ungodliness [*fīsq*]", and/or by a "squall of pebbles" as a clear sign for those "who understand", i.e., the believers.

In contrast to the Hebrew Bible, Sodom and Gomorrah are not specifically referred to in the Qur'ān. They may be described as the "subverted"³ (*al-mu'tafika* or in plural *al-mu'tafikāt* from the root 'FK) cities, "...a transposition of the Hebrew word *mahpeka* ("overturning")..."⁴ In the Qur'ān, instead of the Biblical idiom "Sodom and Gomorrah" the term, "people of Lot" (*qawm Lūt*) or as seen "his people" is used to refer to those who are destroyed. Lot is greatly honoured in the Qur'ān as being one of the prophets of the Hebrew Bible. Furthermore, nowhere in the Qur'ānic rendition does Lot's wife explicitly turn into a pillar of salt.⁵ Instead, she is simply destroyed. In addition, there is no mention in the Qur'ān of a sexual relationship between Lot and his daughters.⁶

The story of Lot in the Qur'ān is a typical punishment story. He is sent to "his people" and rebukes them for various things including approaching men instead of women, i.e., same-sex activity, as well as of committing "indecent", of being among those who "exceed", of being "transgressors" of being "ignorant", of committing "dishonour" in the assembly, of having "cried lies", etc. Lot's wife is destroyed along with the other "unbelievers" because of her betrayal of Lot. All who perish do so for various misdeeds not only for same-sex practices.

Thus far it is difficult to determine the nature of the sins of those who were

³For example, see Qur'ān 9/71, 53/55 and 69/9 which Watt, "Stories of punishment", *Bell's Introduction*, p. 130 states, "are probably to be identified with the cities of the Plain, Sodom and Gomorrah, since they seem to stand in place of the people of Lot".

⁴B. Heller-[G. Vajda], "Lūt", *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, V, 832. See also Reuven Firestone, *Journeys in Holy Lands: The Evolution of the Abraham-Ishmael Legends in Islamic Exegesis*, no. 1 and 4, p. 199 and Watt, "Stories of punishment", *Bell's Introduction*, p. 130.

⁵Although this aspect became well known in later tradition.

⁶Sexual indiscretions of the prophets of the Bible are not present in the Qur'ān; the omission of the Biblical narration of Lot's sexual encounter with his daughters is an example of this.

destroyed as there seem to be various misdeeds involved. Even though numerous terms are referred to, in most cases a specific understanding of the types of sins in question still remains vague, especially in reference to the rest of the Qur'ān. When the people oppose Lot and threaten to expel him, he is delivered to safety together with some of his followers, while his enemies are destroyed. The Lot story within the Qur'ān represents a particular type of paradigm of prophet stories suggesting that on many levels they are all the same. Each person has their sin/s but it is the rejection of the prophet that becomes the ultimate sin.

If we are to succeed in our quest to obtain overall the Qur'ān's moral perception of same-sex sexuality by looking at how the Lot story is depicted in the Qur'ān, there appear to be seventeen major roots that are in need of further analysis. Most of the terms under these roots seem to have an ethical or moral connotation. As already stated in chapter one, such terms are those which describe, evaluate or qualify specific human actions and which involve what is believed to be God's judgement. Apart from looking at these terms as they appear in the Lot story, an analysis of their use elsewhere in the Qur'ān will also be beneficial. The people who are destroyed perish for certain practices and analyzing the seventeen roots will help to determine some of the abominations that ultimately alienated Lot's people from God. The seventeen roots that need to be analyzed are, in alphabetical order: 'DW, FDH, FHSH, FSD, FSQ, GHBR, JHL, JRM, KHBTH, KHZY, NKR, RWD, SHHY, SRF, SW', THR and ZLM.

Table 1.2

Qur'ān : verses : Roots :-	7 78-82	11 79-84	15 58-77	21 74-75	22 43-44	26 160-176	27 55-59	29 27-34	37 133-138	54 33-40
DW						X				
FDH			X							
FHSH	X						X	X		
FSD								X		
FSQ				X				X		
GHBR	X		X			X	X	X	X	
JHL							X			
JRM	X		X							
KHBTH				X						
KHZY		X	X							
NKR			X		X			X		
RWD		X								X
SHHY	X						X			
SRF	X									
SW		X		X		X	X	X		
THR	X	X					X			
ZLM		X			X			X		

CHAPTER THREE PRIMARY ROOTS

We have established that there are seventeen major roots in ten of the fourteen Lot passages of the Qur'ān that need to be analyzed. If we are to understand how the Qur'ān perceives same-sex sexuality, terms from these roots need to be studied as they appear in both the Lot *sūrahs* and elsewhere in the Qur'ān. To reiterate what has already been said in the introduction, while we are interested in seeing if there are specific words in the Qur'ān that are uniquely attached to same-sex sexual practices, this is not our main concern. Our goal is to discover overall the Qur'ān's moral perception of same-sex sexuality.

For each of the Arabic terms from the seventeen roots that we shall analyze, after translating the word into English (i.e., offering, in Izutsu's words, a "word-word" definition), that translation has to be transformed into a "word-thing" definition. This needs to be done by looking at how this word occurs in other passages both within the Lot *sūrahs* and in the rest of the Qur'ān. In studying the seventeen roots, we need to pay specific attention to those moral terms that provide, first, same-sex content and, next, an opposite-sex meaning. After analyzing those words that suggest sexual content, we need to look at the remaining words that suggest non-sexual meanings. We then need to determine the relationship between these meanings and to look at their differences as well as their similarities. Our aim is to try to determine the common element in each of these roots that allows particular terms from these roots to be connected to specific groups of activities.

In the interests of determining the moral qualification of terms that imply strong same-sex sexual content within the Qur'ān, we need first to analyze those moral words that present an obvious sexual connotation. For this purpose, from the seventeen roots, as seen in the Lot *sūrahs*, the root SHHY has implications that carry an obvious same-sex sexual overtone and, as such, shall be studied first in this chapter, followed by the roots FHSH, JHL, SRF and THR. This will be followed by the remaining terms from the other twelve roots (in chapter four), again primarily by focusing on those roots that have terms which present strong sexual innuendos, with precedence being given to same-sex sexual content.

SHHY

The moral term *shahwah* (pl. *shahawāt*) and related terms, including the eighth verbal form (*ishtahā*) from the root SHHY, can, according to the context, be translated to mean "to lust" or "to desire". Terms from this root, as has been seen, are present in reference to Lot only in Qur'ān 7/78-82 and 27/55-59. Words from the root SHHY can be found in eleven other passages of the Qur'ān.

In both Q.7/79 and 27/56, Lot reprimands those men who approach other men **lustfully [*shahwah*] instead of women**. The significance of the word "lustfully" indicates here that the approach is of a same-sex nature as it is other men instead of women who are approached "lustfully" by the men. However, it would seem that only these two passages associate "lustfully" exclusively to partaking in same-sex activity.

The remaining eleven passages indicate other meanings, only some of which contain sexual content. For example, Q.19/60-61 states, **Then there succeeded after them a succession who wasted the prayer, and followed lusts [*shahawāt*]; so they shall encounter error save him who repents, and believes, and does a righteous deed; those--they shall enter Paradise, and they shall not be wronged [*yuzlamūna*] anything**. Verses 58-59 of the same *sūrah* mention the descendants of Adam, Abraham and Israel, so even though Lot is not mentioned directly, there is nonetheless a connection made to Lot by association. It is possible, therefore, that even though Q.19/60 is not surrounded by verses that have explicit sexual content, same-sex sexual desire could nonetheless qualify as an example of following one's own "lusts". However, it need not be the only example of the deeds of those who waste prayer and pursue their "lusts". There still remains the possibility that in this passage, following opposite-sex as well as non-sexual "lusts" (*shahawāt*) also, cause one to waste prayer.

Q.4/32, **God desires [*yurīdu*] to turn towards you, but those who follow their lusts [*shahawāt*] desire [*yurīdu*] that you should swerve away mightily. God desires [*yurīdu*] to lighten things for you, for man was created weak [*da'īf*]**, refers to those who opt to follow their own "lusts" and who, in doing so, distance themselves from God.

It is possible to suggest that this verse does not present obvious sexual content. However, verse 30 of the same *sūrah*, as we shall see in the FHSH section, mentions those women who commit "indecent" (*fāḥishah*) when in wedlock. Also mentioned is the term "fornication" (*ʿanat*).¹ Furthermore in verse 32 of this *sūrah* reference is made to man who was created "weak" possibly suggesting man's inability to refrain from giving into sexual - same-sex and/or opposite-sex - "lusts".

In addition to sexual "lusts", mention is made in verse 33 of *sūrah* 4, of consuming goods in vanity, here referring to a non-sexual example of those who follow their "lusts" and emphasizing, once again, man's weak nature. This suggests that there are both sexual - same-sex and/or opposite-sex - as well as non-sexual examples relevant to the use of "lusts" in this passage. Partaking in activities that are self-indulgent is part of man's "weak" disposition, causing one to turn away from God.

In Q.3/12-13, **Decked out fair to men is the love of lusts [*shahawāt*]-women, children, heaped-up heaps of gold and silver, horses of mark, cattle and tillage. That is the enjoyment of the present life; but God--with Him is the fairest resort. Say: 'Shall I tell you of a better than that?' For those that are godfearing, with their Lord are gardens underneath, which rivers flow, therein dwelling forever, and spouses purified [*muṭahharah*], and God's good pleasure. And God sees his servants,** "lusts" is used in reference mostly to material possessions that are in turn contrasted to heavenly rewards. However, the fact that women are mentioned first on this list of earthly "lusts" suggests that aside from the "lusts" for more wealth in the form of children, gold, silver, horses, cattle and land, there are also opposite-sex "lusts". While these "lusts" are compared to the enjoyments of earthly life, those who do not get caught up in self-indulgence at the expense of all else (and who are therefore godfearing), for them there awaits far greater pleasures in paradise.

Q.34/53 refers to disbelievers who have gone astray and who, because of their disbelief, will never reap the rewards of the believers since **a barrier is set between them**

¹The word *ʿanat* in Q.4/30 is often translated as "sin", in Q.2/219 as "harassed" and in Q.3/114, 9/129 and 49/7 as "suffer" or "suffering".

and that they desire [*yashtahūna*], as was done with the likes of them aforetime; they were in doubt disquieting. Here "desire" reflects the wants of the unbelievers, i.e., specifically "desire" for paradise, from which they are distanced because of their disbelief.

Eschatological rewards are connected to six other passages, Q.21/102, 41/31, 43/71, 52/22, 56/21 and 77/42. For example, in Q.52/22 and 56/21 the "desire" (*yashtahūna*) is linked to rewards in paradise for being godfearing and for believing. For example in verses 20-24 of *sūrah* 52, **Reclining upon couches ranged in rows; and We shall espouse them to wide-eyed houris [*hūr*]. And those who believed, and their seed followed them in belief, We shall join their seed with them, and We shall not defraud them of aught of their work; every man shall be pledged for what he earned. And We shall succour them with fruits and flesh such as they desire [*yashtahūna*], while they pass therein a cup one to another wherein is no idle talk, no cause of sin, and there go round them youths [*ghilmān*], their own, as if they were hidden pearls [*lu'lu' makhnūn*],** those in paradise, i.e., believers, "such as they desire", apart from rewards of marriage, will be granted rewards like abundant fruits and food (**And We shall succour them with fruits and flesh such as they desire**).

References in verse 24 of *sūrah* 52 made to youths in paradise, "and there go round them youths, their own, as if they were hidden pearls", or to "immortal youths [*wildān*]" in Q.56/17, are probably not sexual references.² What is particularly relevant here is that

²Marriage to "wide-eyed houris" (*hūr*) and the mention of "youths" (*ghilmān* or *wildān*) may present sensual ideas, but only figuratively. The comparison of these heavenly creatures is made without actually identifying them with those beings who persevere in earthly pleasures. Instead, the houris are free from impurities and therefore serve to fulfil functions that are dissimilar to tainted earthly functions. See A. J. Wensinck, "Hūr", *First Encyclopaedia of Islam* 1913-1936, III, 337 and A. J. Wensinck-[Ch. Pellat], "Hūr", *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, III, 581-582. In the latter article on p. 582, wives who enter paradise, as in Q.43/70, are said to be much superior to the houris. Furthermore, the *ghulām*'s function both on earth and in heaven are paralleled not to sexual services, but rather, as an extension of a servant, sometimes even a slave servant or bodyguard. See D. Sourdel, "Ghulām", *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, II, 1079-1081. There are other figurative uses of the types of rewards in paradise. For example, see Q.43/71 where "platters of gold, and cups" are the rewards of paradise. It is doubtful that such rewards are to be understood literally. According to Suzanne Pinckney Stetkevych, "Intoxication and Immortality: Wine and Associated Imagery in al-Ma'arri's Garden", *Homoeeroticism*, Wright Jr., and Rowson, eds., pp. 210-232., the "immortal youths" (*wildān mukhalladīn*) are not only immortal but also bestow immortality on

Qur'ānic passages like 52/22 are specific in limiting "desire" (*yashṭahūna*) to "fruits and flesh" in paradise. In Q.56/18-19 reference is also made to **goblets, and ewers, and a cup from a spring (no brows throbbing, no intoxication)**.³ However, the "desire" in Q.56/21 is related once again to "flesh" here, specifically that of "fowl".

Lastly, in verses 59-60 of *sūrah* 16, **And they assign to God daughters; glory be to Him!--and they have their desire [*yashṭahūna*]; and when any of them is given the good tidings of a girl, his face is darkened and he chokes inwardly, as he hides from the people because of the evil of the good tidings that have been given unto him, whether he shall preserve it in humiliation, or trample it into the dust. Ah, evil is that they judge!**, mention is made to the acceptance of daughters, "...referring to the notorious dislike of the pre-Islamic Arabs for female children, that went often to the length of burying alive female babies...".⁴ No sexual content as such can be rendered to this passage, which, marks the era prior to Islam (and which in a secondary sense, is understood as the ignorance of God [(pagandom)] or the state of the *Jāhilīyah*).

Terms belonging to the root SHHY as seen in these thirteen Qur'ānic passages are

others. She also suggests on pp. 223-224, that even though the sexual role of these youths in the Qur'ān is not explicit, "it is nonetheless inherent in the archetype, and thus eventually and inevitably generated by that archetype". Also see her comments about the houris on pp. 226-227.

³Whereas one could draw parallels between earthly wine and heavenly wine, they are clearly different. The former, among other things, intoxicates, whilst the latter does not inebriate. This heavenly drink apart from not intoxicating, unlike earthly wine, also does not cause headaches or have other negative effects. See Jane D. McAuliffe, "The Wines of Earth and Paradise: Qur'ānic Proscriptions and Promises", in *Logos Islamikos: Studia Islamica in honorem Georgii Michaelis Wickens*, pp. 159-174. Stetkevych, "Intoxication and Immortality", *Homoeotericism*, Wright Jr., and Rowson, eds., suggests on p. 214, that the proscriptions on wine in Qur'ānic passages, associates wine to "pagan cultic practices". She also states on p. 227, "The drinking scene then...in the Qur'ānic depictions of Paradise, is not descriptive but iconic, consisting of the archetypal symbols of eternal youth and life everlasting".

⁴Izutsu, *Ethico-Religious Concepts*, p. 232. In referring to Q.16/59, Al-Shamma, *The Ethical System*, notes on p. 29 that "desire" often "...implies a longing for a wrong object [i.e., sons over daughters]. Thus the object of desire, and not desire itself, is what is condemned". See also pp. 23-25, *sūrah* 81/8-9, **when the buried infant shall be asked of what sin she was slain** (which refers to the practice of killing female infants) and as well, references like Q.17/42 and 43/15-16.

clearly not limited to same-sex activities. Even though two passages (Q.7/79 and 27/56) directly connect "lustfully" (*shahwah*) to the same-sex activities of Lot's people, the use of additional words from the same root support other meanings as well.

Q.4/32 makes reference to man's "weak" (*da'if*) disposition when it comes to giving in to "lusts" (*shahawāt*), which, apart from including same-sex or opposite-sex desires, also suggests non-sexual desires, like the consumption of goods in vanity in verse 33. Thus, those in following such "lusts" swerve away from God. Similarly in Q.19/60, those who waste prayer and follow their "lusts" could suggest the likes of those who partake in same-sex, opposite-sex and non-sexual activities.

In Q.3/12, aside from referring to the "love of lusts" with reference to women, the non-sexual "lusts" (*shahawāt*) for more wealth in the form of children, gold, silver, horses, cattle and land, are referred to as being incomparable to the wealthy pleasures of paradise. One could suggest that, often, the pleasures of paradise are foregone for material pleasures that are temporary. In Q.34/53, disbelievers have a non-sexual "desire" for paradise, from which they are distanced because of their disbelief. In Q.21/102, 41/31, 43/71, 52/22, 56/21 and 77/42 "desire" is linked to the pleasures of paradise like fruits and flesh (e.g., fowl), reiterating the benefit of being one of those who enter paradise. Lastly, Q.16/59, refers to the "desire" for sons over daughters and which, like all other impure desires, causes one to be alienated from God.

The use of words from the root SHHY in the Qur'ān clearly do not morally prioritize same-sex sins over opposite sex and/or non-sexual sins. Instead, same-sex sexuality is put on an ethical plane with all sorts of other misdeeds. Same-sex sexuality is not the ultimate abomination; rather, it is one of many abominations that cause people to be alienated from God. There is an emphasis on the sensual nature of the use of "lustfully" in the two Lot passages and elsewhere in the Qur'ān; nonetheless, passages that refer to the "desires" of fruits and flesh in paradise or even more obviously, the passage that refers to the "desire" for male infants over female infants, do not emphasize the sensual aspect of words from the root SHHY.

Words from the root SHHY are positive and negative words which are qualified

morally in the Qur'ān as having both positive and negative dispositions. While certain terms as seen refer to temporal temptations that are often too hard to resist, other terms refer to the "desires" of paradise which are not only encouraged, but which in fact bring one closer to God. What seems to intertwine all the thirteen uses of words from the root SHHY is that the terms are indicative of a contradiction, that things that are forbidden are also sacred.

FĤSH

The term *fāḥishah* (pl. *fawāḥish*) from the root FĤSH, can, according to the context, be translated to mean "to be indecent", "to be abominable" or "to be scandalous". Words from this root occur in three Lot passages, Qur'ān 7/78-82, 27/55-59 and 29/27-34 quoted earlier. Terms from the root FĤSH can be found an additional twenty-one times in the Qur'ān.

The term "indecent" (*fāḥishah*) in Q.7/78-79 and 27/55-56 is used by Lot to reprimand the men for approaching other men "lustfully [*shahwah*] instead of women". The meaning of "indecent" in its given sense is brought into perspective mainly because of the clarity of the meaning of "lustfully"; the former suggests an insinuated meaning which is strengthened largely by the latter's more obvious same-sex meaning.⁵

The term "indecent" (*fāḥishah*) in Q.29/27 is used in reference to an indiscretion connected to those who "approach men, and cut the way"⁶ and who also commit "dishonour" (*munkar*) in the assembly. While the term "dishonour" will be studied later, no mention is made in Q.29/27 of the term "lustfully" (*shahwah*) in relation to the term "indecent", as is the case in Q.7/78-79 and 27/55-56. However, though Q.29/27 is not

⁵See also Izutsu, *Ethico-Religious Concepts*, who, on pp. 233-234 in referring to Q.7/78, writes that "Sodomy is also very frequently called *fāḥishah*". He also states on p. 173 that "...sodomy is most usually described as *fāḥishah* which is the very word for an 'abominable thing'".

⁶In referring to Q.29/27-29, Izutsu, *Ethico-Religious Concepts*, p. 212, suggests that "cut the way" refers to "robbing wayfarers". In reference to verse 28 of the same *sūrah*, Richard Bell, *A Commentary on the Qur'ān*, Vol. II. p. 62 states that "qata'a s-sabīl is doubtful in meaning; ordinarily it would mean 'commit highway robbery'. But there is no evidence that the people of Lot were accused of that. It must mean 'cut off the way of offspring' or 'bar the (ordinary) way'".

explicit in referring to the men in particular approaching other men sexually, this possibility cannot be excluded. After all, in both Lot passages Q.7/78-79 and 27/55-56, it is men who "approach men lustfully".

Apart from the strong same-sex innuendos that are present in Q.7/78, 27/55 and possibly 29/27, out of the other twenty-one uses of terms from the root F_HSH, the conceivable existence of same-sex and/or opposite-sex content occurs seven times in Q.4/19, 4/23, 4/30, twice in 7/27, 33/30 and 65/1. In Q.4/19, **Such of your women as commit indecency [*fāhishah*], call four of you to witness against them; and if they witness, then detain them in their houses until death takes them or God appoints for them a way**, reference is made to women committing "indecency" and, although there is no clear indication of what exactly this "indecency" is, since four witnesses are also mentioned in this passage, it could suggest some form of sexual indiscretion like adultery and/or fornication (*zinā*),⁷ or even quite possibly same-sex activity.

The consequences in Q.4/19 of being found guilty of sexual abomination can often be death ("then detain them in their houses until death takes them") or upon repentance, possibly, forgiveness (since, "God appoints for them a way"). Similarly, verse 20 of *sūrah* 4 is often understood to imply same-sex sexual content, **And when two of you commit indecency, punish them both; but if they repent and make amends, then suffer them to be; God turns, and is All-compassionate.**⁸

⁷In reference to Q.4/19, Bell, Commentary, Vol. I, p. 111, writes that even though reference is being made to "indecent conduct, not necessarily adultery,...this is the meaning usually assigned to *fāhishah* here". *Zinā*' has been defined as including "both adultery and fornication, but there is a difference in the punishment of these offenses". See Thomas Patrick Hughes, "Adultery", Dictionary of Islam, p. 11. See also s.v. "Fornication". Under both these subject headings, proof of *zinā*' is established by the presence of four witnesses as mentioned in Q.4/19.

⁸Abdullah Yusuf Ali translates this verse as, "If two men among you are guilty of lewdness, punish them both. If they repent and amend, leave them alone; for God is Oft-returning, Most Merciful". See verse 16 of *sūrah* IV, The Holy Qur'an: Text, Translation and Commentary, p. 184. However, there are differing opinions about this verse. For example, Bell, Commentary, Vol. I, p. 112, states, "There is no reason to stress the masculine gender in v.20, and regard it as dealing with offenses between males; it simply refers to couples guilty of indecent conduct. The penalty is really milder than that for a woman so guilty by herself".

Q.4/30, as seen under the root SHHY, refers both to women in wedlock who commit "indecentry" (*fāḥishah*) as well as to the term "fornication" (*ʿanat*). Committing "indecentry" could, aside from adultery (*zināʾ*) and similar sins like "fornication" (*ʿanat*), refer to same-sex practices as well.⁹ In addition, also seen under the root SHHY, verse 32 of this *sūrah* refers to those who follow their own lusts (*shahawāt*), and therefore distance themselves from God. Reference is also made to man who was created "weak" (*daʿīf*), possibly suggesting man's lack of resistance from giving into same-sex and/or opposite-sex lusts.

Q.4/23, 33/30 and 65/1 make reference to rules of conduct with women pertaining to divorce and dowry.¹⁰ All three passages refer to women, although the latter two refer specifically to the wives of the Prophet committing flagrant "indecentry" (*fāḥishah*). Once again, in these three examples, "indecentry" could refer to adultery (*zināʾ*), as well as to same-sex activity among women. Furthermore, in passages like Q.33/30 the wives of the Prophet are warned that "chastisement shall be doubled" for committing "indecentry". Likewise, verse 31 of the same *sūrah* refers to "a generous provision" for the wives of the Prophet who are "obedient to God and His Messenger".

In Q.7/27, **And whenever they commit indecentry [*fāḥishah*] they say, 'We found our fathers practicing it, and God has commanded us to do it.' Say: 'God does not command indecentry [*fahshā*']; what, do you say concerning God such things as you know not?',** those who commit "indecentry", i.e., the Jahilites, like their forefathers continue to perform indecent acts. Apart from non-sexual indecencies, even though there are no explicit sexual - same-sex and/or opposite-sex - references, it is possible that the Jahilites also practiced sexual abominations. Therefore, by its use of "indecentry", Q.7/27

⁹Al-Shamma, *The Ethical System*, on p. 31 writes, "In (4,30) a *fāḥishah* means adultery for which 'punishment' is mentioned, though exercising patience is recommended".

