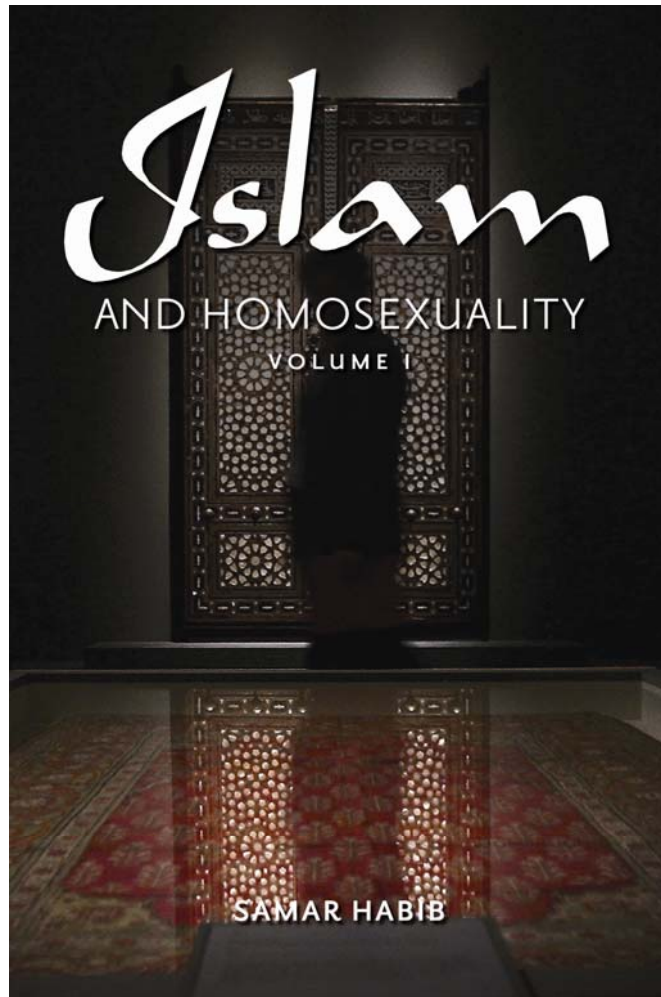


Der Kommentar der Herausgeberin Samar Habib in der "Introduction" (volume 1, pp. xxxii-xxxiv) zu Tilo Beckers' Beitrag "Islam and the Acceptance of Homosexuality: The Shortage of Socioeconomic Well-Being and Responsive Democracy", S. 57-98 in: Samar Habib (ed.): *Islam and Homosexuality* (in two volumes). Santa Barbara, Denver, Oxford: Praeger.



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“Looking at the drastically low levels of acceptance of homosexuality in Muslim countries that participated in the *World Values Survey* that was conducted in more than 60 societies across the world” between 1999 and 2007, Tilo Beckers searches for a means to ground these findings within a socioeconomic as well as political framework. As the title of his chapter suggests, the lack of “responsive democracy,” as well as greater levels of poverty, contribute to these attitudes in the Muslim world. Contrary to the hesitation of some scholars in this collection, Beckers confirms that Islamic states remain the most resistant to homosexuality