¹⁰In Q.65/1 for example, during the prescribed period (the *ʿiddat*) divorced women should not be driven out of their house unless they "commit a flagrant indecentry [*fāḥishah*]". In reference to the same passage see Joseph Schacht, "Zinā", *First Encyclopaedia of Islam 1913-1936*, VIII, 1227 and Al-Shamma, *The Ethical System*, p. 31.

(like Q.4/19, 4/23, 4/30, 33/30 and 65/1) does not entirely exclude the possibility of these sexual activities being the target of condemnation.

Furthermore, verse 26 of *sūrah* 7 makes reference to Satan's temptation, **Children of Adam! Let not Satan tempt you as he brought your parents out of the Garden, stripping them of their garments to show them their shameful [saw'āt] parts. Surely he sees you, he and his tribe, from where you see them not. We have made the Satans the friends of those who do not believe.** Often, one who falls prey to the instigation of Satan partakes not only in forbidden non-sexual activities, but also, possibly, in sexual - same-sex and/or opposite-sex - abominations.

In Q.17/34, the term "indecent" is directly and obviously equated to a opposite-sex taboo: **And approach not fornication [zinā]; surely it is indecent [fāhishah], and it is evil [sā'a] as a way.** Even though the term "evil" will be analyzed later, this passage clearly links "fornication" to "indecent" and "evil".

In Q.12/24, the term "desire" has a role to play in the use of "abomination". **For she did desire [hamma] him; and he would have taken her, but that he saw the proof of his Lord. So was it, that We might turn away from him evil [sū] and abomination [fahshā]; he was one of Our devoted servants.** Here, the wife of the Egyptian Governor desires Joseph sexually who in turn succeeds in not giving in to "evil" and "abomination". The term "abomination" in Q.12/24 refers to the opposite-sex desire that both the Governor's wife and Joseph feel for one another. Such desire, especially when felt outside the bounds of marriage, is considered as being abominable.

Another passage in which a strong opposite-sex implication is present for the word "indecent" is Q.4/26. Here, it is "indecent" (*fāhishah*) as well as "a hateful [*maqt*] thing" and "is evil as a way [*sā'a sabīlan*]" to marry women whom one's father has married and to sexually approach one's mother, daughter, sister, aunt, niece, women by whom one has been suckled, one's wife's mother or stepdaughter, as did the Jahilites.

Eleven times (Q.2/164, 2/271, 3/129, 6/152, 7/31, 16/92, 24/18, 24/21, 29/44, 42/35 and 53/33) out of a total of twenty-four uses, the Arabic terms *fāhishah*, *fahshā'* and/or *fawāhish* are used in ways that are not obviously sexual. This, however, does not

eliminate the presence of possible sexual innuendos. Qur'ānic passages 2/164, 2/271 and 24/21, for instance, all use "indecentcy" (*fahshā*) to refer to the temptation of Satan who is an enemy of the believers and thus tries to command "indecentcy". For example, in Q.24/21, **O believers, follow not the steps of Satan; for whosoever follows the steps of Satan, assuredly he bids to indecentcy [*fahshā*] and dishonour [*munkar*]**, despite the lack of explicit sexual content, its total absence cannot be confirmed. One could suggest that this is even more so true because the beginning of this *sūrah* (verse 2) refers to the scourging of "the fornicatress and the fornicator".

In Q.7/31, **Say: 'My Lord has only forbidden indecencies [*fawāhish*], the inward and the outward, and sin [*ithm*], and unjust insolence [*bhagy*], and that you associate with God that for which He sent down never authority [i.e., idolatry], and that you say concerning God such as you know not [i.e., deny God's signs]'**, "indecentcies" refer to forbidden deeds and/or even to inward thoughts of doing something "indecent". While no obvious sexual connotation is present in Q.7/31, there exists nonetheless the possibility of inward and/or outward sexual impropriety being suggested in this sense. Along with this possibility is also the conceivable practice of certain non-sexual abominations such as "insolence", idolatry and denying God's signs. Similarly, Q.6/152 makes reference to not approaching "indecentcy [*fāhishah*] outward or inward".

In relation to Q.3/129, the "good-doers", i.e., believers mentioned in verse 128 of this *sūrah*, obtain favour with God when they **expend in prosperity and adversity in almsgiving, and restrain their rage, and pardon the offenses of their fellowmen; and God loves the good-doers**. Here, believers too are vulnerable and thus capable of committing "indecentcy" (*fāhishah*) by not expending or giving alms, by not controlling their temper and by not being able to forgive others.

In other passages like Q.16/92, "indecentcy" (*fahshā*) is compared to "dishonour" (*munkar*) and to "insolence" (*bhagy*), the opposite of being just and kind (the latter two acts being urged over the former two acts). In passages like Q.29/44, prayer itself forbids "indecentcy" (*fahshā*) so that those who believe not only put their trust in God but they avoid sinning, are quick to forgive when angered and are therefore on the right path. In the

remaining passages, Q.53/33 speaks of "a painful chastisement" that awaits "those who love that indecency [*fāhishah*] should be spread abroad" and in Q.24/18 and 42/35, avoiding "indecencies" (*fawāhish*) is encouraged.

Overall, from a total number of twenty-four uses of terms from the root FĤSH, the Lot passages Q.7/78-79 and 27/55-56, as possibly does Q.29/27, provide a same-sex connotation. In the remaining twenty-one uses, reference is made to possible same-sex, definite opposite-sex (e.g., adultery and/or fornication (*zinā*ʾ) as well as incest, i.e., marriage to women whom one's father has married and sexually approaching mothers, daughters, sisters, aunts, nieces, women by whom one has been suckled, wife's mothers and stepdaughters) and non-sexual connotations (e.g., insolence, idolatry, denying God's signs, not expending nor giving alms, not controlling one's temper, not forgiving others, being unjust and being unkind). The consequences of being found guilty of sexual abomination (as in Q.4/19 and 33/30) and/or non-sexual indecencies (as in Q.24/18) can often be death or chastisement. However, forgiveness and generous provisions, as in the former two examples, can be attained upon repenting and becoming obedient.

Same-sex sexuality, as Izutsu suggests, is frequently called "indecency" (*fāhishah*). This is evidenced by the fact that all passages that contain same-sex content do indeed have "indecency" (*fāhishah* and/or *fahshā*) as a moral qualifier of these activities. However, "indecency" and other related terms from the root FĤSH also morally qualify opposite-sex and non-sexual activities. Apart from the sensual nature of the uses of "indecency" in the Lot passages and elsewhere in the Qur'ān, terms from the root FĤSH do not always suggest sexual connotations as is evidenced in eleven non-sexual references.

Not only are all the terms from this root negative and suggest a negative disposition, but very often these terms can be associated with the instigation of Satan who befriends humans in order to prey on their weak disposition. In other words, terms from the root FĤSH are often considered to be evil, hateful, dishonourable and sinful precisely because they distance one from God. That is why when God forbids indecency, dishonour and insolence, such practices are additionally emphasized as having grave consequences such as

death and doubled chastisement. Yet there are positive repercussions such as generous provisions for those who do obey God.

JHL

The term *jāhil* and related words, including the first verbal use (*jahila*) from the root JHL, can, according to the context, be translated to mean "to be ignorant", "to be foolish" or "to act unwittingly". As seen, the root JHL appears in only Lot one passage, Qur'ān 27/55-59. Words from the root JHL can be found in twenty-three other passages of the Qur'ān.

In Q.27/56, Lot tells his people off in an exasperated manner, **No, you are a people who are ignorant** [*tajhalūna*]. This is done immediately after he has accused the men of committing "indecent" (*fāhishah*) by approaching other "men lustfully [*shahwah*] instead of women". Given the sequence of the manner in which "ignorant" (*jāhil*) is used, this term seems to indicate that the people are referred to as such because of their same-sex advances.¹¹

Same-sex implications can be seen, not always explicitly, in some of the remaining twenty-three passages of the Qur'ān. Four such cases would be Q.4/21, 6/54, 16/120 and 49/6. For example in Q.4/21, **God shall turn only towards those who do evil** [*āw*] **in ignorance** [*jahālah*], **then shortly repent; God will return towards those; God is All-knowing, All-wise**, though the term "evil" remains to be analyzed, it is possible that "ignorance" may refer to those who partake in sexual and non-sexual activities. As established in the FHSJ section, verse 19 of this *sūrah* could be referring to some form of opposite-sex sexual indiscretion such as adultery and/or fornication (*zinā*), or even

¹¹In referring to Q.27/55-56, Izutsu, *Ethico-Religious Concepts*, p. 32 states, "In this passage we see the people of Lot, that is, the people of Sodom described as behaving in a characteristically *jāhil* way, 'approaching' as they do 'men lustfully rather than women', which is an 'abominable sin' *fāhishah*...what is primarily understood under the word *jāhil* is a man who goes to any extremes at the mercy of his own passions, and that not ignorantly,...*jāhil* has essentially nothing to do with 'ignorance' though it implies the act of ignoring wilfully the moral rule of *ḥilm* [i.e., reasonableness]".

possibly to same-sex activity among women.

In addition, also seen in the FHSJ section, verse 20 of *sūrah* 4 possibly implies a same-sex sexual meaning. Thus, in relation to these two verses, "ignorance" in Q.4/21 could, in addition to non-sexual activities, be referring to sexual - same-sex and/or opposite-sex - transgressions as well. Furthermore, reference is also made to the possibility of forgiveness upon repentance.

Similarly in Q.49/6, **O believers if an ungodly [*fāsiq*] man comes to you with a tiding, make clear, lest you afflict a people unwittingly [*jahālah*], and then repent of what you have done**, though the term "ungodly" will be looked at later, one could suggest that reference is being made (apart from other things like the need to keep one's actions in check) to a man approaching another man sexually.

Four other uses, Q.3/148, 5/55, 33/33 and 48/26, of terms from the root JHL make specific reference to the *Jāhiliyyah* or "pagandom".¹² While there may not be overt sexual

¹²The understanding of the *Jāhiliyyah* has often been the centre of much controversy. Cyril Glassé, "al-Jāhiliyyah", The Concise Encyclopedia of Islam, p. 204, refers to it as the "time of ignorance". A time when there was "darkness before the dawn". T. H. Weir, "Djāhiliya", First Encyclopaedia of Islam 1913-1936, II, 999-1000, notes that according to J. D. Michaelis and others, it is a time frame that existed prior to Islam, the latter having brought enlightenment as well as knowledge to the pagan Arabs. He writes on p. 999, "*Djahila* 'to be ignorant' is the antonym of '*alima* 'to know' frequently in the old language and oftener in more recent times". However, others like Ignaz Goldziher, suggest different things. In referring to Al-Qastallānī, Goldziher, Muslim Studies, Vol. I, p. 202, writes that "The whole of the pagan, pre-Islamic time is al-Jāhiliyya. Between these two periods there is the *Nubuwwa*, i.e. the time of Muhammed's appearance as prophet and of his missionary work...the Jāhiliyya is subdivided into two periods: the older period (i.e. the time from Adam to Noah or Abraham--according to others from Noah to Idrīs) and the more recent one (from Jesus to Muhammed)". On this page, Goldziher also suggests that had the "Jāhiliyya" been a time of "ignorance", Muhammad would not have counter-opposed "ignorance" with the need to be devoted and have confidence in God. Instead, he would have urged "knowledge" (*al-ilm*). He further states on p. 203 that, "It is true that in the old language, too, we find the concept of knowledge (*ilm*) contrasted to *jahl*, but this opposition is founded on a secondary meaning of *jhl*. The original meaning is seen in an antithesis of this word group, much more common in the older language, with *hlm*, *hilm* and *halūm*. According to their etymological meaning these words describe the concept of firmness, strength, physical integrity and health, and in addition moral integrity, the 'solidity' of a moral character, unemotional, calm deliberation, mildness of manner. A *halūm* is what we would call a civilized man. The opposition to all this is the *jāhil*, a wild, violent and impetuous character who follows the inspiration of unbridled passion and is cruel by following his animal instincts; in one word, a barbarian". Furthermore, Goldziher continues on pp. 203-204 that, "The false assumption that *jāhil* is the opposite to 'knowing' and

connotations present in these passages, the era of "pagandom" itself was an era in which sexual - same-sex and/or opposite-sex - and non-sexual violations were rampant.¹³ In Q.33/33, **Remain in your houses; and display not your finery, as did the pagans [jāhiliyah] of old**, the wives of the Prophet are urged not to imitate those, who, prior to the onset of Islam lived in ignorant ways. As established earlier in the FHS section, in verse 30 of the same *sūrah* the wives of the Prophet are warned about committing "indecent" (*fāhishah*) which may include the likes of committing adultery (*zinā*) and/or same-sex abominations.

Likewise, verse 32 of *sūrah* 33 cautions the Prophet's wives from being too tender in speech to strange men, lest **he in whose heart is sickness may be lustful [fa-yatma'a]**. Here too, an opposite-sex sexual innuendo is present. Apart from making reference to "showing-off" and to other non-sexual "pagan" activities, wives of the Prophet are also cautioned against sinning sexually (in same-sex and/or opposite-sex ways); all such practices are considered unbecoming to their status.¹⁴

Q.48/26, When the unbelievers set in their hearts fierceness, the fierceness of pagandom [jāhiliyah], then God sent down His Shechina [Divine Presence] upon His Messenger and the believers, and fastened to them the word of godfearing to which they have better right and are worthy of; and God has knowledge of everything, contrasts the old pagan Arabs (e.g., their haughtiness, pride, stubborn defiance and excessive indulgences) and the godfearing believers - like Muḥammad - who during

that therefore *istajhala* means 'to consider someone ignorant' has misled the translators...*Istajhala* means: to display the manner of a *jāhil*, here in the passive: to be roused to such wild behaviour". See also "Djāhiliyya", *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, II, 383-384 and Izutsu's reflections on Goldziher's analysis of JHL in chapter one.

¹³For example see Q.4/26 and 7/27 in the FHS section.

¹⁴Goldziher, *Muslim Studies*, Vol. I, p. 202, suggests that the unclear sub-division of the period of the *Jāhiliyah*, "arose owing to misunderstanding of the Koranic passage 33:33 where Muhammed says to the women that they should not flirt as was customary in the days of the 'first Jāhiliyya'". In his footnote to this passage, in referring to Baydāwī, Goldziher states that, "It is also given as an explanation that the first Jāhiliyya comprises the whole of the pre-Islamic time and the new Jāhiliyya refers to relapses into paganism after the Prophet's appearance".

critical times controlled themselves and remained calm.¹⁵ It is quite possible that here too the practitioners of "ignorant" or *jāhilī* acts, among non-sexual activities, are those who also transgressed by committing same-sex and/or opposite-sex (*zinā*) activities.

Q.12/33 and 25/64 also link JHL to some form of sexual activity. In the former passage, Joseph in pleading with God says, **'My Lord, prison is dearer to me than that they call me to; yet if Thou turnest not from me their guile, then I shall yearn towards them, and so become one of the ignorant [*jāhilūn*].'** Here, the Egyptian Governor's wife solicits Joseph who abstains with difficulty from succumbing to his lusts. He pleads with God to turn away the guile of those who try to seduce him, fearing that he, too, shall give in to temptation and therefore "become one of the ignorant".

The main connection of "ignorant" (*jāhil*) in Q.12/33 to sexual seduction is verse 30 in the same *sūrah*: **Certain women that were in the city said, 'The Governor's wife has been soliciting [*turāwidu*] her page; he smote her heart with love; we see her in manifest error [*dalāl*].'** Although there is clearly a sexual connotation present, it is an opposite-sex one and not a same-sex one.¹⁶

¹⁵Goldziher, *Muslim Studies*, Vol. I, p. 206, in reference to Q.48/26 states that, "The Jāhiliyya in this context is nothing but the time in which *jahl*-in the sense which we have seen-was prevalent, i.e. barbarism and cruelty. When the proponents of Islam say that it has ended the customs and habits of the Jāhiliyya, they are thinking of these barbaric customs and wild mentality which distinguish Arab paganism from Islam, and through the abolition of which Muhammed intended to become the reformer of his people's morality--the arrogance of the Jāhiliyya (*hamiyyat al-Jāhiliyya*)...." Izutsu, *Ethico-Religious Concepts*, p. 31 concurs, "From the standpoint of Islām, the *jāhiliyyah* was a blind, savage passion which characterised those who 'did not know how to distinguish between good and bad, who never asked pardon for the evil they had done, who were deaf to the good, dumb to the truth, and blind to Heavenly guidance.' [Ibn Ishāq, II, 603] And it was this dark, blind passion that had inspired endless blood feuds, and caused countless miseries and disasters in the history of the pre-Islamic Arabs".

¹⁶In reference to Q.12/33, Izutsu, *Ethico-Religious Concepts*, p. 32 notes that *jāhil* here "seems to mean the reckless behaviour of one who easily falls a victim to the surge of lust and makes himself knowingly blind and deaf to the distinction between right and wrong, behaviour which is evidently the exact opposite of *hilm* [i.e., reasonableness]". Al-Shamma, *The Ethical System*, p. 97, states that, "The narrative surah XII gives in some parts of it a detailed account of chastity, though both the moral and naturalistic descriptions go hand in hand. Thus despite some response on the part of Joseph to his lover, the wife of his benefactor (v. 24), the response, which is very short and does not seem to be more than mere intention, to an unlawful love-affair is described as 'evil and indecency'....Thus, as Joseph reaches his manhood after he has passed his

In Q.25/64, **The servants of the All-merciful are those who walk in the earth modestly and who, when the ignorant [jāhilūn] address them, say, 'Peace'**, reference is made to those who have overcome the obstacles of their forefathers, are reasonable and who when addressed by the "ignorant" not only respond in a peaceful manner, but as mentioned in verse 68 of this *sūrah*, they do not partake in that which is forbidden, i.e., idolatry, unjustified slaying and fornication. It is possible thus that the "ignorant" in Q.25/64 partake not only in forbidden non-sexual activities but also, in opposite-sex (*zinā*) sexual activities like fornication.

The majority of thirteen passages refer mostly to non-sexual vices. While there may not be obvious sexual connotations present, they are not necessarily excluded from these remaining uses of terms from the root JHL. They are: Q.2/63, 2/274, 6/35, 6/111, 7/134, 7/198, 11/31, 11/48, 12/89, 28/55, 33/72, 39/65 and 46/22. For the most part, these passages refer particularly to disbelief and/or acts of disbelief. They include vices like idolatry, being "ignorant" of one's duties, being provoked easily, opposing peace, arrogance, jealousy, murder, telling lies, idle talk, ignoring God's signs and rejecting the prophets.

For example, Q.6/35 states: **And if their turning away is distressful for thee, why, if thou canst seek out a hole in the earth, or a ladder in heaven, to bring them some sign--but had God willed, He would have gathered them to the guidance; so be not thou one of the ignorant [jāhilūn]**. Referring to al-Bayḍāwī's commentary, Izutsu explains this passage as referring to Muḥammad who is consoled as well as admonished by God for being disheartened and for feeling dismal about the future:

God reminds him that there were many prophets before him who suffered from the same sort of adverse fortune and that they endured it patiently, putting absolute confidence in Providence. He ends by commanding Muḥammad to follow

adolescence (v. 22), his heart begins to be smitten with love, with one reservation, namely that he must not approach an unlawful woman. In other terms he has the right to seek only a love which is identified with marriage...." Also see Richard Serrano, "Al-Sharīf al-Talīq, Jaques Lacan, and the Poetics of Abbreviation", *Homosexualism*, Wright Jr., and Rowson, eds., pp. 142-143 and Q.12/24 in the FHS section.

their example and not to get impatient in vain. It will be evident, then, that *jāhil* in this passage also means a man whose mind tends to be easily thrown into agitation by anger, grief, desperation, or any other emotion.¹⁷

Moses in Q.7/134 tells the Israelites, **You are surely a people who are among the ignorant [*jāhilūn*]**, based on their idolatrous proclivities. In Q.11/48, Noah pleads with God to have mercy on his son who has been arrogant and insolent towards God's message. In return, God says to Noah, **I admonish thee, lest thou shouldst be among the ignorant [*jāhilūn*]**. Noah's questioning of God's Will is thought of as unfavourable, especially because Noah's son was a disbeliever. Q.33/72, **We offered the trust [*amānah*] to the heavens and the earth and the mountains, but they refused to carry it and were**

¹⁷Izutsu, Ethico-Religious Concepts, p. 33. Goldziher, Muslim Studies, Vol. I, p. 14, in referring to Muhammad's mission notes that, "Generally, however, Muhammed could not expect the mind of his people to be readily responsive to his preaching. He offered them the opposite of their established view on life, their ideals and ancestral traditions [the latter was especially important to the pagan Arabs. The fact that fathers who had died were condemned as unbelievers was a great source of disagreement for those whom Muhammad tried to convert]. Hence the great opposition that he encountered everywhere. The pagans opposed less the shattering of their idols than the pietistic disposition which they were to accept: that the whole of their life should be determined by thinking of God and His omnipotence which predestines and requites; that they should pray, fast, abstain from enjoyable indulgences, sacrifice money and property, all demanded from them in the name of God". Further, on pp. 21-23 Goldziher states that, "The gulf between the moral views of the Arabs and the prophet's ethical teachings is deep and unbridgeable. If we seek slogans to make this contrast clear, we can find none better than the two words: *dīn* and *muruwwa*; the first is the religion of Muhammed, the second the 'virtue' (literally and etymologically the latin word *virtus* corresponds to the Arabic *muruwwa*) of the Arabs. By *muruwwa* the Arab means all those virtues which, founded in the tradition of his people, constitute the fame of an individual or the tribe to which he belongs; the observance of those duties which are connected with family ties, the relationships of protection and hospitality, and the fulfilment of the great law of blood revenge....Islamic teaching was not opposed to a large part of the Arab system of virtues--in particular Islam incorporated into its own teaching the moving loyalty of the Arabs towards those seeking protection...Nevertheless there were decisive and basic points in the moral teaching of the Jāhiliyya to which Islam was in almost irreconcilable contrast". Yet probably later, Hamilton A. R. Gibb, Studies on the Civilization of Islam, p. 181 states, "I am convinced that a great part of the success of Muhammad's preaching was due to the fact that among many of his hearers the level of rational understanding had risen to a point at which the old symbols and rituals had lost their meaning and value, and no longer satisfied their craving for an explanation of what lay behind the external phenomena".

afraid of it; and man carried it. Surely he is sinful, very foolish [jāhūl], refers to the "foolishness" of rejecting an offering of God.

From a total of twenty-four uses of the root JHL, the Lot passage Q.27/55-56 is the only one in which the men in particular, on the basis of having approached other males "lustfully", are accused of being "ignorant". Apart from also linking non-sexual practices (like not keeping one's actions in check) to Q.4/21, 6/54, 16/120 and 49/6, suggested in these passages are same-sex and/or opposite-sex (*zinā*) activities. Four other passages, Q.3/148, 5/55, 33/33 and 48/26 refer to the era of "pagandom" during which non-sexual activities such as showing off, as well as sexual - same-sex and/or opposite-sex - indiscretions were rampant. Passages Q.12/33 and 25/64 refer to opposite-sex activities and, in the case of Q.25/64, also to non-sexual activities such as idolatry and to unjustified slaying.

The use of words from the root JHL in the Qur'ān do not morally prioritize sexual - same-sex and/or opposite sex - sins over non-sexual sins. Other than those passages that make reference to sexual abominations, thirteen passages support various examples of non-sexual vices. Most of the vices have to do with disbelief and/or acts of disbelief such as idolatry, neglecting one's duties, being easily provoked, opposing peace, arrogance, jealousy, murder, telling lies, idle talk, ignoring God's signs and rejecting the prophets.

Words from the root JHL are generally non-sensual in character, negative and are qualified morally throughout the Qur'ān as having negative dispositions. Terms from this root do not necessarily reflect a lack of knowledge in determining right from wrong per se; rather, they reflect an unwillingness to accept that which has been deemed as being morally right over that which is considered wrong. Often the need for patience and absolute confidence in God is replaced by an unwillingness to look past that which is externally visible, quickly obtainable, and therefore often temporal. This form of spiritual resistance makes one weaker still when there is no attempt made in differentiating those activities that bring one closer to God from those that further alienate one from God. With reference to terms from the root JHL, same-sex sexuality within the Qur'ān is, then, morally equivalent to being prone to unreasonableness.

SRF

The term *musrif* and related words, including the fourth verbal form (*asrafa*), from the root SRF can, according to the context, be translated to mean "to exceed all bounds", "to be extravagant", "to waste" or "to be prodigal". The term *musrifūn* appears in the previously cited Lot passage, Qur'ān 7/78-82. Terms from the root SRF can be found in twenty-two other places in the Qur'ān.

In Q.7/79, **See, you approach men lustfully instead of women; no, you are a people that do exceed**, Lot uses the term "those who exceed" (*musrifūn*) to tell his people off in an exasperated manner. This is done after he has accused the men in the previous verse of committing "indecent" (*fāḥishah*) and of approaching other men "lustfully [*shahwah*] instead of women". The use of *musrifūn* right after the use of "lustfully" implies that Lot is referring to those men who "exceed" by approaching other men in a same-sex sexual way.¹⁸

Q.51/32-37, **'And what is your business, envoys?' They said, 'We have been sent to a people of sinners [*mujrimūn*], to loose upon them stones of clay marked with thy Lord for the prodigal [*musrifūn*].'** So We brought forth such believers as were in it, but We found not therein except one house of those that have surrendered themselves. And therein We left a sign to those who fear the painful chastisement, can very easily be taken for a Lot passage although there is no explicit mention of the prophet.¹⁹ Here, the messengers visit Abraham in order to bring good news of the birth of a child. They do this while on their way to destroy disbelievers, i.e., "sinners" (a term that will be looked at later) and the "prodigal". Who these disbelievers are, however, is not obvious.

Q.51/32-37 is comparable to the already cited Lot passage Q.15/58-77. In particular reference to verses 58-60 of *sūrah* 15, the messengers in the midst of bringing

¹⁸Izutsu, *Ethico-Religious Concepts*, p. 175, in referring to Q.7/78-79 states that the term *musrif*, "is applied to the custom of sodomy among 'the people of Lot'".

¹⁹Also see the first footnote in chapter two.

good tidings to Abraham also inform him of their mission to destroy the "sinners" (*mujrimūn*), a term that is used in both Q.15/58 and 51/32. However, unlike Q.51/32-37, the messengers in Q.15/58-60, are specific about who it is they are to destroy, i.e., Lot's people (including his wife).

One could argue that based on their similarities Q.15/58-77 and 51/32-37 are indeed passages that both refer to Lot and his people; however, this is particularly difficult to ascertain for the latter, simply because nowhere in this *sūrah* is Lot (and/or his people) even mentioned. Although Q.51/32-37 is an ambiguous passage in reference to its connection to the Lot saga, its similarity especially to Q.15/58-60, cannot be ignored. The "prodigal" in Q.51/34 are doomed to destruction perhaps due to activities that may have been sexual - same-sex and/or opposite-sex - as well as non-sexual in nature.

Two other passages, Q.17/35 and 25/67 indicate meanings which, in addition to non-sexual activities, refer to possible opposite-sex practices. Q.17/35, **And slay not the soul God has forbidden, except by right. Whosoever is slain unjustly [*mazlūman*], We have appointed his next-of-kin authority; but let him not exceed [*isrāf*] in slaying; he shall be helped.**, refers to retaliation for unlawful killing. In verse 33 of this *sūrah*, mention is made to the unjust slaying of children during times of poverty, **And slay not your children for fear of poverty; We will provide for you and for them; surely the slaying of them is a grievous sin [*khaṭ*']**. In addition, verse 34 of this *sūrah*, as already seen in the FHS section, relates fornication (*zinā'*) to the terms "indecent" (*fāḥishah*) and "evil" (*sā'a*). Whereas those who kill unlawfully exceed, it is possible to suggest that partaking in fornication also causes one to exceed.

Q.25/67, who, when they expend, are neither prodigal [*musrifūn*] nor parsimonious, but between that is a just stand, is a passage which suggests that what is preferable for the believer is to do things in balance; one should neither "expend" immoderately nor be miserly. Verse 68 of this *sūrah*, as seen in the JHL section, makes reference to idolatry, to unjustified slaying and to fornication. In addition, verse 69 makes reference to "doubled" chastisement. While believers who do not do things in balance are "prodigal", similarly, it is possible that those who partake in idolatry, unjustified slaying

and fornication also commit *isrāf*, i.e., are also among the "prodigal"; all threatened with a deadly punishment.

Nineteen²⁰ remaining uses of words from the root SRF make reference mostly to believers, disbelievers and/or to acts of disbelief. For example, Q.4/5, **Test well the orphans, until they reach the age of marrying; then, if you perceive in them right judgement, deliver to them their property; consume it not wastefully [*isrāf*] and hastily**, refers to the proper management of funds with reference to the property of orphans.²¹ Q.5/36, **Our Messengers have already come to them with the clear signs; then many of them thereafter commit excesses [*musrifūn*] in the earth**, refers to those who reject the Messengers and continue to commit "excesses". Also mentioned in verse 35 of the same *sūrah* is the slaying of souls and to (another term that shall be analyzed later) "corruption" done on land.

Furthermore, God cannot tolerate the quality of committing "excesses" even when it is ascribed to such things as eating and drinking, as outlined in passages Q.6/142 and 7/29. For example in Q.6/142, **Eat of their fruits when they fructify, and pay the due thereof on the day of its harvest; and be not prodigal [*isrāf*]; God loves not the prodigal [*musrif*]**, one is in particular warned about the excessive intake of food. Reference is also made to not following in the steps of Satan who is an enemy of the

²⁰Q.3/141, 4/5, 5/36, 6/142 (twice), 7/29 (twice), 10/13, 10/83, 20/127, 21/9, 26/151, 36/18, 39/54, 40/29, 40/36, 40/46, 43/4 and 44/30.

²¹In reference to Q.4/2-7, Bell, Commentary, Vol. I, pp. 107-108, suggests that the care of orphans was a problem, perhaps because of the number of men who died from fighting. Furthermore, with reference to verse 3 of *sūrah* 4, Bell states that, "...if a man fears that he may not act justly towards orphans he should marry other women. Marriage would appear to be intended as a means of seeing that justice is done to orphans. The danger of their property being neglected or abused may be obviated by the marriage either of the widowed mother of orphan children, or of the orphan girl herself...." Even though Q.4/3, **If you fear that you will not act justly towards the orphans, marry such women as seem good to you, two three, four; but if you fear you will not be equitable, then only one...**, does not make direct reference to sexual impropriety, perhaps, it can also be perceived as suggesting that one who marries against what has been recommended, commits a sexual infringement. In Q.4/5 however, those who commit *isrāf* are among those who "wastefully" consume an orphan's property. Nonetheless, it is wrong also for one to take on more than one wife and to be unequitable. Being part of such a marriage possibly suggests that one is erring sexually as well.

believers. Verse 141 of this *sūrah* mentions "losers" **who slay their children in folly, without knowledge, and have forbidden what God has provided them, forging against God; they have gone astray, and are not right-guided.**

It is possible that, though these uses of terms under the root SRF do not specifically refer to sexual excesses, nonetheless, they can be included in the category of those who are "wasteful", who "commit excesses" and/or who are "prodigal". This is especially so with examples like Q.7/29, which, although like Q.6/142 connects "prodigal" specifically to food and/or to drink taboos, also present are other connotations. As seen in the FHS section, both verses 27 and 31 of *sūrah* 7 can be conceived (in addition to having non-sexual content), possibly, as having sexual intimations as well.

Disbelievers like Pharaoh are an example of those who are among the "prodigal". Q.10/83, **So none believed in Moses, save a seed of his people, for fear of Pharaoh and their Council, that they would persecute them; and Pharaoh was high in the land, and he was one of the prodigals [*musrifīn*]**, is a clear example of Pharaoh's position against God. People were so scared of persecution that they did not dare betray Pharaoh, choosing instead, to reject Moses. Also condemned in verses 80 and 81 of this *sūrah* is Pharaoh's use of sorcery.

In Q.40/29, Pharaoh is intent on having Moses killed on the pretext that Moses is a threat to the traditional belief system. However, one of Pharaoh's people - a secret believer in God - pleads for Moses's life by asserting that, **God guides not him who is prodigal [*musrif*] and a liar.** In Q.40/46, the "prodigal [i.e., the *musrif* like Pharaoh] are the inhabitants of the Fire", for they partake in things such as polytheism, as mentioned in verse 45 of this *sūrah*. Verse 50 also refers to the "weak" (*da'if*) and to what they say to "those who waxed proud" as both are chastised to "Fire" for their disbelief.

In a similar manner, those who repent can also be forgiven by God's mercy as in Q.39/54, **Say: 'O my people who have been prodigal [*asrafū*] against yourselves, do not despair of God's mercy; surely God forgives sins altogether; surely He is All-forgiving, the All-compassionate.**

From a total of twenty-three uses of words from the root SRF, the Lot passage Q.7/79 is the only one in which the men specifically, on the basis of having approached other males "lustfully [*shahwah*] instead of women", are accused of being among "those who exceed". It is possible that same-sex sexual indiscretions caused the "prodigal" to be destroyed in Q.51/34; however, also possible are causes like opposite-sex (*zinā*) and/or non-sexual activities. Two other passages, Q.17/35 and 25/67 can be related to opposite-sex indiscretions like fornication, as well as to non-sexual activities such as unjustified murder, expending immoderately and committing idolatry.

Same-sex activity is put on an ethical plane with numerous other deeds - opposite-sex and/or non-sexual activities. Words from the root SRF are generally non-sensual in character, negative and are qualified morally throughout the Qur'ān as having negative dispositions. Terms from this root do not necessarily focus solely on prohibitions or on curtailing a certain activity per se; rather, they reflect a need for balance in whatever it is one does.

Activities (practised as in verse 50 of *sūrah* 40, by those deemed weak) such as wasting an orphan's property, murder (e.g., retaliation for unlawful killing and slaying of children), acting immoderately (e.g., when giving alms and consuming food and/or drinks), refusing to repent after doing wrong, believing in Satan, and like Pharaoh rejecting God's message and the prophets, persecuting believers, partaking in sorcery, telling lies, practicing polytheism and being arrogant, are all activities that have been deemed as exceeding a certain limit. This limit of tolerance, once surpassed, often has devastating consequences for those who are unable to have control over themselves. With reference to terms from the root SRF, same-sex sexuality within the Qur'ān is, then, morally equivalent to doing things in immoderate proportions.

THR

The moral term *ṭāhir* and related words, including first, second and fifth verbal forms (*tahara*, *ṭahhar* and *ṭaṭahhara*) from the root THR, can, according to the context, be translated to mean "to be or become clean or pure", "to cleanse" or "to be purified". In

addition to occurring in the previously cited Lot passages Qur'ān 7/78-82, 11/79-84 and 27/55-59, words from the root THR can be found twenty-eight times in the Qur'ān.

In Q.7/78-82 and 27/55-59 Lot accuses the men of committing "indecency" (*fāhishah*) by approaching other men "lustfully [*shahwah*] instead of women", thereby, of being "ignorant" (*jāhil*) and among "those who exceed" (*musrifūn*). Lot's reproach is met with a rebuttal from the people who wish to expel him and his followers from the city, because **they are folk/men that keep themselves clean** [*ṭāhir*]. The terms "lustfully", "indecency", "ignorant" and "those who exceed" are all used by Lot to describe the people who were destroyed; however, the term "clean" is used in an ironical fashion by those who were destroyed to refer to Lot. The city dwellers, in what seems to be a mocking fashion, jeer at Lot and his people for being "clean".

However, it is in this way that "clean", like the other four terms, distinguishes those who were destroyed from Lot (and his followers), linking the use of "clean" to the same-sex activities of Lot's people. What makes "clean" especially different from the four preceding moral terms is that it implies an opposite meaning to the terms "lustfully", "indecency", "ignorant" and "those who exceed"; "clean" is used, after all, to describe a preferred and/or positive state--something that Lot's people were not in.

In Q.11/80, **O my people, these are my daughters; they are cleaner** [*aṭhar*] **for you**, Lot offers his daughters to the people as being "cleaner" for them, an offer which is rejected by the people. It is plausible to suggest that Lot's offer here is made to the men who in Q.7/78-82 and 27/55-59 have been implicated for approaching other men sexually. So that in rejecting Lot's daughter's as a "cleaner" alternative, they may have been wanting to have some sort of sexual contact with Lot's male guests. If this is the case, when Lot offers his daughter's as a "cleaner" alternative, in doing so Lot insinuates therefore that the people's original request, i.e., what "they desire" (*yurīdūna*), is less "clean". Therefore, as in Q.7/80 and 27/57, the root THR in Q.11/80, connotes an opposite meaning to the term "lustfully" (*shahwah*). The proposition that Lot makes to the people in Q.11/80 is difficult

to understand outside of a same-sex sexual implication.²²

Q.33/33, Remain in your houses; and display not your finery, as did the pagans [jāhilīyah] of old. And perform the prayer, and pay the alms, and obey God and his Messenger. People of the House, God only desires [yurīdu] to put away from you abomination [rijs] and to cleanse [yuṭahhirakum taṭhīr] you. Here, the use of "cleanse" is made in relation to several things. As already seen in the FHS section, wives of the Prophet are also warned in verse 30 of the same *sūrah* about committing "indecent" (*fāhishah*), which may suggest the likes of committing same-sex activity and/or adultery (*zinā*). Similarly, verse 32 of this *sūrah*, as already seen in the JHL section, cautions the Prophet's wives from being too tender in speech to strange men, implying the presence of an opposite-sex sexual innuendo.

The term "cleanse", however, in Q.33/33 seems to imply an opposite meaning to the term "abomination" (*rijs*) which suggests non-sexual (pagan) activities such as displaying finery (i.e., showing off), being disobedient, not praying and not giving alms. It is possible also that among these "abominable" acts are sexual - same-sex and/or opposite-sex - activities that the wives of the Prophet in earlier verses are also cautioned against committing.

In Q.33/53, **And when you ask his wives for any object, ask them from behind a curtain; that is cleaner [aṭhar] for your hearts and theirs**, here, within its broader sense, "cleaner" becomes opposed to sexual lust. Believers are told not to communicate with the Prophet's wives unless it is done so from behind a curtain. This ensures that both the men and the Prophet's wives are kept away from opposite-sex (*zinā*) sexual temptation. Here, opposite-sex lust outside the bounds of marriage is considered unclean.

Five other cases (in Q.2/222 and 5/9) of the use of THR suggest opposite-sex sexual connotations in addition to non-sexual examples. In Q.2/222, **They will question thee concerning the monthly course. Say: 'It is hurt; so go apart from women during**

²²In reference to Q.11/80, Al-Shamma, *The Ethical System*, p. 97, states, "As marriage is the usual reason for any sexual contact, there does not seem to be any alarm because of Lot's declaration, there does not seem to be in it more than a condemnation of sodomy".

the monthly course, and do not approach them till they are clean [*yathurna*]. When they have cleansed [*taṭahharna*] themselves, then come unto them as God has commanded you.' Truly, God loves those who repent, and he loves those who cleanse [*mutaṭahhiṛn*] themselves, not only is menstrual blood considered as being "unclean", but it is also asserted that undertaking any sort of sexual activity can only be possible under "clean" circumstances, i.e., after the course of a woman's menstrual cycle. Also, sex under "clean" circumstances possibly suggests opposite-sex sexual relations within the boundaries of marriage.²³

Q.5/9, O believers, when you stand up to pray wash your faces, and your hands up to the elbows, and wipe your heads, and your feet up to the ankles. If you are defiled, purify [*taṭahharū*] yourselves; but if you are sick or on a journey, or if any of you comes from the privy, or you have touched women, and you can find no water, then have recourse to wholesome dust and wipe your faces and your hands with it. God does not desire [*mā yurīdu*] to make any impediment for you; but He desires [*yurīdu*] to purify [*yutaḥhiru*] you, and that he may complete His blessing upon you; haply you will be thankful. Here, the process of ritual purification through, for example, ablution or dust in the event that one has become tainted after visiting the lavatory or after having sexual relations under "clean" circumstances, can in most instances be undertaken

²³Kevin Reinhart, "Impurity No Danger", *History of Religions*, 30, (1990), 9, states, "Blood and urine are dangerous since their defiling character is contagious, but their power to affect one's fitness for ritual activity is limited. If either defiling substance falls on one's clothing, it is cleansed merely by removing the offending substance and running water over the clothing. Until one does so one may not worship. Yet it is washing only in the ordinary sense that is stipulated; *there is no ritual act connected with removing these substances*". A. S. Tritton, "Tahāra", *First Encyclopaedia of Islam 1913-1936*, VII, 608, states that, "Sexual intercourse, menstruation, and childbirth are religious impurities. Actual impurities (*nadjis* q. v.) have a perceptible body. They are wine, pigs and dogs and what is begotten of them, dead bodies (except those of men, animals used for food, fish, and creatures that have no blood, i.e. insects), and certain discharges from the body". What is of interest is that although menstrual blood is "unclean", on the same page, Tritton also states that "...the blood squashed out of a full-fed flea, and the blood or pus from a boil or pimple or from cupping...are clean". Even though it seems rather bizarre that menstruating blood is "unclean" while blood from a flea, a boil or a pimple is "clean", perhaps what differentiates the two is that menstruating blood is equated to urine; both being transient and necessary (body emissions).

by the rites of decontamination and is necessary prior to prayer.²⁴ The use of words like "purify" in Q.5/9, as in the cases "clean", "cleansed" and "cleanse" in Q.2/222, do not specifically point to abstaining from sexual activity per se, but rather, to what is required for prayer after partaking in opposite-sex sexual activity performed under "clean" circumstances, again, suggesting that sex under unclean or impure conditions is prohibited.

Although most of the remaining twenty uses of words from the root *ṬHR* support non-sexual examples, the words are used broadly enough so that they can in some cases provide sexual intimations as well. Q.2/119, 9/109 and 22/27 all use words from the root *ṬHR* to refer to the need to "purify" God's house (i.e., mosque) so that, as mentioned in Q.9/109, **therein are men who love to cleanse [yataṭahharūn] themselves as much as God loves those who cleanse [mutṭahhirūn] themselves**. Apart from the need for ritual purification prior to prayer, the house of God itself is to be "purified" from unclean things like polytheism as in Q.22/27, **And when We settled for Abraham the place of the House: 'Thou shall not associate with Me anything. And do thou purify [ṭahhir] My House for those that shall go about it and those that stand, for those that bow and prostrate themselves**.

Q.56/78, 80/14 and 98/2 make reference to the Qur'ān so that only the "pure" shall touch the Holy Book, pages of which are themselves "purified". For example Q.56/76-78, **it is surely a noble Koran in a hidden Book none but the purified [mutaḥharūn] shall touch, a sending down from the Lord of all Being**. Those who need to be "cleansed" prior to prayer and/or the "pure" who touch, or rather who are touched by, the Holy Book need to be "clean" not only in a ritualistic sense but quite possibly in other non-sexual and

²⁴Ali Abdel Kader, "The Concept of Purity in Islam", in Proceedings of the XIth International Congress of the International Association for the History of Religions, Vol. II: Guilt or Pollution and Rites of Purification, p. 104 states, "A Muslim must cleanse his body completely after sexual intercourse. He must otherwise cleanse certain organs of the body such as the hands, the face, the arms, the head and the feet before prayer. This is the ablution that must be done and maintained to validate the prayer. If the ablution is nullified by such acts as going to the bathroom or falling asleep or getting intoxicated it must be done over again". The fact that "dust" is not unclean is further illustrated by Tritton, "Tahāra", First Encyclopaedia of Islam 1913-1936, VII, 608, who states that among other things, NOT unclean are, "...dirt left after defecation, dust or mud on the roads, the soles of shoes...".

sexual ways too. It is possible therefore that "purity" may involve sexual "cleanliness".

Q.2/23, 3/13 and 4/60 mention heavenly rewards. All three refer to "purified" spouses. For example Q.4/60, **And those that believe, and do deeds of righteousness, them We shall admit to the gardens underneath which rivers flow, therein dwelling forever and ever; therein for them shall be spouses purified [*mutaḥharah*]; and We shall admit them to a shelter of plenteous shade.** Here rewards for believers, i.e., those who are righteous, entail "spouses purified" which could mean that the spouses offered as heavenly rewards, are unlikely to have any impure human-like qualities. As well, what is possibly suggested is a state that is free of opposite-sex sexual desire.²⁵

Q.8/11 and 25/50 make reference to water from heaven conceived as being inherently "pure" and "purifying", whereas verses 21-22 of *sūrah* 76, **Upon them shall be green garments of silk and brocade; they are adorned with bracelets of silver, and their Lord shall give them to drink a pure [*ṭahūr*] draught. 'Behold, this is recompense for you, and your striving is thanked'**, refer to recompensation in the form of a "pure" drink in heaven. Among the heavenly rewards for the believers are also "Immortal youths" (*wālid*), in verse 19 of *sūrah* 76, who are likened to "scattered pearls" (*lu'lu'manthūr*). All these rewards, probably have none of the corrupt earthly qualities (like inebriation for example).²⁶

Q.2/232, When you divorce women, and they have reached their term, do not

²⁵With reference to "purified" spouses in Q.2/23, 3/13 and 4/60, Wensinck-[Pellat], "Hūr", The Encyclopaedia of Islam, III, 581-582, states, "which means, according to the commentators, that they are free alike from bodily impurity and from defects of character....The commentators maintain that every women [sik] who was married and virtuous by nature will meet her husband in Paradise and become again his legal wife; those who had several husbands will be able to choose the one they prefer; whereas polygamous husbands will be allowed to keep all their earthly wives. The women among the Believers will be 70, 000 times superior to the houris, will know none of the cares of earthly life and will spend their time enjoying pleasures of every sort. The commentators remain silent on the fate of virtuous women who have remained unmarried, and give the impression that the daughters of Eve are definitely at a disadvantage in comparison with men". Also see Wensinck, "Hūr", First Encyclopaedia of Islam 1913-1936, III, 337 and verses 20-24 of *sūrah* 52 (including footnote) in the SHHY section.

²⁶See Q.56/17 (including footnote) as well as verses 18-19 of *sūrah* 56 (including footnote) in the SHHY section.

debar them from marrying their husbands, when they have agreed together honourably. That is an admonition for whoso of you believes in God and the Last Day; that is cleaner [azkā] and purer [athar] for you; God knows, and you do not, refers to acting honourably when divorcing women and to the legal stipulations for a divorced wife.

Q.3/37 and 3/48 make reference to Mary and to Jesus respectively and to their preeminent positions. While Q.3/37, **And when the angels said, 'Mary, God has chosen thee, and purified [ṭahhara] thee,** makes reference to Mary and to her role as being chosen as God's instrument, her esteemed position could possibly have been a result of her not having been touched by men sexually.

In Q.5/45, "degradation" (*khizy*) awaits those **whose hearts God desired not [lam yurid] to purify [yutahhir]**. Q.9/104 makes reference to hypocrites (like the Bedouins) as well as for the need for them to make a "freewill offering" in order to "purify" themselves and Q.58/13 makes reference to a freewill offering to the Prophet - a gesture considered to be "purer" for the believer. Lastly, Q.74/1-4, **O thou shrouded in thy mantle, arise, and warn! Thy Lord magnify thy robes purify and defilement flee!**, is difficult to understand as the significance of "purify" (*tahhir*) is unclear.²⁷

With reference to terms from the root THR, there seem to be two main types of cleanliness and/or purification at play. First, that which renders one in constant state of purification and can only be attained, it seems, in the heavens. Examples can be drawn from Q.2/23, 3/13 and 4/60 which make reference to "purified" spouses as among the heavenly rewards. Here, the "purified" spouses are unlikely to have any impure human-like qualities (sexual or otherwise). Similarly, Q.76/21 refers to a "pure" drink in heaven (another heavenly reward) which again suggests that it has none of the corrupt earthly qualities (like inebriation for example).

²⁷In reference to Q.74/4, Al-Shamma, *The Ethical System*, p. 96 states, "As this passage is very early and is related to general notions bearing on ethical values (cf. 74, 12-15), then the purification of the garments is closely related to a demand for purity, though chastity is not necessarily meant. It is however characteristic of this stage to speak of most notions in a general way only".

The highest form of purification need not be restricted to the heavens; however, its link to the heavens seems essential. For example, Q.8/11 and 25/50 make reference to water from heaven (possibly pointing to an uncontaminated source from which comes forth not only water but lasting enjoyments of paradise) that is either "pure" or that "purifies". In all six (Q.2/23, 3/13, 4/60, 8/11, 25/50 and 76/21) cases, whether it be the "purified" heavenly rewards (e.g., spouses and drink) and/or water from the heavens that is "pure/purifying", there is present an inherent state of constant "purification".

In the second case, earthly processes play an integral role and cause one to fluctuate between cleanliness and uncleanness. Even though remaining pure is preferable, human beings are prone (whether by choice or through necessity) to becoming impure. Natural bodily functions (including menstruation as seen in Q.2/222) render one impure. However, these bodily functions are temporary and allow one to become clean again. With the exception of Q.5/45, in which the choice of purification belongs to God alone, in most other cases there is an element of choice involved in rendering oneself clean or unclean. This can be seen when the men among Lot's people reject Lot's daughters who are "cleaner", opting to partake in same-sex sexual relations that are less clean.

Even the Prophet's wives as in Q.33/33 are given a choice (from partaking in certain opposite-sex and non-sexual activities as already outlined) which render them less clean as are those who choose in Q.33/53 to partake in opposite-sex sexual lusts outside the bounds of marriage. Similarly, one can choose to abstain from sexual relations with one's spouse during her menstrual cycle as in Q.2/222 in order to remain clean, act honourably as in Q.2/232 when divorcing women in order to be "cleaner and purer", give free will offerings as in Q.9/104 and 58/13, choose not to practice polytheism in God's house as in Q.22/27, undergo ritual purification before prayer after having had sexual relations with one's spouse or after having gone to the lavatory as in Q.5/9 and so forth. While one is incapable of being continuously clean, being unclean also, more often than not, is temporary.

What is of interest is that those like Mary and Jesus as seen in Q.3/37 and 3/48, are somewhere in between the two main types of cleanliness and/or purification. Even though

they have preeminent positions, however, one would assume that, as human beings, they would also have natural and defiling qualities and, therefore, would also be required to partake in ritual cleansing in order to offset such impurities. What distinguishes those like Mary and Jesus from ordinary human beings, however, is that in Mary's case she is chosen as God's instrument, possibly as a result of her not having been touched by men sexually. The immaculate conception of Jesus's birth also renders him special.

Terms from the root **THR** are not necessarily sensual in nature and are positive words which are qualified morally in the Qur'ān as having positive dispositions. The use of words from the root **THR**, like terms from the roots **SHHY**, **FHSH**, **JHL** and **SRF** in the Qur'ān, once again place same-sex sexuality side by side on a moral plane with both opposite-sex and non-sexual activities.

What distinguishes the use of "clean" (*tāhir*) or "cleaner" (*aṭhar*) from words like "lustfully" (*shahwah*), "indecently" (*fāhishah*), "ignorant" (*jāhil*) and "those who exceed" (*musrifūn*) in the Lot passages, is that not only is "clean" used ironically by Lot's opponents to jeer at Lot and his followers, but that being "clean", in comparison to the other terms, is a preferred state to be in because it ultimately distinguishes those who are saved from those who perish. In reference to terms from the root **THR**, same-sex activities within the Qur'ān are, then, morally equivalent to having the choice of deciding whether one should partake in that which renders one clean or do that which causes one to be unclean.

Table 2.3

Root (in order of analysis)	sensual and/or non-sensual terms	positive (+), negative (-) and/or neutral terms	positive (+), negative (-) and/or neutral dispositions
SHHY	mix of sensual and non-sensual terms	+ and - terms	+ and - dispositions
FHSH	mix of sensual and non-sensual terms	- terms	- dispositions
JHL	generally non-sensual terms	- terms	- dispositions
SRF	generally non-sensual terms	- terms	- dispositions
THR	generally non-sensual terms	+ terms	+ dispositions

CHAPTER FOUR SECONDARY ROOTS

Having studied the roots SHHY, FHSH, JHL, SRF and THR, the remaining twelve roots seem to imply, as seen in the Lot passages in chapter two, less obvious same-sex sexual connotations. However, in our continuing endeavour to understand better how the Qur'ān overall perceives same-sex sexuality, as in the previous chapter, terms from the next twelve roots need to be studied as they appear in both the Lot *sūrahs* and elsewhere in the Qur'ān. Once again, precedence will be given to those terms that support same-sex connotations, followed by opposite-sex and then non-sexual intimations.

In order to understand the Qur'ān's moral perception of same-sex sexuality, for the remaining roots we need to follow a similar approach, albeit more condensed, to one of the previous chapter. This process will help us once more to determine the common elements in each of these roots that allows particular terms to be connected to specific groups of activities. In the continuing interest of determining the moral qualification of terms that imply stronger same-sex sexual content within the Qur'ān, we need to analyze the twelve roots in the following order: 'DW, RWD, FDH, KHZY, FSQ, JRM, FSD, SW', NKR, KHBTH, ZLM and GHBR.

'DW

The term *mu'tadūn* and related words, including first, third, fifth and eighth verbal forms (*'adā*, *'ādā*, *ta'adā* and *i'tadā*) from the root 'DW, can, according to the context and form, be translated to mean "to transgress", "to be at enmity with", "to trespass" or "to commit aggression". As has been seen, words from this root appear in only one Lot passage, Qur'ān 26/160-176. Terms from the root 'DW can be found an additional one hundred and three times in the Qur'ān.¹

In the Lot passage Q.26/166, **Nay, but you are a people of transgressors**

¹In addition, Q.8/43 uses *'udwah* from the same root but meaning "bank of a valley" or "river bank".

[*mu'tadūn*], the term "transgressors" is used by Lot to refer to the men right after he condemns them for going to other males (possibly sexually) instead of to their wives, therefore, providing a same-sex implication. After all, wives within the Qur'ānic context have been created to fulfil their husband's sexual desire.²

Out of the other one hundred and five cases, the conceivable existence of sexual intimations is present four times in Q.4/18, 4/34, 23/7 and 70/31. Though these passages may not have direct sexual implications, they can nonetheless be perceived as containing same-sex and/or opposite-sex sexual innuendos. Q.23/1-7, **Prosperous are the believers who in their prayers are humble and from idle talk turn away and at almsgiving are active and guard their private parts save from their wives and what their right hands own [i.e., slaves] then being not blameworthy (but whoever seeks after more than that, those are the transgressors [*'ādūna*])**, is a good example.

The use of "transgressors" in Q.23/7, apart from referring to non-sexual virtues such as humbleness during prayer, not gossiping and paying alms, refers also to those who, apart from their wives and slaves, do not "guard their private parts". This could suggest the presence of sexual (same-sex and/or opposite-sex) indiscretions. While Q.70/31 is similar to Q.23/7,³ in Q.4/18, "transgresses" (*yata'adda*) refers to those who disobey God, God's Messengers and who go beyond the allowed bounds,⁴ whereas the

²Consider Q.2/183, **Permitted to you, upon the night of the Fast, is to go in to your wives; they are a vestment for you, and you are a vestment for them.** In reference to Q.26/165-166, Izutsu, *Ethico-Religious Concepts*, p. 173 states that, "It may be noted in this connection that the practice of sodomy is sometimes regarded as an act of 'transgression'. In such a case, the notion of the 'transgression of the bounds of God' approaches remarkably close to that of an 'abomination', that is, more concretely, any object to which God's abhorrence is directed...."

³In both Q.23/7 and 70/31, what is of interest is that the gender of the slaves is never mentioned. In another passage, Q.24/31, reference is made to "believing women" who are also told to "guard their private parts". Sexual chastity is endorsed over freely exposing oneself and therefore tempting others sexually. Mention is also made to men who attend to these women as "not having sexual desire", possibly referring to Eunuchs.

⁴Even though there is no direct mention of sexual violations, as already seen in the FHS and JHL sections, verses 19 and 20 of this *sūrah* seem to refer to some form of sexual indiscretion like adultery and/or fornication (*zinā*) or even, possibly, same-sex activity. It is thus possible that in Q.4/18, one who "transgresses" God's bounds is able to do that in non-sexual as well as sexual

term "transgression" ('*udwān*) in Q.4/34, also refers (in verse 33 of this *sūrah*), to those who consume goods in vanity and who commit murder.⁵

The remaining one hundred and one uses of terms from the root 'DW refer mostly to non-sexual vices that suggest disbelief, disobedience and/or refer to that which is forbidden. For example, sixty-five⁶ uses, in one way or another, refer in general to disbelief. Disbelievers for example are "enemies" who come in the form of wives and children as in Q.64/14. Belonging to this category of disbelief is the "enemy" Abraham's father as in Q.9/115, 26/77 and 60/4. The Children of Israel and/or Pharaoh are also among the "enemies" of God in Q.2/58, 2/79, 5/82, 10/75, 10/90, 20/82 and 28/7. Disbelievers include "enemies" like the hypocrites in Q.5/67, 41/34 and 63/4 and idolaters as in Q.5/85, 6/108, 9/10 and 46/5.

A well known instigator of disbelief is Satan who is mentioned in Q.2/163, 2/205, 5/93, 6/143, 7/21, 12/5, 17/55, 35/6, 36/60 and 43/62. For example, the term "foe" ('*adūw*) in Q.7/21, **So he led them on by delusion; and when they tasted the tree, their shameful [*saw'āt*] parts revealed to them, so they took to stitching upon themselves leaves of the Garden. And their Lord called to them, 'Did not I prohibit you from the tree, and say to you, 'Verily Satan is for you a manifest foe'?',** refers to Satan the "enemy" of believers who in this passage manages to convince Adam and Eve to

(same-sex and/or opposite-sex) ways.

⁵Though the use of the term "fornication" ('*anat*) in verse 30 of *sūrah* 4 is equivalent, as seen in the SHHY section, to "sin", it does not present obvious sexual content. However, the use of "indecent" ('*fāhishah*) also in verse 30 of *sūrah* 4, as seen in the FHS section, possibly refers to opposite-sex activity, i.e., adultery (*zinā*) and to same-sex practices as well. Similarly, verse 32 of this *sūrah*, as seen under the root SHHY, refers to those who follow their own "lusts" (*shahawāt*), which possibly suggests giving into sexual - same-sex and/or opposite-sex - lusts as well as to non-sexual lusts.

⁶Q.2/58, 2/79, 2/91, 2/92 (twice), 2/163, 2/205, 3/98, 3/108, 4/47, 4/102, 5/17, 5/67, 5/69, 5/82, 5/85, 5/93, 6/108, 6/112, 6/143, 7/21, 7/53, 7/126, 7/149, 8/62 (twice), 9/10, 9/84, 9/115, 9/121, 10/75, 10/90, 12/5, 17/55, 18/48, 20/39 (twice), 20/82, 20/115, 25/33, 26/77, 28/7, 28/14 (thrice), 28/18, 35/6 (twice), 36/60, 41/18, 41/28, 41/34, 43/62, 43/67, 46/5, 50/24, 60/1 (twice), 60/2, 60/4, 60/7, 61/14, 63/4, 64/14 and 83/12.

disobey God.⁷

Apart from complete disbelief in God, reference is also made to disobedience and/or to that which is forbidden in thirty-four⁸ other places that use words from the root 'DW. For example, certain foods (e.g., "carrion", "blood" and "the flesh of swine") are forbidden as in Q.2/168, 6/146 and 16/116, whereas Q.2/61, 4/153 and 7/163 make reference to breaking the Sabbath after having made a compact not to do so. In a similar manner, the use of "enmity" (*'udwān*) in Q.58/9 and 58/10 (as *'ūdwan*) refers to those who conspire in secret.

Hostility (which includes aggression, retaliation, fighting, murder, animosity, etc.) is another deplorable trait and is referred to in Q.2/174, 2/186, 2/190, 4/94 and 5/3. Bounds are also placed upon giving false testimony (i.e., dishonesty) as in Q.5/106 and favouring the rich over the poor in 18/27. Frowned upon as well is disobeying regulations concerning divorce as in Q.2/231 and 65/1. For example, the use of the term "transgress" in Q.2/231, **When you divorce women, and they have reached their term, then retain them honourably or set them free honourably, do not retain them by force, to transgress [*ta'tadū*]; whoever does that has wronged [*ḡalama*] himself.**, refers to forcibly retaining women after divorcing them. Instead, one is urged to let them go with honour (*ma'rūf*).⁹

Thus far, the Lot passage Q.26/166 provides a same-sex implication while the

⁷Sexual connotations may not be obvious in these uses of words from the root 'DW, nonetheless, there may be some cases that can be understood to provide sexual content. Here for example, it is possible that "shameful" (*saw'ā*) parts is used in these passages as a sexual signifier. In being misled by Satan, Adam and Eve may have become aware of themselves as sexual beings, hence, partaking as well in opposite-sex sexual abominations.

⁸Q.2/34, 2/61, 2/168, 2/174, 2/186 (twice), 2/189, 2/190 (thrice), 2/229 (twice), 2/231, 4/94, 4/153, 5/3 (twice), 5/89 (twice), 5/95, 5/106, 6/119, 6/146, 7/23, 7/163, 16/116, 18/27, 20/121, 28/28, 58/9, 58/10, 65/1, 68/12 and 100/1.

⁹Here too, sexual connotations are not paramount in these uses of words from the root 'DW; however, some cases may provide sexual content. For example, as seen in the FHSH section, there is a conceivable presence of same-sex and/or opposite-sex content in Q.65/1. Also, it is plausible to suggest that one who "transgresses" by retaining his ex-wife forcibly, possibly partakes in forbidden sexual activities as well.

conceivable existence of sexual (same-sex and/or opposite-sex) and non-sexual intimations is present four times in Q.4/18, 4/34, 23/7 and 70/31. Words from the root 'DW do not morally prioritize same-sex sins over opposite sex and/or non-sexual sins. As seen, sixty-four other uses refer in general to disbelief and in thirty-three other places disobedience and/or restrictions are the main focus.

Words from the root 'DW are non-sensual, negative and are qualified morally throughout the Qur'ān as having negative dispositions. In all passages, what is deemed morally unacceptable are those vices like same-sex indiscretions, opposite-sex activity, i.e., *zinā* and non-sexual activities, such as disobeying God and/or God's Messengers, consuming goods in vanity, committing murder, not being humble in prayer, gossiping, not paying alms, hypocrisy, idolatry, disobeying food laws, breaking the Sabbath, conspiring in secret, being hostile, being dishonest, favouring the rich over the poor and disobeying regulations concerning divorce. With reference to terms from the root 'DW, same-sex sexuality within the Qur'ān is, then, morally equivalent to going to any extremes at the mercy of one's own whim and, therefore, digressing into the ways of the *Jāhiliyah* (Age of Ignorance).

RWD

The term *arāda* and related words, including the third verbal form and one adverb (*rāwada* and *ruwaydan*) from the root RWD, can, according to the context, be translated to mean "to want", "to desire" or "to solicit". Terms from this root appear in the previously cited Lot passages Qur'ān 11/79-84 and 54/33-40. In addition, words from the root RWD can be found one hundred and forty-six times in the Qur'ān.

In Q.11/79-84, even though the terms "evil deeds" (*sayyi'āt*), "do not degrade" (*lā tukhẓū*) and "evildoers" (*ẓālimūn*) will be analyzed later, Lot's offer of his daughters to the men as being "cleaner" (*aṭhar*) for them as seen in the THR section, possibly implies that the men were hoping to have some sort of sexual contact with Lot's male guests. The men, perhaps with a hint of sarcasm, respond to Lot's offer with the words, **'Thou knowest we have no right to thy daughters, and thou well knowest what we desire**

[*nurīdu*].⁹ It seems likely that the use of "we desire" in Q.11/81, refers to those men who wanted to have sexual contact with Lot's male guests.

In the other Lot passage Q.54/33-40, reference is made to those who are chastised for having "disputed the warnings". They had "solicited" (*rāwada*) Lot's guests and, as a result, had their eyes "obliterated". As seen in Q.11/79-84, one could suggest that those who had "solicited" Lot's male guests, were probably men who might have tried to do so sexually.¹⁰

In the remaining one hundred and forty-six cases, the possible existence of indirect sexual (same-sex and/or opposite-sex) and non-sexual intimations are present in at least three passages Q.4/32, 11/90 and 33/33. For example, "I desire" used in Q.11/90, refers to Shu'ayb who tells his people that he wishes to be honest with them (**I desire not [*mā urīdu*] to come behind you**) and also wishes to make them see the truth (**I desire [*urīdu*] only to set things right**). In verse 91 of this *sūrah*, Shu'ayb implores his people not to reject him fearing that if they do so, they will be destroyed as were the people of Noah, Hūd, Sāliḥ and Lot. The mention of the destruction of Lot's people could imply that there might have been men among Shu'ayb's people who also approached other men sexually instead of going to women.¹¹

Nine other uses (in Q.5/9, 12/23, 12/25, 12/26, 12/30, 12/32 and 12/51) of the root RWD, support opposite-sex sexual and/or non-sexual examples. For example, the verses from *sūrah* 12 relate the use of "to solicit" (*rāwada*), "to purpose" (*arāda*) and "to solicit" (*turāwīdu*) from the root RWD, to opposite-sex activity, specifically, fornication and adultery (*zinā*). These passages refer to the Egyptian Governor's wife's sexual solicitation of Joseph. For example, in Q.12/30, already outlined in the JHL section, the women in the

¹⁰In reference to Q.54/37, Al-Shamma, *The Ethical System*, p. 32 states that, "rāwada (to solicit), though it might be understood in a general sense, still bears on immoral love temptation as the passage is connected with Lot and his people's interest in homosexuality...."

¹¹For Q.4/32, see Q.4/32 and verse 33 of this *sūrah* in the SHHY section, Q.4/30 (including footnote) in the FHSH section and Q.4/34 (especially footnote) in the 'DW section. For Q.33/33, see Q.33/30 in the FHSH section, Q.33/33 and verse 32 of this *sūrah* (including footnote) in the JHL section and Q.33/33 in the THR section.

city accuse the Governor's wife of imposing herself onto Joseph sexually.¹²

The remaining one hundred and thirty-one uses of terms from the root RWD refer mostly to non-sexual activities, which, may have present indirect sexual connotations as well. For example, the use of "to desire" (*arāda*) in Q.33/49 refers to the Prophet's wish to take "any woman believer" should she give herself, as his wife. In a sense one could suggest that the "desire" for marriage supposes a lawful opposite-sex sexual relationship as well.

Forty-eight¹³ passages make reference to what God wishes and/or decrees as well as to God's power. For example in Q.5/45, as seen in the THR section, "degradation" (*khizy*) awaits those "whose hearts God desired not [*lam yurid*] to purify [*yutahhir*]". The use of "desires" (*yurid*) in Q.6/125 refers to how whomever God wishes to guide will embrace Islam while whomever God wishes to lead astray will disbelieve. The use of "desire" (*turīdūna*) and "desires" (*yurīdu*) in Q.8/68 contrasts "desire" for material goods "of the present world" to what God "desires" for believers in "the world to come" (the latter being preferred by God). Similarly, in Q.39/6, had God "desired" (*arāda*) to "take to Him a son", this would have happened. This verse seems to allude to the Christian belief of Jesus as son of God.

Fifty-two¹⁴ passages make reference to some form of disbelief. For example, the use of "desiring" (*yurīdūna*) in Q.9/32, refers to Jews and Christians who, in verse 30 of

¹²Al-Shamma, *The Ethical System*, p. 32, states that, "the verb *rāwada* (to solicit) recurs seven times in surah XII. Except in 12.61, where a neutral sense is meant, it is always connected with love temptation between the two sexes". Also see Q.12/24 in the FHS section and Q.12/33 as well as verse 30 of this *sūrah* (including footnote) in the JHL section. For Q.5/9, see the THR section.

¹³Q.2/24, 2/181 (twice), 2/254, 3/104, 3/170, 4/31, 4/65, 5/1, 5/19, 5/45 (twice), 5/54, 6/125 (twice), 8/7, 8/68 (twice), 9/55, 9/86, 10/107, 11/36 (twice), 11/109, 13/12, 16/42, 17/17, 18/81, 21/17, 22/14, 22/16, 25/63 (twice), 28/4, 33/17 (twice), 36/82, 39/6, 39/39 (twice), 40/33, 48/11 (twice), 51/57 (twice), 72/10 (twice) and 85/16.

¹⁴Q.2/102, 4/47, 4/63 (twice), 4/90, 4/93, 4/133, 4/149 (twice), 5/32, 5/41, 5/93, 7/107, 8/64, 8/72, 9/32, 9/46, 9/108, 11/18, 14/12, 17/19 (twice), 17/105, 18/80, 20/66, 20/89, 21/70, 22/22, 22/26, 23/24, 26/34, 28/18 (four times), 28/79, 32/20, 33/13, 34/42, 35/11, 37/84, 37/96, 38/5, 42/19 (twice), 48/15, 52/42, 53/30, 61/8, 74/33, 74/52 and 75/5.

this *sūrah*, by believing in Ezra and/or Jesus respectively as "the Son of God" commit abomination and thus "extinguish with their mouths God's light". In Q.21/70, **They desired [arādu] to outwit him; so We made them the worst losers, and We delivered him, and Lot, unto the land that We had blessed for all beings**, though Lot is mentioned, the term "they desired" is used to refer to the harm that the people wished to inflict onto Abraham.

Twenty-eight¹⁵ passages make reference to believers--either to their wishes or to certain regulations concerning conduct. For example, in reference to regulations concerning both marriage and divorce, the use of "desire" (*aradtum*) in Q.2/233, is used in reference to the need for a mother, if she so wishes, to suckle her child for at least two years (if, the mother and father are divorced, upon agreement the latter has to provide for the nursing mother). It is also allowed, should the mother and father decide, to have the child weaned by someone else, in which case a legal provision should be made for this. The use of "they desire" (*aradna*) in Q.24/33, refers to the need to encourage slave girls (*fatayāt*) who wish to marry, rather than to constrain them to prostitution.¹⁶

From a total of one hundred and forty-eight uses of terms from the root RWD, the Lot passages Q.11/79-84 and 54/33-40 are difficult to understand without including some same-sex sexual implication. In addition, indirect sexual (same-sex and/or opposite-sex) intimations are present at least six times in Q.4/32, 11/90 and 33/33. Nine other uses (in Q.5/9, 12/23, 12/25, 12/26, 12/30, 12/32 and 12/51) supply as well, opposite-sex sexual content. The remaining one hundred and thirty-one uses of the root RWD, refer mostly to non-sexual activities (with some cases having indirect sexual connotations present as well).

¹⁵Q.2/228, 2/233 (thrice), 3/139 (twice), 3/146 (twice), 4/24, 4/39, 4/143, 5/113, 6/52, 12/61, 17/20, 18/27 (twice), 18/78, 24/33, 28/27 (twice), 28/83, 30/37, 30/38, 33/28, 33/29, 36/22 and 76/9.

¹⁶Another example, Q.4/24 refers to the **desire [aradtum] to exchange a wife in place of another**. In verse 23 of the same *sūrah*, as mentioned in the FHSB section, there is a conceivable presence of same-sex and/or opposite-sex content. In that, reference is made to a wife committing "indecentry" (*fāhishah*).

With two neutral exceptions (Q.18/76 and 86/17), words from the root RWD, are mostly positive, non-sensual and are qualified morally throughout the Qur'ān as having both positive and negative dispositions. Apart from same-sex and opposite-sex (*zinā*) abominations as well as opposite-sex regulations concerning marriage and divorce, terms from this root refer to what God decrees as well as to God's absolute say over everything. While there are disbelievers who choose to do opposite of what God desires, i.e., wish for earthly rewards, believe in Jesus and/or Ezra as the son of God, reject the prophets, etc., there are believers who are advised on how to conduct themselves (e.g., in reference to marriage and divorce, when suckling children and in encouraging slave girls, should they so wish, to get married) and who in doing so fulfil God's wishes.

Similar to the English use of words like "desire" or "solicit", words from the root RWD have very broad implications. It is not necessarily what is desired but rather who desires that thing and how. With reference to terms from the root RWD, same-sex sexuality within the Qur'ān is, then, morally equivalent not necessarily to wanting something that has been deemed immoral, but rather, to wanting something in an immoral way.

FDH

The term *tafdahū* from the root FDH, appears only once in the Qur'ān in the previously cited Lot passage Q.15/58-77. It can be translated to mean "to shame". Even though the term sinners (*mujrimūn*) and "do not degrade" (*lā tukhẓū*) will be analyzed later, (*lā tafdahū*): "not to shame" is used by Lot when he pleads with "the people of the city" not to embarrass him, emphasizing to them, that the male visitors are his guests. **He said, 'These are my guests; put me not to shame, and fear God, and do not degrade me.'** Lot also offers his own daughters to the assailants suggesting, perhaps, that the male inhabitants of the city had intentions to approach Lot's male guests sexually. If this is the case, in doing so they would "shame" Lot. Considering that this is a Lot passage, it is likely that "shame" has a same-sex connotation.

The use of (*lā tafdahū*): "not to shame" from the root FDH in Q.15/69 depicts how

the men would have brought "shame" onto Lot had they approached Lot's male guests sexually. Since, this is the only use of "shame" in the Qur'ān, it is hard to determine whether the Qur'ān does or does not morally prioritize same-sex sins over opposite sex and/or non-sexual sins with the use of the root FDH. The term "shame" is a negative term that is qualified morally in the Qur'ān as having a negative disposition. With reference to the use of "shame" from the root FDH, same-sex sexuality within the Qur'ān is, then, morally equivalent to bringing dishonour onto others.

KHZY

Words from the root KHZY, including first and fourth verbal forms as well as one compound adjective (*khaziya* and *akhzā*), can, according to the context, be translated to mean "to be degraded", "to be disgraced" or "to put to shame". Terms from this root appear in the previously cited Lot passages, Qur'ān 11/79-84 and 15/58-77. Words from the root KHZY can be found twenty-four additional times in the Qur'ān.

In Q.11/80, as seen in the THR section, as soon as Lot offers his daughters to the men as being "cleaner" (*aṭhar*) for them, he says to them, **So fear God, and do not degrade [tukhzū] me concerning my guests.** Since his guests are also males, it is difficult to understand the use of "degrade" outside a same-sex implication. In Q.15/69, "do not degrade" (*lā tukhzū*) is used together with (*lā tafdahū*): "not to shame". As seen in the FDH section, Lot pleads with "the people of the city" as he tells them, **'These are my guests; put me not to shame, and fear God, and do not degrade me.'** Like Q.11/80, Lot offers his own daughters suggesting, perhaps, that the men had intentions to approach Lot's male guests sexually and that in doing so they would "shame" and "degrade" him. Here too, it is difficult to understand the use of "degrade" outside of a same-sex situation.

Nineteen¹⁷ of the remaining twenty-four passages which use terms from the root KHZY, refer to the recompensation (usually in the form of chastisement) that disbelievers

¹⁷Q.2/79, 2/108, 3/189, 5/37, 5/45, 9/2, 9/14, 9/64, 11/41, 11/96, 16/29 (twice), 20/134, 22/9, 39/27, 39/41, 41/15 (twice) and 59/5.

will face. This is made clear for example in Q.5/37, **This is the recompense of those who fight against God and His Messenger, and hasten about the earth, to do corruption [fasād] there: they shall be slaughtered, or crucified, or their hands and feet shall alternately be struck off, or they shall be banished from the land. That is the degradation [khizy] for them in this world; and in the world to come awaits them a mighty chastisement.**¹⁸

The remaining five¹⁹ passages refer to how believers (unlike disbelievers) will be spared from being negatively recompensed. This can be seen for example in Q.66/8, **Upon the day when God will not degrade [yukhzi] the prophet and those who believe with him, their light running before them, and on their right hands; and they say, 'Our Lord, perfect for us our light, and forgive us; surely Thou art powerful over everything.'**

Overall, the Lot passages Q.11/79-84 and 15/58-77 seem to imply a same-sex intimation. The remaining uses of the root KHZY, with the possible exception of some cases, do not have sexual content. For the most part words from the root KHZY refer to a negative retribution for disbelievers while believers are spared from the pessimistic and shameful recompensation that befalls the former group. Words from the root KHZY are negative, generally non-sensual and are qualified morally throughout the Qur'ān as having negative dispositions. With reference to terms from the root KHZY, same-sex sexuality within the Qur'ān is, then, morally equivalent to ensuring that one's deeds do not indeed lead one astray and hence onto the path of self-destruction.

FSQ

The term *fāsiq* and related words, including one verbal form (*fasaqa*) from the root FSQ, can, according to the context, be translated to mean, "to be ungodly", "to be rebellious" or "to be lewd". Words from the root FSQ appear in two previously cited Lot

¹⁸Also see Q.5/45 in the THR and RWD sections.

¹⁹Q.3/192, 10/98, 11/69, 26/87 and 66/8.

passages, Qur'ān 21/74-75 and 29/27-34. Terms from this root can be found fifty-two other times in the Qur'ān.

In Q.29/33, **We shall send down upon the people of this city wrath out of heaven for their ungodliness** [*fisq*], the term "ungodliness" is used to describe the deeds of those who are to be destroyed. As already suggested in the FHS section, even though this Lot passage does not have explicit same-sex content, the possibility that it refers to men approaching other men sexually cannot be excluded.²⁰ In addition, as shall be seen in the GHBR section, Lot's wife also perishes for non-sexual indiscretions and is therefore also "of the ungodly". Similarly in Q.21/74, reference is made to Lot's people who were destroyed. It is likely that "of the ungodly" (*fāsiqūn*) may have included, as in Q.29/33, those who committed both same-sex and/or non-sexual indiscretions.

Two other passages, Q.2/193 and 24/4 allude to same-sex, opposite-sex and/or non-sexual activities. For example in Q.24/4, **And those who cast it up on women in wedlock, and then bring not four witnesses, scourge them with eighty stripes, and do not accept any testimony of theirs ever; those--they are the ungodly** [*fāsiqūn*], **save such as repent thereafter and make amends; surely God is All-forgiving, All-compassionate**, "of the ungodly" refers to those who accuse women of adultery and/or fornication (*zinā*) as well as possibly of same-sex indiscretions, but who fail to produce four witnesses to collaborate this accusation. Here it is wrong to accuse someone falsely of a deed they have not committed, especially if that deed is related to sexual impropriety.²¹

The remaining fifty passages which use terms from the root FSQ refer mostly to non-sexual indiscretions with sexual innuendos being possibly present in some cases. A

²⁰In reference to Q.29/33, Izutsu, Ethico-Religious Concepts, p. 161, translates the use of *fisq* to mean "sodomy".

²¹In reference to Q.24/2-9, Bell, Commentary, Vol. I, p. 593 states that the verses "deal with fornication. The separate regulations probably all belong to about the same time, and we may accept the statement of Tradition that they are connected with the affair of 'Ā'ishah. If so, they were probably promulgated after the affair was over". See verses 2-3 of the same *sūrah* as well as Q.4/19 (including footnote) in the FHS section.

majority of the cases, forty²² instances, refer to disbelievers (e.g., "People of the Book" [Jews and Christians], "People of the Gospel" [Christians], Children of Israel, Pharaoh and his followers, Iblis, Noah's people and Abraham's people), who, in some cases face a terrible chastisement for among other things, turning away from God's signs (which includes rejecting the Messengers), committing idolatry, hypocrisy, crying lies, being arrogant and resenting giving alms.

Ten²³ last cases refer to forbidden activities. Although disbelievers are mainly prone to these activities, believers too are warned from practicing that which has been deemed unlawful. Some of the things that have been forbidden include acting unjustly when dealing with credit in commerce, consuming forbidden foods, gambling, giving incorrect legal testimony, breaking the Sabbath and finding possessions, commerce as well as dwellings dearer than God.

Overall, same-sex sexuality is not the ultimate level of "ungodliness"; rather, it is one of many vices often condemned as a practice of those who are "of the ungodly". Words from the root FSQ are generally non-sensual, negative and are qualified morally throughout the Qur'ān as having negative dispositions. In all passages, sexual (same-sex and/or opposite-sex) and non-sexual deeds are practiced in varying degrees, both by those who outright disbelieve (often chastisement being the consequence of this disbelief) as well as by those who do believe. With reference to terms from the root FSQ, same-sex sexuality within the Qur'ān is, then, morally equivalent to being disobedient.

JRM

The term *mujrimūn* and related words, including first and fourth verbal forms (*jarama* and *ajrama*) from the root JRM, can, according to the context, be translated to mean "to be sinful", "to seduce" or "to be guilty". Terms from this root appear in the

²²Q.2/24, 2/56, 2/93, 3/76, 3/106, 5/28, 5/29, 5/51, 5/54, 5/64, 5/84, 6/49, 7/100, 7/142, 7/165, 9/8, 9/53, 9/68, 9/81, 9/85, 9/97, 10/34, 17/17, 18/48, 24/54, 27/12, 28/32, 32/18, 32/20, 43/54, 46/19, 46/35, 51/46, 57/15, 57/26, 57/27, 59/5, 59/19, 61/5 and 63/6.

²³Q.2/282, 5/4, 5/107, 6/121, 6/146, 7/163, 9/24, 49/6, 49/7 and 49/11.

previously cited Lot passages, Qur'ān 7/78-82 and 15/58-77. Words from the root JRM can be found sixty-four additional times in the Qur'ān.

In Q.7/82, **And We rained down upon them a rain; so behold thou, how was the end of the sinners [muḥrimīn]!**, the term "sinners" is used to refer to the people of Lot who were destroyed. As already seen in the SHHY section, it is likely that some of Lot's people who perished were men accused of approaching other "men lustfully instead of women". The use of "sinners" probably refers to those who were destroyed for same-sex activities, however, unlike the terms "lustfully" (*shahwah*), "indecent" (*fāhishah*), "those who exceed" (*musrifūn*) and "clean" (*ṭāhir*), it also includes others like Lot's wife who, as we shall see, was among those who "tarried" (*ghābirūn*) for non-sexual reasons.

In Q.15/58, upon being asked by Abraham of their mission, the messengers tell him that they are going to destroy the "sinners" (*muḥrimīn*), among them Lot's wife. Later, Lot's confrontation with the "sinners" also include the likes of those who, as seen in both the FDH and KHZY sections, are offered his daughters. Like Q.7/82, the use of "sinners" in Q.15/58 probably refers to men accused of same-sex activities as well as to others, like Lot's wife.

The remaining sixty-four²⁴ uses of words from the root JRM refer mostly to disbelievers (e.g., Pharaoh and/or his Council, Noah's people, people of 'Ād, people of Shu'ayb and the Egyptians) and/or to acts of disbelief (e.g., committing aggression, not being equitable, being insolent, crying lies, being averse to God's truth, hypocrisy, idolatry, rejecting the Messengers, leading others astray, not praying and not feeding the needy). The consequences for these activities are often chastisement like "Fire" or "Gehenna".

Verses 33-38 of *sūrah* 37 is a good example: **Even so We do with the sinners [muḥrimīn]; for when it was said to them, 'There is no god but God,' they were ever waxing proud, saying, 'What, shall we forsake our god for a poet possessed?' 'No**

²⁴Q.5/3, 5/11, 6/55, 6/123, 6/124, 6/148, 7/38, 7/130, 8/8, 9/67, 10/14, 10/18, 10/51, 10/76, 10/82, 11/24, 11/37 (twice), 11/55, 11/91, 11/118, 12/110, 14/50, 15/12, 16/24, 16/64, 16/110, 18/47, 18/51, 19/89, 20/76, 20/102, 25/24, 25/33, 26/99, 26/200, 27/71, 28/16, 28/78, 30/11, 30/46, 30/54, 32/12, 32/22, 34/24, 34/31, 36/59, 37/33, 40/46, 43/74, 44/21, 44/37, 45/30, 46/24, 51/32, 54/47, 55/41, 55/43, 68/35, 70/11, 74/42, 77/18, 77/46 and 83/29.

indeed; but he brought the truth, and confirmed the Envoys. Now certainly you shall be tasting the painful chastisement, and not be recompensed, except according to what you were doing.' Sexual connotations may not be obvious in these uses of terms from the root JRM, even then there may be some cases that have present as well sexual (same-sex and/or opposite-sex) innuendos.²⁵

From a total of sixty-six uses of words from the root JRM, the Lot passages Q.7/82 and 15/58 in all likelihood refer to those who perished for same-sex sexual indiscretions as well as to others like Lot's wife whose sins, as we shall see, were probably non-sexual. Words from the root JRM are generally non-sensual in character. Eight cases (Q.5/3, 5/11, 11/24, 11/91, 16/24, 16/64, 16/110 and 40/46) are neutral while fifty-eight uses are negative. In general, uses of terms from the root JRM have negative dispositions.

Words from the root JRM do not morally prioritize same-sex activity over non-sexual sins. Terms from this root essentially focus upon disbelievers and/or acts of disbelief. The consequences for such people and/or deeds is often chastisement like "Fire" or "Gehenna". With reference to terms from the root JRM, same-sex sexuality within the Qur'ān is, then, morally equivalent to doing that which has been forbidden.

FSD

The term *mufsidūn* and related words, including first and fourth verbal forms (*fasada* and *afsada*) from the root FSD, can, according to the context, be translated to mean "to work corruption", "to go into ruin" or "to do mischief". Words from this root appear in only one previously cited Lot passage, Qur'ān 29/27-34. Terms from the root FSD can be found an additional forty-nine times in the Qur'ān.

In Q.29/29, 'My Lord, help me against the people that work corruption', Lot uses the term "those who work corruption" (*mufsidīn*) when he asks God for help against those whom he accuses, as seen in the FHS section, of committing "indecency"

²⁵For example, see Q.51/32-37 in the SRF section.

(*fāhishah*), possibly, in reference to men approaching other men sexually.²⁶

The remaining uses of terms from the root FSD refer to non-sexual indiscretions which may have inadvertent sexual connotations present as well. Forty-eight²⁷ uses refer to disbelievers (e.g., Pharaoh, Children of Israel, Jews, Ṣāliḥ's people, Shu'ayb's people and Queen of Sheba) and/or to acts of disbelief (e.g., hypocrisy, rejection of the Prophets, idolatry, murder, insolence, cheating, disbelief in the Qur'ān, crying lies, leading others astray, sorcery, robbery and causing dissension) as well as in some cases to chastisement being the end result of such deeds. Some references also emphasize how God does not love those who partake in "corruption".²⁸

An example of a reference that suggests disbelief is Q.27/34, in which the term, "disorder" (*ʿafṣadū*), is used by the Queen of Sheba in reference to Solomon. She feels that Kings (like Solomon), **enter a city, disorder it and make the mighty ones [like herself] of its inhabitants abased**. She justifies her refusal to accept his authority based on this belief. In a similar manner, ironically in Q.7/124 and 40/27, Pharaoh and/or his people accuse Moses and/or his followers of being "corrupt". This can for example be seen in the latter case, **And Pharaoh said, 'Let me slay Moses, and let him call to his Lord. I fear that he may change your religion, or that he may cause corruption [*fasād*] to appear in the land.'**

The last example from the root FSD, Q.28/83 refers to those (believers) who do not desire "corruption" (*fasād*) and, as such, gain entrance into the "Last Abode".

From a total of fifty uses of terms from the root FSD, the Lot passage Q.29/27-34 is the only one in which the use of "those who work corruption" may imply a same-sex

²⁶In reference to Q.29/27-29, Izutsu, Ethico-Religious Concepts, p. 212, states that the word from the root FSD "is used to mean the odious habit for which Sodom was notorious".

²⁷Q.2/10, 2/11, 2/25, 2/28, 2/57, 2/201 (twice), 2/219, 2/252, 3/56, 5/35, 5/37, 5/69 (twice), 7/54, 7/72, 7/83, 7/84, 7/101, 7/124, 7/138, 8/74, 10/41, 10/81, 10/91, 11/86, 11/118, 12/73, 13/25, 16/90, 17/4, 18/93, 21/22, 23/73, 26/152, 26/183, 27/14, 27/34, 27/49, 28/3, 28/77 (twice), 29/35, 30/40, 38/27, 40/27, 47/24 and 89/11.

²⁸For example, see Q.5/37 in the KHZY section.

indiscretion. The remaining uses support examples that deal mostly with disbelief and/or acts of disbelief. Words from the root FSD are generally non-sensual, negative and are qualified morally throughout the Qur'ān as having negative dispositions. In most passages, what has been deemed morally "corrupt" (and for which chastisement can be the penalty) are deeds of disbelief, with prominence being given to the rejection of the Prophets. With reference to terms from the root FSD, same-sex sexuality within the Qur'ān, then, is equivalent morally to the outright rejection of authority.

SW'

The word *sayyi'āt* and related terms, including first and fourth verbal forms as well as one compound adjective (*sā'a*, *asā'a* and *sayyi'*) from the root SW', can, according to the context, be translated to mean "to be or become evil", "to do wrong deeds", or "to do bad". Terms from this root appear in the previously cited Lot passages, Qur'ān 11/79-84, 21/74-75, 26/160-176, 27/55-59 and 29/27-34. Words from the root SW' can be found one hundred and sixty-one additional times in the Qur'ān.

The use of "evil deeds" (*sayyi'āt*) in Q.11/80, **And his people came to him, running towards him; and erstwhile they had been doing evil deeds**, can be understood as referring to the same men who, as seen in the THR section, reject Lot's offer of his daughters as being "cleaner" (*athar*) for them. It is possible that the men opt instead to approach Lot's male guests sexually.²⁹ The use of "troubled" (*sī'a*) in Q.11/79, **And when Our messengers came to Lot, he was troubled on their account and distressed for them, and he said, 'This is a fierce day'**, does not seem to have a moral implication present. Lot's duress, nonetheless, is possibly a result of what the men were capable of doing to his male guests. In addition to *sūrah* 11, the term "troubled" (*sī'a*) is used in Q.29/32, again, to refer to Lot's concern for the safety of the messengers.

The term "evil" (*saw'*) from the root SW' in Q.21/74, refers to Lot's people who

²⁹In reference to Q.11/80, Izutsu, Ethico-Religious Concepts, p. 229, links words from the root SW' to "sodomy" and on p. 234 to the "habit of Sodom".

were destroyed. This passage does not make specific mention of the sins of Lot's people, however, as seen in the FSQ section, in all probability the people destroyed may have included the likes of those who committed same-sex as well as non-sexual indiscretions (Lot's wife being an example of those belonging to the latter group).

The use of "evil" (*aw*) in Q.27/59, **And We rained on them a rain; and the rain of them that are warned, is indeed evil**, refers to a rain that destroyed not only the men who were accused of approaching other men sexually but as well the likes of Lot's wife who, as we shall see in the GHBR section, perished for non-sexual reasons. Similarly, in Q.26/173, the use of "evil" (*sa'a*) is used to refer to a rain that destroys Lot's people who were accused of "coming" onto other men instead of going to their wives. Also destroyed is "an old woman [probably Lot's wife as suggested in Q.27/59] among those that tarried [*ghābirīn*]".

Fourteen³⁰ other uses of words from the root SW', as seen in other sections, indicate meanings that refer in addition to same-sex activities, in particular to opposite-sex and non-sexual practices.³¹ For example, in Q.19/29, **Sister of Aaron, thy father was not a wicked [*saw*] man, nor was thy mother a woman unchaste**, the term "wicked" in Izutsu's words, "implies unchastity or sexual licence".³² This passage is thought to refer to Mary who conceived Jesus through immaculate conception. It emphasizes that neither of Mary's parents were unchaste and yet she became pregnant outside of marriage. There is present here an opposite-sex intimation.

³⁰Q.4/21, 4/22, 4/26, 7/19, 7/21, 7/25, 7/26, 12/24, 12/25, 12/51, 12/53, 17/34, 19/29 and 20/119.

³¹For example, for Q.4/21 and 4/22, see Q.4/19 and verse 20 of *sūrah* 4 (including footnote) in the FHS section and Q.4/21 in the JHL section. For Q.4/26, see Q.4/26 in the FHS section. For Q.7/21, see Q.7/21 (including footnote) in the 'DW section. For Q.7/26, see Q.7/27 and verse 26 of *sūrah* 7 in the FHS section. For verses 24, 25, 51 and 53 of *sūrah* 12, see Q.12/24 in the FHS section, Q.12/33 and verse 30 of *sūrah* 12 (including footnote) in the JHL section and verses 23, 25, 26, 30, 32 and 51 of *sūrah* 12 in the RWD section. For Q.17/34, see Q.17/34 in the FHS section and Q.17/35 in the SRF section.

³²Izutsu, *Ethico-Religious Concepts*, p. 230.

Majority of the uses (one hundred and six³³) of words from the root SW' indicate meanings which refer for the most part to disbelievers (e.g., people of Noah, people of 'Ād, people of Thamūd, men of Al-Rass, the Bedouins, Satan as well as Pharaoh and his followers) and/or to acts of disbelief (e.g., being displeased at the good fortune of others, using "bad language", murder, crying lies, idolatry and/or polytheism, being dissatisfied at the news of a baby girl, hypocrisy, wishing for others to disbelieve and being haughty) as well as to chastisement (e.g., "evil" abode and Gehenna) for these activities.

For example, Q.7/71, 11/67 and 26/156, all refer to the story of Thamūd and the Prophet Sālih. Reference is made to not touching with "evil" (in Q.7/71 and 11/67) or "malice" (in Q.26/156) a she-camel. In Q.26/155-57, **He said 'This is the she-camel; to her a draught and to you a draught, on a day appointed, and do not touch her with malice [aw] so that there seize you the chastisement of a dreadful day.' But they hamstrung her; and in the morning they were remorseful, and the chastisement seized them.** Sālih implores his people to believe in God telling them that they are not to mistreat the she-camel (a sign of God in Q.7/71 and 11/67) and that should they do so they will be chastised. Upon crippling the camel, true to Sālih's word, the offenders are destroyed. Q.27/47 is another passage that refers to the story of Thamūd and the Prophet Sālih. Here, Sālih chides the people for hastening "evil before good".

Thirty four³⁴ other uses refer to believers and/or acts of belief. Unlike disbelievers, believers also commit "evil" deeds which are often forgiven, providing they do good things (e.g., make free-will offerings - especially in private - to the poor, suffer in fighting

³³Q.2/46, 2/75, 2/164, 3/28, 3/116 (twice), 4/42, 4/80, 4/81, 4/87, 4/99, 4/115, 4/122, 4/147, 5/15, 5/34 (twice), 5/70 (twice), 6/31, 6/137, 6/158, 6/161, 7/71, 7/93, 7/128, 7/137, 7/165, 7/166, 7/167, 7/176, 7/188, 9/9, 9/37, 9/50, 9/99, 10/28 (twice), 11/13, 11/57, 11/67, 13/7, 13/18, 13/25, 14/6, 16/27, 16/29, 16/30, 16/36, 16/47, 16/61 (twice), 16/62, 16/96, 17/7 (twice), 17/40, 18/28, 20/101, 21/77, 25/42, 26/156, 27/5, 27/47, 27/92, 28/84 (twice), 29/3 (twice), 30/9 (twice), 30/35, 35/9, 35/11, 35/41 (twice), 37/177, 39/25, 39/48, 39/49, 39/52 (twice), 40/40, 40/43, 40/48 (twice), 40/55, 40/60, 41/27, 41/46, 42/38 (twice), 42/47, 45/14, 45/20 (twice), 45/32, 48/6 (thrice), 48/12, 53/32, 58/16, 60/2, 63/2 and 67/27.

³⁴Q.2/273, 3/168, 3/191, 3/194, 4/35, 4/110, 4/148, 5/101, 6/54, 7/152, 8/29, 9/103, 11/116, 13/21, 13/22, 16/120, 23/98, 25/66, 25/70, 27/11, 28/54, 29/6, 39/36, 39/62, 40/9 (twice), 41/34, 46/15, 47/2, 47/15, 48/5, 64/9, 65/5 and 66/8.

for God's cause, pray, pay alms, are kind to and respect their parents, turn away from idle talk and pardon others) as well as repent. Paradise is often said to be the reward for believers. Q.66/8 is a good example, **Believers, turn to God in sincere repentance** [*tawbatan naṣīhan*]; **it may be that your Lord will acquit you of your evil deeds** [*sayyi'āt*], **and will admit you into gardens underneath which rivers flow.**

Seven³⁵ uses of terms from the root SW' refer to God's power, for example in relation to God's ability to change "evil" into good or to there being no escape once God desires "evil". Whereas sexual connotations may not be obvious in these last one hundred and forty-seven uses of words from the root SW', there may be some cases, nonetheless, that do present sexual innuendo. Overall, however, the vast majority of the cases are non-sensual in character. In fact in most instances, sexual - same-sex and/or opposite-sex - transgressions are viewed as being no more abominable than non-sexual transgressions.

With the exception of three (Q.11/79, 17/7 and 29/32) neutral cases, words from the root SW' are generally negative and are qualified morally throughout the Qur'ān as having negative dispositions. While God ultimately resides over everything, human beings are also responsible for the outcome of their own actions, in particular, towards other creatures. Words from this root depict practices by humans that inflict pain, anguish, distress, suffering, etc., on other living things and, as a result, onto themselves. In contrast when human beings do good (e.g., accept all infants irregardless of gender, help the poor and look after and respect one's parents) they too benefit. With reference to terms from the root SW', same-sex sexuality within the Qur'ān is, then, morally equivalent to taking responsibility for one's own actions and knowing full well that one's positive and/or negative actions have corresponding consequences that affect both others and oneself.

NKR

The term *munkar* and related words, including second and fourth verbal forms (*nakkara* and *ankara*) from the root NKR, can, according to the context, be translated to

³⁵Q.13/12, 20/23, 27/12, 27/63, 28/32, 33/17 and 42/24.

mean "to disguise", "to deny", "to reject" or "to not know". Words from this root appear in the previously cited Lot passages, Qur'ān 15/58-77, 22/43-44 and 29/27-34. Terms from the root NKR can be found in thirty-four additional passages of the Qur'ān.

In Q.29/28, **What, do you approach men, and cut the way, and commit in your assembly dishonour?**, the term "dishonour" (*munkar*) is used after Lot accuses the people of committing "indecenty" (*fāhishah*) which, as seen in the FHS section, possibly refers to same-sex indiscretions (even though "cut the way" could suggest a non-sexual act such as robbery).

In Q.22/43, **And I respited the unbelievers, then I seized them; and how was My horror!**, the use of "horror" (*nakirī*) refers to God's trepidation at the deeds of the unbelievers. Disbelievers like the people of Noah, 'Ād and Thamūd, people of Abraham, people of Lot and the men of Midian are "respited" by God for having cried "lies". It is possible that in addition to non-sexual activities, unbelievers were also destroyed for opposite-sex and/or same-sex offenses (some of Lot's people being an example of those destroyed for the latter). In addition to Q.22/43, the non-Lot passages Q.34/44, 35/24 and 67/18 also mention God's "horror" at the disbelievers who "cried lies".

"Unknown" (*munkarūn*) in Q.15/62 is used by Lot to tell the envoys who approach him that he does not know them. Apart from this Lot passage, the same term is used in Q.51/25 by Abraham when he is approached by the Messengers whom he does not recognize. Likewise, in Q.11/73, Abraham is "suspicious" (*nakira*) of the Messengers whom he does not recognize and who tell him later that they have been sent to the "people of Lot". Similarly in Q.12/58, "knew him not" (*munkirūn*), another non-sexual term, is used to refer to Joseph's brothers who fail to recognize Joseph.

Twenty-eight other passages have mostly to do with vices and/or disbelief as well as with virtues and/or belief. Nineteen³⁶ passages belong to the former group and for example refer in Q.27/41 to Solomon who, in wanting to test the Queen of Sheba, decides to "disguise" (*nakkirū*) her throne. Q.31/18 refers to the ass's voice which is "hideous"

³⁶Q.5/82, 9/68, 13/36, 16/23, 16/85, 16/92, 18/73, 18/86, 21/51, 22/71, 23/71, 24/21, 27/41, 31/18, 40/81, 42/46, 54/6, 58/2 and 65/8

(*ankar*), emphasizing the need, among other things, to lower one's voice (i.e., not be haughty and/or boastful especially towards God). Q.42/46 urges people to acquire belief before the Last Day when there will be no "denial" (*nakīr*) whereas in Q.58/2, the term "dishonourable [*munkar*] saying", states Izutsu, "is applied to the formula of divorce",³⁷ i.e., what the men in *Jāhilīyah* used to say in order to divorce their wives.

In reference to virtues and/or belief, the term "dishonour" (*munkar*) is used in nine³⁸ other places, mostly as being opposite of honour (*ma'rūf*). The latter is preferred and a virtue of the believers. While most of the twenty-eight references are non-sexual in nature, nonetheless, there may be present possible sexual innuendos.³⁹

Words from the root NKR are neutral in four cases (Q.12/58, 15/62, 27/41 and 51/25). In the remaining thirty-three uses, the terms are negative, are generally non-sensual and are qualified morally throughout the Qur'ān as having negative dispositions. Same-sex sexuality is not the ultimate level of ignominy; rather, it is one of many vices often condemned as a practice of those who do wrong. Terms from this root refer to those who commit "dishonour" in the assembly, cry "lies", do not recognize others, commit vices (i.e., raise voices as well as become haughty and boastful towards God and also say dishonourable things about others) and disbelieve. In addition, reference is made to those who are virtuous and do believe, preferring to be honourable. In most of the examples, what is deemed as morally wrong is the unwillingness to foster and/or harbour amicable relations with one another and, as a result, with God. With reference to terms from the root NKR, same-sex sexuality within the Qur'ān is, then, morally equivalent to the refusal

³⁷Izutsu, *Ethico-Religious Concepts*, p. 217. Izutsu also writes that, "in this and other places *munkar* has semantically much in common with 'abomination' or 'indecent' is explicitly shown by the fact that the word sometimes appears in combination with *fāhshā* '[indecent]....' For example, as seen in the FHS section, in Q.16/92 "indecent" (*fāhshā*) is compared to "dishonour" (*munkar*) and "insolence" (*bhaghy*) such that they are opposite of being just and kind.

³⁸Q.3/100, 3/106, 3/110, 7/156 (as *munkir*), 9/72, 9/113, 22/42, 29/44 and 31/16

³⁹For example, as seen in the FHS section, in Q.24/21 reference is made to Satan who bids "indecent" (*fāhshā*) as well as "dishonour" (*munkar*). Despite the lack of obvious sexual content, it is possible to suggest that one who allows to be misled by Satan may indeed commit sexual (same-sex and/or opposite-sex) abominations.

to be humble.

KHBTH

The term *khābā'ith* and related words, including one adjective (*khābīth*) from the root KHBTH, can, according to the context, be translated to mean "to do deeds of corruption", "to be bad" or "to be wicked". Terms from the root KHBTH appear in the previously cited Lot passage Qur'ān 21/74-75 and fifteen times elsewhere in the Qur'ān.

In Q.21/74-75, as already seen in the FSQ and SW' sections, reference is made to Lot's people who were destroyed. In addition to being "evil" (*saw'*) and "of the ungodly" (*fāsiqūn*) the people **had been doing deeds of corruption** [*khābā'ith*]. Lot was delivered from harm because he was a righteous man who had been given "judgement and knowledge". Although this passage does not make specific mention of the sins of Lot's people, it is likely that the people destroyed may have included the likes of those who committed sexual - same-sex and/or opposite-sex (*zinā'*) - as well as non-sexual indiscretions (Lot's wife being an example of the latter).⁴⁰

Q.24/26 also seems to imply some form of sexual intimation in its use of "corrupt", **Corrupt women** [*khābīthāt*] **for corrupt men** [*khābīthīn*], **and corrupt men** [*khābīthīn*] **for corrupt women** [*khābīthāt*]; **good women** [*ṭayyibāt*] **for good men** [*ṭayyibīn*], **and good men** [*ṭayyibīn*] **for good women** [*ṭayyibāt*]**--these are declared quit of what they say; theirs shall be forgiveness and generous provision.** Here the "corrupt" women are to be matched only with the "corrupt" men as are the "good" women with the "good" men. It seems plausible to suggest that "corrupt" refers to those women and men who have committed same-sex and/or opposite-sex sexual (*zinā'*) indiscretions (outside the

⁴⁰Izutsu, Ethico-Religious Concepts, p. 236 in referring to Q.21/74 states that, "*khābīth* is applied to the abominable custom of the people of Sodom, who are themselves described as a people of *saw'* and *fāsiq*. All these elements combined, serve to bring out with utmost clarity the concrete meaning content of the word *khābīth*". Al-Shamma, The Ethical System, p. 32 states, "In (21, 74) *khābā'th* might mean 'foul deeds' in general, but sodomy is mainly understood as underlying the word".

bounds of marriage).⁴¹

The majority of the other eleven⁴² passages which use terms from the root KHBTH refer mostly to non-sexual vices which, nonetheless, may imply sexual content as well. For example in Q.7/156, **...making lawful [yuhillu] for them the good things [tayyibāt] and making unlawful [yuharrimu] for them the corrupt things [khabā'ith], and relieving them of their loads, and the fetters that were upon them. Those who believe in him and succour him and help him, and follow the light that has been sent down with him--they are the prosperers,** "corrupt" can be those things that have been forbidden (such as certain foods for example) for believers.

Most of the uses of KHBTH provide a distinction between that which has been deemed as being good and/or lawful and that which has been deemed bad and/or unlawful. In most references, the former is what is encouraged (and for which there is a "generous provision" as in Q.24/26) while consequences for partaking in the latter can be deadly (like "Gehenna" as in Q.8/38).

Words from the root KHBTH are negative, generally non-sensual and are qualified morally throughout the Qur'ān as having negative dispositions. In all passages, what has been deemed morally "corrupt" are deeds and/or vices like same-sex activity, opposite-sex activity, unlawful things such as certain foods, disbelief and/or disbelievers--all of which are contrasted to that which is lawful and usually practiced by believers. With reference to terms from the root KHBTH, same-sex sexuality within the Qur'ān is, then, morally equivalent to an overall willingness to replace something that has been deemed as being morally right and/or lawful with that which is believed as being morally wrong and/or forbidden.

⁴¹Al-Shamma, The Ethical System, p. 33 states, "Khabīth is used in (24, 26) meaning 'unchaste', and the passage seems to inflict a social punishment in addition to the moral and religious punishment of unchastity....Thus the passage prevents the marriage of anyone who dares break the ethics of sex brought by the Qur'ān...." Bell, Commentary, Vol. I, p. 598, in referring to Q.24/26 states that the verse, "evidently refers to marriage, and confirms the supposition that there had been earlier deliverances dealing with fornication and the marriage of prostitutes...."

⁴²Q.2/269, 3/173, 4/2, 5/100 (twice), 7/56, 7/156, 8/38 (twice) and 14/31 (twice).

ZLM

The term *ẓālimūn* and related words, including the first verbal form, one compound adjective and two adjectives (*ẓalama*, *azlam*, *ẓallām* and *ẓalūm*) from the root ZLM, can, according to the context, be translated to mean "to do evil", "to be unjust", "to do greater wrong", "to oppress" or "to be sinful". Terms from this root appear in three previously cited Lot passages, Qur'ān 11/79-84, 22/43-44 and 29/27-34. Words from the root ZLM can be found two hundred and ninety-five other times in the Qur'ān.

In Q.11/84, **We turned it uppermost nethermost, and rained on it stones of baked clay, one on another, marked with thy Lord, and never far from the evildoers**, based on our analysis of the other terms, particularly "cleaner" (*aṭhar*), "we desire" (*nurīdu*) and "do not degrade" (*lā tukhẓū*), the term "evildoers" (*ẓālimūn*) which is used to refer to those who were destroyed, probably accounts for those men who may have been hoping to have some sort of sexual contact with Lot's male guests. In this passage the use of the root ZLM, unlike the roots THR, RWD, KHZY and SW', includes both those men destroyed for same-sex abominations and Lot's wife who for non-sexual reasons is also to be "smitten" (*musibuha*).

In Q.22/43-44, as already suggested in the NKR section, in addition to opposite-sex and non-sexual deeds, those who were destroyed may have (like some of Lot's people) perished for same-sex indiscretions. The term "evildoing" (*ẓālimah*) in Q.22/44, **How many a city We have destroyed in its evildoing, and now it is fallen down upon its turrets!**, is thus used in a generic sense to refer to these unbelievers.

In Q.29/30, the term "evildoers" (*ẓālimūn*) is used by Messengers who inform Abraham that they are going to destroy Lot's people. As already seen in our analysis of previous roots, specifically FHS and NKR, the men are accused perhaps of approaching other men sexually (although "cut the way" could have a non-sexual implication). In addition, Lot's wife is to be destroyed for deeds that are non-sexual in nature.

Apart from the three Lot passages, the conceivable existence of sexual - same-sex

and/or opposite-sex - and non-sexual content is present in Q.4/34 and 12/23.⁴³ The remaining two hundred and ninety-three uses of terms from the root *ZLM* refer mostly to non-sexual content, with the possibility of some cases having inadvertent sexual intimations as well.⁴⁴ A majority of the cases (two-hundred and fifteen uses⁴⁵) make reference to disbelievers (e.g., the Children of Israel, Abraham's people, Noah's people, people of 'Ād, people of Thamūd (or Sālih's people), people of the Thicket, men of Midian (or Shu'ayb's people), Jews, Christians, Satan as well as Pharaoh and his Council).

Disbelievers commit several abominations (e.g., disbelieve in the Qur'ān, reject God's signs including God's Messengers, disbelieve in the world to come, practice sorcery, consume forbidden foods, lead others astray, impede God's place of worship, commit idolatry, conceal God's testimony, argue with believers, do not fight when fighting has been prescribed, do not expend, believe God is the Messiah (Jesus), forge against God lies and wax proud) and, as a consequence, are sometimes said to face a terrible recompensation (e.g., chastisement in the form of Fire or Gehenna, "wrath out of heaven"

⁴³For example, for Q.4/34 see Q.4/34 (including footnote) in the 'DW section and for Q.12/23, see Q.12/24 in the FHS section, Q.12/33 as well as verse 30 of this *sūrah* (including footnote) in the JHL section and verses from *sūrah* 12 in the RWD section.

⁴⁴For example, see Q.2/231 (especially footnote) in the 'DW section and Q.65/1 in the FHS section.

⁴⁵Q.2/16, 2/18, 2/48, 2/51, 2/54 (twice), 2/56 (twice), 2/86, 2/89, 2/108, 2/118, 2/134, 2/140, 2/145, 2/160, 2/189, 2/229, 2/247, 2/255, 2/258, 2/259, 2/260, 2/273, 3/50, 3/80, 3/88, 3/113 (twice), 3/123, 3/134, 3/144, 3/189, 4/67, 4/77, 4/99, 4/152, 4/158, 4/166, 5/18, 5/32, 5/49, 5/56, 5/76, 6/21 (twice), 6/33, 6/39, 6/45, 6/47, 6/52, 6/58, 6/67, 6/93 (twice), 6/129, 6/136, 6/145 (twice), 6/158, 7/4, 7/8, 7/35, 7/39, 7/42, 7/45, 7/101, 7/147, 7/149, 7/160 (twice), 7/162 (twice), 7/165, 7/176, 8/25, 8/56, 9/19, 9/47, 9/71 (twice), 9/110, 10/14, 10/18, 10/40, 10/53, 10/55, 10/85, 10/106, 11/21 (twice), 11/33, 11/39, 11/46, 11/70, 11/97, 11/103, 11/104, 11/115, 11/118, 12/75, 13/7, 14/16, 14/27, 14/32, 14/37, 14/43, 14/45, 14/47, 15/78, 16/30, 16/35, 16/63, 16/87, 16/114, 16/119, 17/50, 17/61, 17/84, 17/101, 18/14, 18/28, 18/48, 18/55, 18/58, 18/86, 19/39, 19/73, 20/110, 21/3, 21/11, 21/14, 21/30, 21/47, 21/60, 21/65, 21/97, 22/26, 22/47, 22/52, 22/70, 23/28, 23/29, 23/43, 23/96, 23/109, 24/49, 25/5, 25/9, 25/21, 25/29, 25/39, 26/9, 26/228, 27/14, 27/53, 27/87, 28/20, 28/25, 28/37, 28/40, 28/50, 28/59, 29/13, 29/39, 29/45, 29/48, 29/68, 30/8, 30/28, 30/57, 31/10, 31/12, 32/22, 33/72, 34/18, 34/30, 34/41, 35/29, 35/35, 35/38, 37/22, 37/61, 37/113, 39/25, 39/33, 39/48, 39/52, 40/19, 40/55, 42/6, 42/20, 42/21, 42/38, 42/40, 42/42, 42/44, 43/38, 43/65, 43/76, 45/18, 46/9, 46/11, 51/59, 52/47, 53/53, 59/17, 61/7 (twice), 62/5, 62/7, 66/11, 71/24, 71/29 and 76/31.

and even drowning).

Twenty-six⁴⁶ additional uses refer to deeds of disbelief (e.g., devouring an orphan's property, giving false testimony at the bequeathing of property, retaining ex-wives unlawfully against their wills after the divorce has been finalized, expelling ex-wives prematurely, having disbelievers as friends, telling lies, committing murder, fighting unfairly, scoffing at others, giving others contemptuous nicknames, not repenting and looking down on others) which may be practised by disbelievers and believers alike. What distinguishes the former from the latter is that more often than not, believers tend to repent upon seeing the error of their ways.⁴⁷

The last fifty-two⁴⁸ uses of terms from the root *ZLM* essentially emphasize God's fairness and, as a result, that no one is wronged. Since God is not capable of "wronging" or being "unjust" to either believers or disbelievers, should the former be allowed into Paradise and the latter perish, each one gets what they deserve. God even permits those who have been "wronged" to fight back; God is never unfair. Q.42/39-40 is a good example, **And whoever helps himself after he has been wronged [ba'da zulmihi]-- against them there is no way. The way is only open against those who do wrong [yazlimūna] to the people, and are insolent in the earth wrongfully [bi-ghayr al-haqq]; there awaits them a painful chastisement.**⁴⁹

In the Qur'ān, in reference to the overall use of words from the root *ZLM*, same-sex impropriety is not the ultimate level of "wrong-doing"; rather, it is one of many activities that is often condemned together with opposite-sex sexual and non-sexual practices alike.

⁴⁶Q.2/33, 2/231, 3/129, 4/11, 4/110, 4/147, 5/43, 5/106, 7/18, 7/22, 9/23, 9/36, 10/45, 12/79, 16/43, 17/35, 18/33, 21/87, 27/11, 27/45, 28/15, 38/23, 49/11, 60/9, 65/1 and 68/29.

⁴⁷For example, see Q.17/35 in the SRF section.

⁴⁸Q.2/274, 2/279 (twice), 2/281, 3/24, 3/104, 3/113, 3/155, 3/178, 4/44, 4/52, 4/79, 4/123, 6/1, 6/59, 6/63, 6/82, 6/131, 6/161, 8/53, 8/62, 10/45, 10/48, 10/55, 11/103, 11/119, 16/35, 16/112, 16/119, 17/73, 18/31, 18/47, 19/61, 20/111, 21/48, 22/10, 22/40, 23/64, 26/209, 26/228, 29/39, 30/8, 36/54, 39/69, 40/17, 40/33, 41/46, 42/39, 43/76, 45/21, 46/18 and 50/28.

⁴⁹Another example is Q.19/60-61 in the SHHY section.

With the exception of ten⁵⁰ neutral uses, words from the root **ZLM** are generally non-sensual, mostly negative and are qualified morally throughout the Qur'ān as having both negative and positive dispositions (with more of an emphasis on the former).

In essence, what is deemed morally unacceptable are certain activities practiced both by believers and disbelievers alike (with an emphasis on the latter group). Even though both believers and disbelievers transgress God's bounds, they do so by different proportions; more importantly, the former are more willing to repent. All human beings are responsible for their own fate and are recompensed accordingly; however, God has the ultimate say and is always equitable--never unjust. With reference to terms from the root **ZLM**, same-sex sexuality within the Qur'ān is, then, morally equivalent to not only following one's own whims at the expense of hurting others (as in the *Jāhiliyah* - Age of Ignorance), but in this insolence also of totally rejecting God's Revelation. Majority of the terms from this root are opposite of both *hilm* or reason and *'ilm* or Qur'ānic religious knowledge.

GHBR

The verb *ghabara* is translated to mean "to tarry". The term *ghābirūn* from the root **GHBR**, as has been observed, occurs seven times in Qur'ān 7/78-82, 15/58-77, 26/160-176, 27/55-59, 29/27-34 and 37/133-138 pertaining to Lot. One other term, *ghabarah*, also from the root **GHBR**, occurs only once in Qur'ān 80/40 and means "dust". Unlike any of the other roots that have been examined, terms from the root **GHBR** are not moral in nature. It is a root, nonetheless, that is used to refer to Lot's wife who perishes with the others, some of whom as we have seen, were accused of same-sex indiscretions. Lot's wife is the only clear example of those destroyed for non-sexual reasons. The fact that this root contrasts the other roots in this way makes it an imperative root to study. Since it is non-moral in nature, it is the last of the seventeen roots to be analyzed.

The use of "tarried" (*ghābirūn*) in Q.7/78-82, 15/58-77, 27/55-59 and 29/27-34

⁵⁰Q.2/16, 2/18, 2/258, 2/259, 5/18, 6/1, 6/39, 6/59, 6/63 and 18/31.

emphasizes that while Lot and part of his family were saved, his wife perished along with all the others who were destroyed. Even though her sin has not been elaborated upon, clearly Lot's wife cannot be placed in the same category, for example, as those men accused of approaching other men "lustfully [*shahwah*] instead of women" as in Q.7/78-82 and 27/55-59 or as those men who are offered Lot's daughters as in Q.15/58-77. Her "sinful" ways in all likelihood suggest non-sexual indiscretions.⁵¹

⁵¹Yusuf Ali, trans., The Holy Qur'an, in his footnote no. 3289, p. 991, in referring to *sūrah* 27, states that Lot's wife "...was not apparently a Believer. Her previous sympathy with the sinful people 'destined her'...to a miserable end, as she lagged behind and shared in the destruction of her kinsfolk". As seen in chapter one, in the Biblical rendition, despite having been forbidden to turn around, Lot's wife turns to look back when fleeing to Zoar and is thus turned into a pillar of salt. Max Seligsohn, "Lot", The Jewish Encyclopedia, VIII, 186, states that in Rabbinical literature, "Lot's wife, called 'Irit' or 'Idit,' desirous to see whether her other two daughters followed her, looked behind her: but she then saw the back of the Shekinah [Divine Presence] and was accordingly punished for her imprudence (*Pirke R. El. l.c.*). She was turned into a pillar of salt because she had previously sinned by not giving salt to strangers (Targ. pseudo-Jonathan and Yer. to Gen. xix. 26, comp. Gen. R. li. 7). According to a legend, oxen used to consume every day the pillar of salt by licking it down to the toes, but it was restored by the morning (*Pirke R. El. l.c.*; Sefer ha-Yashar, 'Wayera,' p. 28a, b). Lot's wife, being turned into a pillar of salt, was not considered as a dead body, contact with which rendered one unclean (*Niddah* 70b). The transformation was one of those miraculous occurrences at sight of which one must recite a benediction (*Ber. 54a*)". On p. 187 of the same article, under "Critical View", Joseph Jacobs states that, "The story about Lot's wife, also, bears marks of popular origin, and is regarded by critics and travellers as a folk-legend intended to explain some pillar of crystallized rock-salt resembling the female human form. Owing to its composition, such a pillar would soon dissolve. One in the neighbourhood of the Dead Sea was identified by Josephus (*'Ant.'* i. 11, § 4) as that of Lot's wife; and another (or the same) had that name at the time of Clement of Rome (*I Cor. xi.2*)". Also see Michael D. Coogan, "Lot", The Oxford Companion of the Bible, p. 467 and Heller-[Vajda], "Lūt", The Encyclopaedia of Islam, V, 832-833. In later Muslim sources such as The History of al-Ṭabarī: Prophets and Patriarchs, William M. Brinner, trans., p. 118, according to Mūsā b. Hārūn--'Amr b. Ḥammād--Asbāt--al-Suddī--Abū Mālik and Abū Ṣāliḥ--Ibn 'Abbās and Murah al-Ḥamdānī--Ibn Mas'ūd and some of the companions of the Prophet, Lot's people (for reasons unknown) had forbidden him to be hospitable to anyone. So when Lot accommodated his male guests, he did so in secrecy, "...and no one but his family knew they were there. But Lot's wife went out to tell her people saying, 'In Lot's house there are men the likes of whom I have never seen, nor have I ever seen such handsome faces.' [In a footnote here, reference is made to 'Ginzberg, *Legends*, I, 254, where Lot's wife borrows salt from a neighbour saying, 'We had enough salt, until guests came to us...' thus inadvertently betraying the secret. Salt being the cause of her sin, she is turned into salt. But *ibid.*, V, 241, n. 176, exonerates her.]" In the same source, on p. 120, according to Bishr b. Mu'ādh--Yazīd--Sa'īd--Qatādah--Ḥudhayfah, upon seeing the messengers, "the evil old woman", who is referred to as Lot's wife, told her people about the guests. Later, when Lot is asked to escape with his family, "It has been mentioned that Lot's wife was with them when they left the town, but when she heard the sound of its destruction she turned around, and God dropped a stone

In both Q.26/171 and 37/135, even though no specific mention is made to Lot's wife, it is possible to suggest that the **old woman among those that tarried** is indeed Lot's wife, based on the use of *ghābirūn* in Q.7/81, 15/60, 27/58, 29/31 and 29/32. Either way, the woman who was among those who "tarried" does not do so for sexual indiscretions; for example, Lot clearly is not referring to her when he admonishes the men for coming to other males instead of going to their wives as in Q.26/160-176. Most of those who are destroyed "are not believers".

Outside the use of words from the root GHBR, there are only two other references made to Lot's wife in the Qur'ān. As seen in the Lot passage Q.11/79-84, Lot's wife is to be "smitten" (*musibuha*) along with the other "evildoers" (*ẓālimūn*), some of whom, as seen especially in the THR and RWD sections, are men who may have been hoping to have sexual contact with Lot's male guests. Once again, however, there is no concrete explanation given for Lot's wife's destruction. The only other passage, Q.66/10 already cited, in which reference is made to Lot's wife, suggests that the main sin of Lot's wife was disbelief which led to her betrayal of Lot and therefore determined her fate.⁵²

on her and destroyed her". Though reference is made on pp. 117, 119, 120, 121 and 122 to Lot's wife's pre-determined fate, in many of the narrations in al-Tabarī such as on p. 117 and as seen on p. 118, Lot's wife's sin seems to have been related to informing the townsfolk of her husband's guests. Interestingly, in many citations, she is killed not while being among those who "tarry" but as in the Biblical rendition, for having turned around. See pp. 120 and 121 for examples. In another late Muslim source, *The Tales of the Prophets of al-Kisa'i*, W. M. Thackston, Jr., trans., p. 157, reference is made to Lot reprimanding his wife for having "disobeyed God for forty years", demanding that she keep the guests hidden. It is further stated on this page that, "Noah's wife's treachery was that she told her people not to strike him [Noah] because he was mad. Lot's wife's treachery was in grinding wheat if a guest came during the day and in kindling a fire if a guest came at night so that the people would know someone was there". On p. 159, Lot's wife is killed by a stone that strikes her head after she asks Lot (in disbelief) "Does your Lord have the power to destroy all these cities?". Lot's wife, "It is said...remained transformed into a black stone for twenty years, after which she was swallowed up into the bowels of the earth".

⁵²Bell, *Commentary*, Vol. II, p. 399, in reference to Q.66/10-12 states that, "One is tempted to find in this passage a reference to the Prophet's matrimonial worries, but *alladhīna kafarū* is too much a designation of persistent unbelievers like the Meccans to be used of disobedient wives...." In referring specifically to Q.66/10, on the same page Bell goes on to say that, "The wife of Noah' is probably due to some confusion, perhaps with the wife of Job". Barbara Freyer Stowasser, *Women in the Qur'an. Traditions and Interpretation*, pp. 39-40 states that, "In scripture and interpretation, the wives of Noah and Lot are examples of rebelliousness

All uses of terms from the root GHBR have nothing to do with sexual activities. The term *ghabara* in five (Q.7/81, 15/60, 27/58, 29/31 and 29/32) of the eight cases make reference to Lot's wife who was among those who "tarried" and, as a result, got destroyed along with all the others. In two other uses (Q.26/171 and 37/135) reference is made to an "old woman" who was one of those who "tarried", in all likelihood referring again to Lot's wife. Though none of these seven uses elaborate on the exact nature of the sin, Lot's wife and/or the "old-woman" were not punished for erring sexually. Outside the root GHBR, in referring to Q.66/10 it seems that Lot's wife's sin was her disbelief in God and, as a consequence, her betrayal of her prophet husband Lot. The remaining use of the root GHBR in Q.80/40, makes reference to "dust", reflecting the disbelievers' doomed disposition on the day of judgement.

The use of words from the root GHBR in the Qur'ān are clearly not moral in nature nor do they make reference to sexual sins. But they do confirm the premise that same-sex sexuality is not the ultimate abomination that causes people to be alienated from God. After all, Lot's wife whose disbelief and betrayal were her downfall, also perished with

against God and His chosen spokesmen. They acted falsely toward their husbands, both righteous servants of God; these prophets in turn, then did not (could not?) help them in the final reckoning before God, and the two sinners were condemned to hell. The Qur'anic 'lesson of warning' on the wives of Noah and Lot appears in Sura 66:10 where, by inner-Qur'anic context, it belongs together with the Sura as a whole. The main theme of Sura 66 is female rebellion in a prophet's household and its punishment. [Here, in an endnote Stowasser writes that, 'The flip side of this theme--which is righteousness, faith, and obedience of female exemplars who had no conjugal relations with a prophet of God--appears at the end of the Sura (66:11-12) in the examples of the Pharaoh's wife, foster mother of the prophet Moses, and Mary, mother of the prophet Jesus'.] The first five verses of Sura 66 deal with a specific crises in the Prophet Muhammad's household....Verses six and seven of Sura 66 speak of the certainty of hell, a warning to the believers and a divinely ordained requital for the unbelievers. In 66:8 the believers are called upon to repent so that God forgive their bad deeds and admit them to paradise on the day when the Prophet and those who believe will not be humiliated. Sura 66:9 calls upon the Prophet to stand steadfast against unbelievers and hypocrites. In 66:10, the wives of Noah and Lot are then established as examples of how God punishes sinful conduct on the part of consorts of righteous prophets. The wives of Noah and Lot, then, appear in 66:10 as symbolic prefigurations of acts of betrayal by the Prophet's own, and their stories exemplify the seriousness of such betrayal, which leads to eternal punishment in hell. Islamic exegesis has shown some awareness of the links between these 'warning examples' and Muhammad's wives (although in a reverse mode)...."

all the others.⁵³

Terms from the root GHBR, even though they are not moral words, are negative words which are qualified in the Qur'ān as having negative dispositions. In the Lot passages, words from the root GHBR convey a sense of being left behind and therefore of being excluded from safety, whereas in Q.80/40, reference is made to the doom that disbelievers face. What seems to intertwine all the eight uses of words from the root GHBR is that the terms are indicative of "reaping what one sows".

⁵³Stowasser, Women in the Qur'an, p. 40, puts it well when she writes, "...the wives of Noah and Lot have thus been recognized as models of, and for, the human condition. Here they have come to represent the tenet of free will, that is, individual human freedom of choice and concomitant responsibility in matters of morality and faith. Even a woman, and even a prophet's wife, is a free agent when she answers the essential question of the purpose of life. Thereafter, she will gain her eternal reward according to the quality of this, her most fundamental decision".

Table 3.4

Root (in order of analysis)	sensual and/or non-sensual terms	positive (+), negative (-) and/or neutral terms	positive (+), negative (-) and/or neutral dispositions
'DW	generally non-sensual terms	- terms	- dispositions
RWD	generally non-sensual terms	2 neutral and rest are mostly + terms	+ and - dispositions
FDH	fairly sensual term	- term	- disposition
KHZY	generally non-sensual terms	- terms	- dispositions
FSQ	generally non-sensual terms	- terms	- dispositions
JRM	generally non-sensual terms	8 neutral and rest are - terms	- dispositions
FSD	generally non-sensual terms	- terms	- dispositions
SW'	generally non-sensual terms	3 neutral and rest are - terms	- dispositions
NKR	generally non-sensual terms	4 neutral and rest are - terms	- dispositions
KHBTH	generally non-sensual terms	- terms	- dispositions
ZLM	generally non-sensual terms	10 neutral terms and rest are - terms	+ and - dispositions
GHBR	non-sensual terms	- non-moral terms	- dispositions

CHAPTER FIVE CONCLUSION

In chapter one, we posed difficult questions. For example, we raised questions concerning the claim traditional Muslims make that "Islam is very clear about homosexuality" and that it is "one of the most dangerous crimes". We asked whether the ban on same-sex sexuality in Islam does indeed have its roots in the Biblical story of Lot which also appears in the Qur'ān. We wondered if a "reform position" on homosexuality is totally out of the question. Is it true that the only options are to either "convert" to heterosexual behaviour, refuse to be part of the Islamic society or in the event that the first two options are rejected, even face death? In wanting to recognize the struggles that queer Muslims endure in their attempt to hold on to Islam, we have completed one part of a long and difficult journey.

In our quest to seek answers to the continued ostracizing of queer Muslims both by traditional Muslim sectors and often consequently by their own families, we suggested that by going to the core we might be able to see for ourselves what moral judgement is made upon same-sex sexuality in Islam. The search was to see for ourselves if there is a basis in the Muslim sacred text of the Qur'ān for making a judgement on this. Aware of the challenge, we proposed to try and explore the stance of same-sex sexuality in Islam by looking (primarily) at the way in which the story of Lot is talked about in the Qur'ān.

From one hundred and fourteen chapters in the Qur'ān, we found passages in fourteen¹ *sūrahs* that refer to Lot. Furthermore, key "ethical" and/or "moral" words (that is, terms which describe, evaluate or qualify certain human actions and which involve what is believed to be God's judgement on these actions) from the seventeen² Arabic roots

¹Q.6/85-87, 7/78-82, 11/73 and 11/79-84, 15/58-77, 21/70-71 and 21/74-75, 22/43-44, 26/160-176, 27/55-59, 29/25 and 29/27-34, 37/133-138, 38/11-14, 50/12-13, 54/33-40 and 66/10. The last passage, Q.66/10, refers to Lot's wife rather than to Lot himself.

²In alphabetical order, 'DW, FDH, FHS, FSD, FSQ, GHBR, JHL, JRM, KHBTH, KHZY, NKR, RWD, SHHY, SRF, SW', THR and ZLM.

analyzed, occur a varying number of times³ in ten⁴ of the fourteen Lot *sūrahs* and elsewhere in the Qur'ān.

In our goal to understand the Qur'ān's perception of the morality of same-sex sexuality, we carried out an investigation of the ethical and moral words, by pragmatically exploring the semantic categories of these terms. We did this first, by providing, in Izutsu's words, a "word-word" definition (i.e., provided a simple translation) of the terms we analyzed and then transformed the "word-word" definition into a "word-thing" definition (i.e., gathered different terms from a root and contrasted them against one another). After collecting pertinent examples of passages of the Qur'ān and subjecting them to a thorough scrutiny, we attempted to provide as accurate a meaning as possible of the given words belonging to their respective roots as used in the Qur'ān.

In the interest of determining the moral qualification of terms that suggest strong same-sex content within the Qur'ān, we first analyzed those moral words, in particular from the Lot story as seen in chapter two, that present an obvious sexual connotation. After analyzing terms, both in the Lot passages and elsewhere in the Qur'ān, that suggest same-sex and/or opposite-sex sexual content (with precedence being given to the former), we looked at the remaining verses that suggest non-sexual meanings.

Of the seventeen, we first analyzed the roots in order of SHHY, FHSH, JHL, SRF and THR, followed by the second group of roots 'DW, RWD, FDH, KHZY, FSQ, JRM, FSD, SW ', NKR, KHBTH, ZLM and GHBR. Even though terms from the root GHBR are non-moral in nature, we thought it essential to study this root as it supports a clear example of Lot's wife perishing for non-sexual reasons with those others, who, perished for sexual reasons. To avoid being repetitious we condensed those roots from the second group which gave us similar conclusions.

³The least being once (as in the case of the root FDH) and the most frequent being two hundred and ninety-eight times (as in the case of the root ZLM).

⁴Q.7/78-82, 11/79-84, 15/58-77, 21/74-75, 22/43-44, 26/160-176, 27/55-59, 29/27-34, 37/133-138 and 54/33-40.

After gathering all the different terms from a given root and contrasting them against one another, in light of their connotations, we then tried to determine the relationship between all these terms. We did this by discovering common and uncommon elements in each of these terms that allowed particular words to be connected to specific groups of activities.

What we found is that while there are no terms in the Qur'ān that are uniquely attached to same-sex sexuality, certain terms (e.g., from the roots SHHY and FHSH) are frequently associated with same-sex practices. These terms are not used exclusively to denote or to condemn same-sex actions, these words do nonetheless qualify morally the practice. However, these same terms are used to qualify morally opposite-sex and non-sexual activities as well. Same-sex indiscretions are, in fact, put on the same ethical plane as all sorts of inappropriate opposite-sex and non-sexual activities.

In that sense, same-sex sexual abominations are just another form of alienation from God, no different than anything else. In the Lot narrative, the people's alienation from God is due to many things. It is possible to suggest that some of Lot's people (specifically the men) were indeed destroyed right after they threatened to assault Lot's male guests sexually; however, there are others, like Lot's wife, who are destroyed for non-sexual indiscretions. This example alone confirms the premise that same-sex sexuality is not the ultimate abomination that causes people to be alienated from God. Same-sex activities are not that different from certain opposite-sex and non-sexual practices.

Apart from same-sex activities, reference is also made to other opposite-sex sexual practices like desiring women and/or men outside bounds of marriage, committing adultery and/or fornication, i.e., *zinā*, marrying women whom one's father has married as well as approaching female relatives like mothers, daughters, sisters, aunts, nieces, etc., sexually, partaking in sexual activity during the course of a woman's menstrual cycle, not purifying oneself prior to prayer after having had sexual relations, not guarding one's "private parts" apart from one's spouses as well as slaves and becoming pregnant outside of marriage.

On the same ethical level, references are made to non-sexual activities such as the preference for earthly "lusts" like more wealth in the form of children, gold, silver, horses, cattle and land over the desire for heavenly rewards (e.g., "purified" spouses, a "pure" drink in heaven as well as "fruits and flesh"), preference for male infants over female babies, breaking rules of conduct with women pertaining to divorce and dowry, insolence, arrogance and/or haughtiness, denying God's signs, i.e., disbelieving in the Qur'ān as well as rejecting God's prophets, not expending or giving alms, not controlling one's temper, not forgiving others, being unreasonable, consuming goods in vanity or displaying finery (i.e., showing off), murder, being provoked easily, opposing peace, jealousy, telling lies, idle talk and feeling disheartened as well as dismal about the future.

In addition, reference is made to wasting an orphan's property, acting immoderately (e.g., when giving alms and consuming food and/or drinks), refusing to repent after doing wrong, persecuting believers, partaking in sorcery, practicing idolatry and/or polytheism, not praying, not ritually purifying oneself prior to prayer after visiting the lavatory, hypocrisy, partaking in forbidden foods (e.g., "carion", "blood" and "the flesh of swine"), breaking the Sabbath after having made a compact not to do so, conspiring in secret, hostility (which includes aggression, retaliation, fighting, and animosity), giving false testimony (i.e., dishonesty), favouring the rich over the poor, encouraging slave girls who wish to marry to remain prostitutes, and believing in Ezra and/or Jesus respectively as "the Son of God".

Furthermore, also included in this category are activities like being displeased with the good fortune of others, using "bad language", wishing for others to disbelieve, failing to recognize others, being unkind to and disrespectful towards parents, disbelieving in the world to come, impeding God's place of worship, concealing God's testimony, arguing with believers, not fighting when fighting has been prescribed, having disbelievers as friends, scoffing at others, giving others contemptuous nicknames, acting unjustly when dealing with credit in commerce, gambling, finding possessions, commerce as well as dwellings dearer than God, not feeding the needy, robbery, causing dissension, and even to the "uncleanliness" of menstruation.

Notwithstanding the reference made to menstruating women, most of these activities are carried out by disbelievers (e.g., "People of the Book" [Jews and Christians], "People of the Gospel" [Christians], Children of Israel, Pharaoh and his followers, Satan, Lot's people, Noah's people, people of 'Ād [or Hūd's people], Abraham's people, Ṣālih's people [or the people of Thamūd], people of the Thicket, men of Midian [or Shu'ayb's people], men of Al-Rass, the Bedouins, Queen of Sheba and the Egyptians); however, believers partake in some of these activities too. What seems to distinguish the former from the latter is that more often than not, believers tend to repent upon seeing the error of their ways.

There are various consequences that are a result of the outlined activities. Sometimes, the repercussions of being found guilty of sexual abomination can be death, or upon repentance, possibly, forgiveness. Often the penalty for fornication is also scourging. On the other hand, repercussions for disbelief include degradation, being slaughtered, crucified, having hands and feet alternately struck off and even drowning. For the believers, the pleasures of paradise await those who are not self-indulgent and who are godfearing. For example, those women who are "obedient" and who do not partake in forbidden things are promised "a generous provision".

In our examination of the seventeen roots, we found that words from the root SHHY, have a fair emphasis on same-sex sexual activities. These activities, nonetheless, are morally equivalent to practices undertaken by those who, for example, are self-indulgent, constantly giving in to human weakness and hence distancing themselves from God. Often, such terms are indicative of a tension that things that are forbidden are also sacred.

In light of the other roots, same-sex sexuality within the Qur'ān is morally equivalent, in the FHS section, to those who, for example, give in to human weakness and do not succeed in distancing themselves from that which is considered to be evil, hateful, dishonourable and sinful. Again, it is believed that such abominations distance one from God. Same-sex sexuality is also morally equivalent to those who are prone to unreasonableness (as in the JHL section), do things in immoderate proportions (as in the

SRF section), have the choice of deciding whether one should partake in that which renders one clean or do that which causes one to be unclean (as in the **THR** section), go to any extremes at the mercy of one's own whim and, therefore, digress into the ways of the *Jāhiliyah* - Age of Ignorance - (as in the **'DW** section).

Same-sex indiscretions in the Qur'ān are comparable not necessarily to wanting something that has been deemed immoral, but rather, to wanting something in an immoral way (as in the **RWD** section), bringing dishonour onto others (as in the **FDH** section), being led astray and hence onto the path of self-destruction (as in the **KHZY** section), being disobedient (as in the **FSQ** section), doing that which has been forbidden (as in the **JRM** section), rejecting authority (as in the **FSD** section) and not taking responsibility for one's own actions, despite knowing that one's positive and/or negative actions have corresponding consequences that affect both others and oneself (as in the **SW** ' section).

Same-sex practices are further likened to the refusal to be humble (as in the **NKR** section), to the willingness to replace something that is deemed as being morally right and/or lawful with that which is believed as being morally wrong and/or forbidden (as in the **KHBTH** section), to following one's whims at the expense of inflicting harm on others (as in the *Jāhiliyah* - Age of Ignorance), in this insolence also of totally rejecting God's Revelation, i.e., partaking in that which is believed to be opposite of both *ḥilm* or reason and *ʿilm* or Qur'ānic religious knowledge (as in the **ZLM** section) and to "reaping what one sows" (as in the **GHBR** section).

We found that some of the terms we analyzed were not only "positive" and/or "negative" in nature, but were neutral as well, i.e., suggested neither a "positive" nor "negative" stance. Specifically, whereas the root **SHHY** has both positive and negative terms, the root **THR** has positive terms only and the root **RWD** has both neutral and positive terms. The rest of the roots, including **JRM**, **SW** ', **NKR** and **ZLM** which also have neutral terms, consist of terms that are mostly negative in nature. In addition, while all the terms under the root **THR** have positive dispositions and under **SHHY**, **RWD** and **ZLM** have both positive and negative dispositions, the remaining terms from the rest of the roots have negative dispositions. Furthermore, with the exception of **SHHY**, **FHSH**

and FDH, most of the terms are predominantly non-sensual in character.

In the course of our analysis, we looked at various passages in the Qur'ān outside of the Lot story that make reference to women and to their sexual practices. Interestingly, in the Qur'ān itself, both women and men are to be punished in some form or another for same-sex activities; however, most, if not all, of Lot's men are portrayed as having more of a direct sexual agenda with reference to Lot's male guests and are therefore destroyed. Women elsewhere in the Qur'ān who commit similar "indecencies", on the other hand, although faced with repercussions, are not necessarily destroyed. Why this is so, is not clear from the Qur'ān; the topic would merit future study.

Though the Qur'ān does not attempt to single out and explicitly condemn same-sex sexuality, it is clear that by the time we come to later religious writings such as the *ḥadīth*, we have a specific Arabic term, *lūṭīyah* which, (like *liwat*, is from the root LWT),⁵ makes reference to some kind of same-sex sexual abomination. The Muslim exegetes and *ḥadīth* literature give such terms a greater moral weight than perhaps is justified, as neither the term nor the meaning within a certain moral context is to be found in the Qur'ān.

Rather than the Qur'ān having influenced the *ḥadīth*, the *ḥadīth* literature has managed to connect Lot and same-sex sexuality exclusively, thus influencing various interpretations of the Qur'ān, perhaps also accounting for the later Islamic attitudes toward same-sex sexuality. This is clearly a topic worthy of future study as this would perhaps provide further evidence as to how traditional Muslims have inherited their interpretations of same-sex sexuality that is somewhat different from the reading of the text of the Qur'ān itself.

While we know that the prohibition of same-sex sexual activity in the Qur'ān does indeed have its roots in the Biblical story of Lot, it may be worthwhile in the future to attempt to try to see how this came about and to query as to what this means for Muslims, and indeed for Jews and Christians alike. An in-depth comparison of the medieval Muslim attitudes toward same-sex sexuality with that of the Hebrew Bible and/or New Testament,

⁵For example, as outlined in *Sunan Abū Dāwūd*, kitāb 33, Kitāb al-Hudūd (Book of Prescribed Punishments), Ahmad Hassan, trans., III, no. 4448, 1245.

may prove to be of interest.

What our conclusions are pointing to is that, even though various elements of sexuality are condemned, there is, in a certain sense, a moral code which is imposed in which there are no degrees of morality. The Qur'ān has certain moral ideas which it puts forth, and part of what we have been arguing is that some of these things are bad because of human weakness and some of them are bad because they take people away from God and so forth. The Qur'ān is not saying that the people of Lot, for example, were punished for a specific sin. The conception of an entire human life is not portrayed simply as a commission of a sinful life led against God. Turning away from a life lived against God to a life lived towards God is what is required.

The essential thrust of the Qur'ān seems to be on the emphasis that is placed on the oneness of God, on the belief that the good we do here on earth fosters our soul's advancement and that, in order to progress, each one of us has unlimited potential. We also have a choice, whether or not to challenge ourselves to use that potential by being understanding and tolerant of those who are different from ourselves and, in doing so, help ourselves and others move towards a common purpose. Upon birth, each individual seeks what is believed in Islam to be innate, i.e., re-union with one's Creator. In this journey, however, often we choose not to maximize our capacities. We forego that option and instead lengthen the process by becoming bound by meaningless and earthly chains.

Coming back to the specific questions that we had posed earlier, based on our analysis of the Lot story in the Qur'ān, it is obvious by now that Islam is not clear about the position of same-sex sexuality (especially about exclusive "homosexuality" or the queer lifestyle as is understood in the West). Although within the Lot story the Qur'ān does render a judgement against same-sex sexuality, the Qur'ān's objections towards same-sex actions are on par with objections toward opposite-sex and non-sexual indiscretions alike.

Same-sex abominations are not an exceptional category of sin. Undeniably, the moral terms associated with same-sex sexuality in the Qur'ān ultimately give it a negative evaluation and deem it to be a sin. However, these same moral terms are often used to evaluate opposite-sex abominations such as adultery, fornication and/or incest, as well as

other non-sexual practices, examples of which have already been outlined.

In reference to specific penalties prescribed within Islamic law, in determining how same-sex sexuality compares in particular with other opposite-sex sexual acts like fornication and adultery (*zinā*'), same-sex indiscretions, like opposite-sex abominations, theoretically can be punishable by death providing one of the parties involved is legally married (i.e., upon committing adultery). Otherwise it is to be treated like fornication which calls for punishment by scourging.⁶ There are, however, various schools of thought with diverse opinions about punishment for sexual activities; the topic is worthy of future consideration.

On the basis of our study, same-sex sexuality is put on the same level as adultery and/or fornication; it is not worse than either of these two activities. As far as the Qur'ān is concerned, same-sex indiscretions are not one "of the most dangerous crimes" as is believed by certain traditional Muslims. It does not deserve the stigma which has become attached to it because, though it may alienate one from God in the same manner as all other sins (sexual and/or non-sexual), it is not the sole cause of this alienation. Same-sex indiscretions have not been elevated to a certain level over opposite-sex and non-sexual sins; in fact, in the Qur'ān, in comparison to adultery, it is barely even mentioned.

As we have already seen in chapter one, "Homosexuality" is a contemporary Western term which actually connotes, in addition to the same-sex sexual act itself, an affiliated lifestyle. In Muslim countries, the idea of the "homosexual" is relevant only if has been adapted from the Western world. There is, after all, no concept of selective

⁶For example see, Ahmad Ibn Naqib Al-Misri (D. 769/1368), "The penalty for fornication or sodomy", The Reliance of the Traveller: A Classic Manual of Islamic Sacred Law, Noah Ha Mim Keller, ed., and trans., no. 012.2, p. 610, who states, "If the offender is someone with the capacity to remain chaste, then he or she is stoned to death..., *someone with the capacity to remain chaste* meaning anyone who has had sexual intercourse (A: at least once) with their spouse in a valid marriage, and is free, of age, and sane. A person is not considered to have the capacity to remain chaste if he or she has only had intercourse in a marriage that is invalid, or is prepubescent at the time of marital intercourse, or is someone insane at the time of marital intercourse who subsequently regains their sanity prior to committing adultery. If the offender is not someone with the capacity to remain chaste, then the penalty consists of being scourged...one hundred stripes and banished to a distance of at least 81 km./50 mi. for one year". See also Qur'ān 24/2 which mentions scourging as a punishment for fornication.

homosexuality and, as such, no gay lifestyle. All in all, the term "homosexuality" is erroneous when it is used in Islam, unless it is used by Muslims who identify also with the Western description of the queer lifestyle which includes both behaviour and orientation.

In relation to an often previous intolerant stand, certain religions have, over time, become more accepting and compassionate towards homosexuals. Just this year, in a column that appeared in The Globe and Mail,⁷ it is reported that the Vatican published an article urging Roman Catholics to "respect homosexuals". The article emphasizes that gays should have a full role in the church, providing they abstain from same-sex sexual activities. The paper goes on to quote Suzanne Scorsone, a spokesperson for the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Toronto who said in relation to this article:

It shows that the church is making a distinction between orientation and behaviour and that the person is allowed to be loved, cared for and treated with respect....There isn't something marginalizing about this--unmarried heterosexuals aren't supposed to have sexual relations, either--it is about where we believe sexuality fits in.⁸

In this and similar articles,⁹ in a way, an equation is being made on a sexual level between being gay and straight. It does not matter whether a priest is gay or straight as long as the priest is abstinent. Undoubtedly, there have been negative reactions towards this somewhat "conditional" acceptance.¹⁰ This is not the best reformed position that homosexuals can hope for; however, it definitely is a step in the right direction away from the previous stance of the Catholic church and its complete rejection of the total

⁷Michael Grange, "Church urges Catholics to accept gays", The Globe and Mail, April 25, 1997, pp. A1 and A2.

⁸Grange, "Church urges Catholics", The Globe and Mail, p. A2.

⁹For example see <http://www.infobeat.com/stories/cgi/story.cgi?id=5211824-fe5>, or for the same story (different coverage) see the write-up by The Associated Press, "Bishops Say Gay Children Need Support", The New York Times, October 1, 1997, p. A15.

¹⁰See for example, Dave Hopper, "Gays in the church" (Letters to the Editor), The Globe and Mail, May 1, 1997, p. A22 and Dick Crosby, "Gays" (Letters to the Editor), The Globe and Mail, May 5, 1997, p. A18.

homosexual person.

Perhaps Islam too, especially in the Western society, may have to differentiate between queer sexual activity and queer tendencies, also taking a step towards accepting if not the former, at least the latter. It seems, after all, that the focus of the Qur'ān is on the sexual act or behaviour itself, and not necessarily on the orientation. We saw this when dealing with the Lot story and how the men were reprimanded for wanting to "approach" other men "lustfully" (*shahwah*). On this basis, even though certain traditional Muslims continue to assert that there is no reform position on the question of homosexuality in Islam, a possible Islamic stance based on this traditional reluctance to accept homosexuality might be to support the same-sex sexual orientation if not the same-sex sexual act itself.

Having said this, in striving, however, for what seems like a more sincere religious progressive change, in another recent article in the Wisconsin State Journal,¹¹ it was reported that "clergy of the American Baptist, Episcopal, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, Quaker, Moravian, United Methodist, Presbyterian Church (USA) and United Church of Christ....In addition, local Unitarian-Universalist and Jewish clergy" signed a statement and issued a promise to support gay men and lesbians. Even though the statement did not go as far as to endorse marriage for same-sex couples, it did promise that the clergy would encourage monogamous and loving same-sex relationships. The article goes on to report that the statement:

began by declaring 'As Christian clergy we embrace gay and lesbian persons as our neighbours. From our reading of scripture and from our pastoral experiences, we believe there is sufficient evidence to conclude that homosexuality is neither sickness nor sin.' The clergy said they 'strongly uphold the family as the basic social unit in which we are called to live together and to give and receive nurture and support.' They said they are 'saddened and concerned by the breakdown of the family that stems from various forms of infidelity, violence and

¹¹William R. Wineke, "Church leaders show support of gays, lesbians", Wisconsin State Journal, May 13, 1997, p. 1B.

failure to maintain long-term loving commitments--among both heterosexual and homosexual communities.' Therefore, the clergy said, 'we believe it is time to eliminate all policies and practices which create barriers and restrictions to the full participation of gay and lesbian Christians in all of the privileges and responsibilities of church membership.'¹²

In contrast to the Canadian Catholics who are willing to endorse abstinent homosexuals, the Madison clergy in Wisconsin feel that it is possible to partake in homosexual and/or heterosexual activity or behaviour as long as the activity is carried out by those who are in monogamous, loving, nurturing and long-term relationships. Even though in Christianity, as in Islam, there are pronouncements against same-sex behaviour, certain churches in Christianity are beginning to conclude that, providing homosexual behaviour is practised within certain guidelines, it is not an abhorrence. While same-sex marriages are yet to be endorsed, it would seem that the queer community would rather embrace this sort of acceptance than the one proposed by the Catholic church.

In relation to Muslims who identify also with the Western concept of the queer lifestyle (including both behaviour and orientation), traditional Muslims like Quick claim that the only way out is "repentance and conversion" to heterosexual behaviour. Whether or not the only way out for queer Muslims who identify with the Western concepts of homosexuality, bisexuality etc., is either conversion to heterosexual behaviour, rejection of the Islamic society or possibly, even death, if Muslims are to continue to take the Qur'ān as the unchangeable word of God, then queer Muslims have little choice. This then means that the reform movement within the Muslim homosexual community has to raise the question of the authority of the Qur'ān and whether a text from the seventh century should indeed be allowed to legislate the twenty-first century.

The contemporary scenario of same-sex sexuality and the practice of Islam is bound to get more attention with the changing times. Today there are those in growing

¹²For the full statement, see "Statement by clergy supporting gays, lesbians", Wisconsin State Journal, p. 4B.

numbers who practice same-sex activity and who also consider themselves to be Muslim. As in some Judaic and Christian sectors, we must ask if, in Islam, room can be made for those who claim to be believers and who also partake in same-sex sexual activities. Or if instead, the adherents of such beliefs are indeed fighting for a lost cause. The purpose of this study has in part been to try and lay a foundation for the future contemplation of such issues.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Abū Dāwūd al-Sijistānī. Sunan Abū Dāwūd. Ahmad Hassan, trans. III. Lahore: Sh. Muhammad Ashraf, 1984.
- Ahmed, Leila. Women and Gender in Islam: Historical Roots of a Modern Debate. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992.
- Al-Misri, Ahmad Ibn Naqib (D. 769/1368). The Reliance of the Traveller: A Classic Manual of Islamic Sacred Law: In Arabic with facing text, commentary, and appendices. Noah Ha Mim Keller, ed., and trans. Dubai: Modern Printing Press, 1991.
- Al-Shamma, S. H. The Ethical System Underlying the Qur'ān. (Thesis) Tübingen: Hopfer-Verlag, 1959.
- Ali, Abdullah Yusuf, trans. The Holy Qur'an: Text, Translation and Commentary. State of Qatar: Presidency of Islamic Courts & Affairs, 1946.
- Anonymous. "Liwāt". In C. E. Bosworth, E. van Donzel, B. Lewis and Ch. Pellat, (eds.). The Encyclopaedia of Islam. New Edition. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1986, V, 776-779.
- Arberry, Arthur J., trans. The Koran Interpreted. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1964.
- The Associated Press, "Bishops Say Gay Children Need Support". The New York Times. Wednesday, October 1, 1997, p. A15.
- Ayalon, David. "On the Eunuchs in Islam". Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam. 1 (1979), 67-124.
- Bahnsen, Greg L. Homosexuality: A Biblical View. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1978.
- Bailey, Derrick Sherwin. Homosexuality and the Western Christian Tradition. London: Longmans, Green and Co., Ltd., 1955.
- Bell, Richard. The Qur'ān: Translated, with a critical re-arrangement of the Surahs. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1937. 2 Vols.
- . A Commentary on the Qur'ān. C. Edmund Bosworth and M. E. J. Richardson, eds. Manchester: University of Manchester, 1991. 2 Vols.

- Bouhdiba, Abdelwahab. Sexuality in Islam. Translated from the French by Alan Sheridan. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1985.
- Brinner, William M., trans. The History of al-Tabarī: Prophets and Patriarchs. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1987.
- Buhl, F. "Koran". In M. Th. Houtsma, A. J. Wensinck, et al. (eds.). First Encyclopaedia of Islam 1913-1936. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1987, IV, 1063-1076.
- Coogan, Michael D. "Lot". In Bruce M. Metzger and Michael D. Coogan, (eds.). The Oxford Companion of the Bible. New York/Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993, p. 467.
- Crosby, Dick. "Gays" (Letters to the Editor). The Globe and Mail. Monday, May 5, 1997, p. A18.
- Denny, Frederick Mathewson. Islam: and the Muslim Community. San Francisco: HarperSan Francisco, 1987.
- Douglas, Ian H. "'Guilt and Purification' in Modern Urdu Quranic Commentary". In Proceedings of the XIth International Congress of the International Association for the History of Religions. Vol. II: Guilt or Pollution and Rites of Purification. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1968, pp. 113-114.
- Duran, Khalid. "Homosexuality and Islam". In Homosexuality and World Religions. Arlene Swidler, ed. Valley Forge: Trinity Press International, 1993, pp. 181-197.
- Dynes, Wayne R. Homosexuality: A Research Guide. New York: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1987.
- , ed. Encyclopedia of Homosexuality. Warren Johansson and William A. Percy, ass., eds. New York: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1990. 2 Vols.
- Early, T. "Sodom and Gomorrah". In Paul Kevin Meagher, Thomas C. O'Brien and Sister Consuelo Maria Aherne, (eds.). Encyclopedic Dictionary of Religion. Washington D.C.: Corpus Publications, 1979, 3339.
- (Ed.) "Djāhiliyya". In B. Lewis, Ch. Pellat and J. Schacht, (eds.). The Encyclopaedia of Islam. New Edition. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1965, II, 383-384.

Firestone, Reuven. Journeys in Holy Lands: The Evolution of the Abraham-Ishmael Legends in Islamic Exegesis. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1990.

Gardet, L. "Fāsik". In B. Lewis, Ch. Pellat and J. Schacht, (eds.). The Encyclopaedia of Islam. New Edition. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1965, II, 833-834.

Gibb, Hamilton A. R. Studies on the Civilization of Islam. Stanford J. Shaw and William R. Polk, eds. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1962.

Glassé, Cyril. The Concise Encyclopedia of Islam. San Francisco: Harper and Row Publishers, Inc., 1989.

Goldziher, Ignaz. Muslim Studies. S. M. Stern, ed. Translated from the German by C. R. Barber and S. M. Stern. Chicago: Aldine Publishing Company, 1967. 2 Vols.

----. Introduction to Islamic Theology and Law. Andras and Ruth Hamori, trans. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981.

Grange, Michael. "Church urges Catholics to accept gays". The Globe and Mail. Friday, April 25, 1997, pp. A1 and A2.

Green Sr., Jay P., ed., and trans. The Interlinear Bible: Hebrew-Greek-English. 2nd ed. Peabody: Hendrickson Publishers, 1986.

Greenberg, David F. The Construction of Homosexuality. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1988.

Guillaume, A. The Life of Muhammad: A Translation of Ibn Ishāq's Sīrat Rasūl Allāh. Karachi: Oxford University Press, 1955.

Hawting, G. R., and Abdul-Kader A. Shareef, eds. Approaches to the Qur'ān. London: Routledge, 1993.

Heller, Bernhard. "Lūt". In M. Th. Houtsma, A. J. Wensinck, et al. (eds.). First Encyclopaedia of Islam 1913-1936. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1987, V, 53-54.

----., and [G. Vajda]. "Lūt". In C. E. Bosworth, E. van Donzel, B. Lewis and Ch. Pellat, (eds.). The Encyclopaedia of Islam. New Edition. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1986, V, 832-833.

Herdt, Gilbert. "Homosexuality". In Mircea Eliade, (ed.). The Encyclopedia of Religion. New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., 1987, 6, 445-453.

- "Homosexuality". In Geoffrey Wigoder, (ed.). The Encyclopedia of Judaism. New York: MacMillan Publishing Company, 1989, 353-354.
- Hopper, Dave. "Gays in the church" (Letters to the Editor). The Globe and Mail. Thursday, May 1, 1997, p. A22.
- Hughes, Thomas Patrick. Dictionary of Islam. New Delhi: Oriental Books Reprint Corporation, 1976.
- Izutsu, Toshihiko. Ethico-Religious Concepts in the Qur'ān. Montreal: McGill University Press, 1966.
- Jakobovits, Immanuel. "Homosexuality". In Cecil Roth, Geoffrey Wigoder, et al. (eds.). Encyclopaedia Judaica. Jerusalem: Keter Publishing House, Ltd., 8, 1971, 961-962.
- Jung, Patricia Beattie and Ralph F. Smith. Heterosexism: An Ethical Challenge. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1993.
- Juynboll, Th. W. "Fāsik". In M. Th. Houtsma, A. J. Wensinck, et al. (eds.). First Encyclopaedia of Islam 1913-1936. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1987, III, 81-82.
- Kader, Ali Abdel. "The Concept of Purity in Islam". In Proceedings of the XIth International Congress of the International Association for the History of Religions. Vol. II: Guilt or Pollution and Rites of Purification. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1968, pp.104-107.
- Kashmeri, Zuhair. "Islam's Hidden Homosexuals". In Now. July 30-August 5, 1992, pp. 12, 13 and 18.
- Kassis, Hanna E. A Concordance of the Qur'an. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983.
- Lassner, Jacob. Demonizing the Queen of Sheba: Boundaries of Gender and Culture in Postbiblical Judaism and Medieval Islam. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1993.
- Loader, J. A. A Tale of Two Cities: Sodom and Gomorrah in the Old Testament, early Jewish and early Christian Traditions. (Contributions to Biblical Exegesis and Theology 1) Tj. Baarda and A. S. van der Woude, eds. Kampen: J. H. Kok Publishing House, 1990.

- Malloy, Edward A. Homosexuality and the Christian Way of Life. Washington D.C.: University Press of America, 1981.
- Marmon, Shaun. Eunuchs and Sacred Boundaries in Islamic Society. New York: Oxford University Press, 1995.
- Al-Sayyid-Marsot, Afaf Lufti., ed. Society And The Sexes in Medieval Islam. Malibu: Undena Publications, 1979.
- McAuliffe, Jane D. "The Wines of Earth and Paradise: Qur'ānic Proscriptions and Promises". In Logos Islamikos: Studia Islamica in honorem Georgii Michaelis Wickens. Roger M. Savory and Dionisius A. Agius, eds. Papers in Mediaeval Studies 6. Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1984, pp. 159-174.
- Medelain, Farah, trans. Marriage and Sexuality in Islam: A Translation of al- Ghazālī's Book on the Etiquette of Marriage from the Ihya'. Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1984.
- Murray, Stephen O., and Will Roscoe, eds. Islamic Homosexualities: Culture, History and Literature. New York: New York University Press, 1997.
- Musallem, B. F. Sex and society in Islam: Birth control before the nineteenth century. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983.
- M'walimu, Subira and Fatumar Omar. "Muslims-In-Exile: Must Muslim lesbians and gays turn their backs on Islam?". In Quota. November 1993, pp. 1 and 5.
- Quick, Abdullah Hakim. "The Homosexual Challenge and the Islamic Response". Seminar held on April 16, 1994. Sponsored by the Second Generation Muslim Discussion Group at Carleton University, Ottawa, Ontario. Transcribed from a tape-recording.
- Rahbar, Daud. God of Justice: a study in the ethical doctrine of the Qur'ān. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1960.
- Rasjidi, Mohammad. "Guilt, Pollution and Rites of Purification in Islam". In Proceedings of the XIth International Congress of the International Association for the History of Religions. Vol. II: Guilt or Pollution and Rites of Purification. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1968, pp. 108-110.
- Reinhart, A. Kevin. "Impurity No Danger". History of Religions. 30 (1990), 1-24.
- Ringgren, Helmer. "Sin and Forgiveness in the Koran". Temenos. 2 (1966), 98-111.

- Rippin, Andrew, ed. Approaches to the History of the Interpretation of the Qur'ān. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988.
- . "Shayṭān". In C. E. Bosworth, E. van Donzel, W. P. Heinrichs and G. Lecomte, (eds.). The Encyclopaedia of Islam. New Edition. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1996, IX, 408-409.
- . Reading the Qur'ān. Typescript manuscript.
- ., and Jan Knappert, eds., and trans. Textual Sources for the Study of Islam. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1986.
- Robson, James. "Aspects of the Qur'anic doctrine of salvation". In Man and his salvation. (Studies in memory of S. G. F. Brandon). Eric J. Sharpe and John R. Hinnells, eds. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1973, pp. 205-219.
- Rowson, Everett K. "The Effeminate of Early Medina". Journal of the American Oriental Society. 111 (1991), 671-693.
- Schacht, Joseph. "Zinā". In M. Th. Houtsma, A. J. Wensinck, et al. (eds.). First Encyclopaedia of Islam 1913-1936. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1987, VIII, 1227-1228.
- Schmitt, Arno. Bio-Bibliography of Male-Male Sexuality and Eroticism in Muslim Societies. Berlin: Verlag Rosa Winkel, 1995.
- ., and Jehoeda Sofer, eds. Sexuality and Eroticism Among Males in Moslem Societies. Binghamton: Harrington Park Press, 1992.
- Scroggs, Robin. The New Testament and Homosexuality: Contextual Background for Contemporary Debate. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1983.
- Seligsohn, Max and Joseph Jacobs. "Lot". In Isidore Singer, (ed.). The Jewish Encyclopedia. New York: Funk and Wagnalls Co., 1904, VIII, 185-187.
- Smith, Wilfred Cantwell. What is Scripture?: A Comparative Approach. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1993.
- Sourdél, D. "Ghulām". In B. Lewis, Ch. Pellat and J. Schacht, (eds.). The Encyclopaedia of Islam. New Edition. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1965, II, 1079-1081.
- Stowasser, Barbara Freyer. Women in the Qur'an. Traditions, and Interpretation. New York: Oxford University Press, 1994.

Swanson, Mark N. "A Study of Twentieth-Century Commentary on Sūrat Al-Nūr (24):27-33". The Muslim World. 74 (1984), 187-203.

Thackston Jr., W. M., trans. The Tales of the Prophets of al-Kisa'i. Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1978.

Towner, W. Sibley. "Sodom". In William H. Gentz, (ed.). The Dictionary of Bible and Religion. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1986, 991-992.

Tritton, A. S. "Ṭahāra". In M. Th. Houtsma, A. J. Wensinck, et al. (eds.). First Encyclopaedia of Islam 1913-1936. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1987, VII, 608.

Watt, W. Montgomery. Bell's Introduction to the Qur'ān. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1970.

Weir, T. H. "Djāhiliya". In M. Th. Houtsma, T. W. Arnold, R. Basset and R. Hartmann, (eds.). First Encyclopaedia of Islam 1913-1936. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1987, II, 999-1000.

Welch, A. T. "Al-Kur'ān". In C. E. Bosworth, E. van Donzel, B. Lewis and Ch. Pellat, (eds.). The Encyclopaedia of Islam. New Edition. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1986, V, 400-429.

Wensinck, A. J. The Muslim Creed: Its Genesis and Historical Development. London: Frank Cass and Co., Ltd., 1965.

----. A Handbook of Early Muhammadan Tradition. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1971.

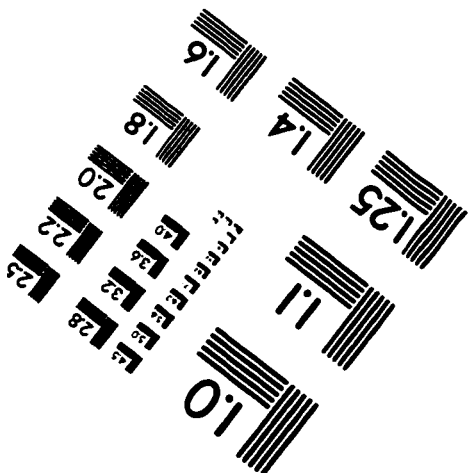
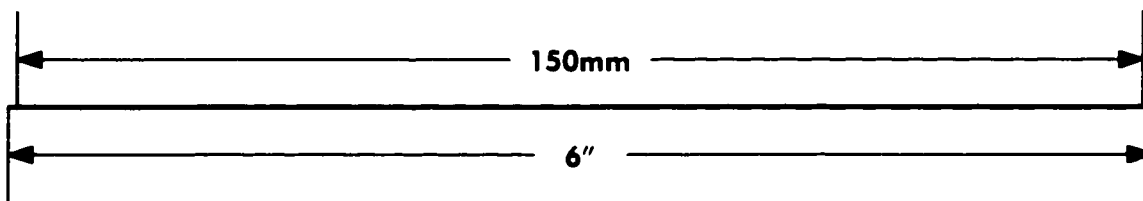
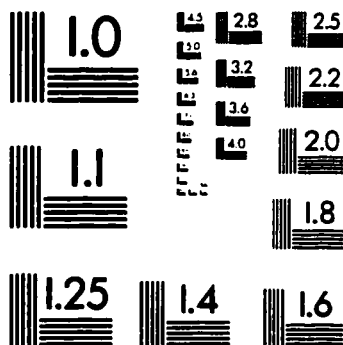
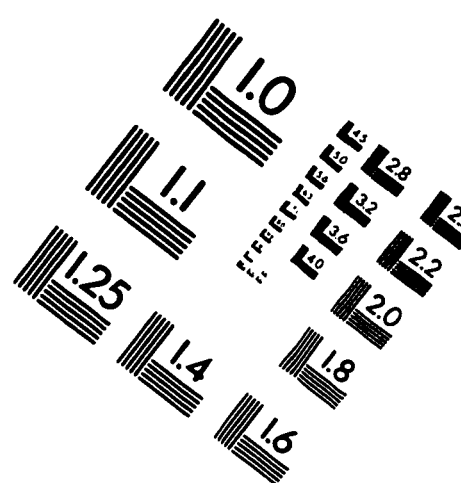
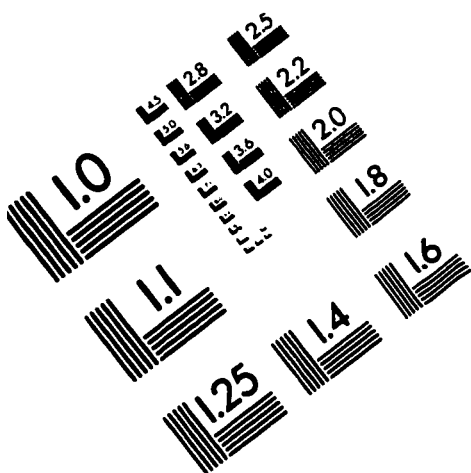
----. "Hūr". In M. Th. Houtsma, A. J. Wensinck, et al. (eds.). First Encyclopaedia of Islam 1913-1936. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1987, III, 337.

----, and [Ch. Pellat]. "Hūr". In B. Lewis, V. L. Ménage, Ch. Pellat and J. Schacht, (eds.). The Encyclopaedia of Islam. New Edition. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1971, III, 581-582.

Wineke, William R. "Church leaders show support of gays, lesbians". Wisconsin State Journal. Tuesday, May 13, 1997, pp. 1B and 4B.

Wright Jr., J. W., and Everett K. Rowson, eds. Homoeroticism in Classical Arabic Literature. New York: Columbia University Press, 1997.

RESOLUTION EVALUATION TEST TARGET (QA-3)



APPLIED IMAGE, Inc
1653 East Main Street
Rochester, NY 14609 USA
Phone: 716/482-0300
Fax: 716/288-5989

© 1993, Applied Image, Inc., All Rights Reserved

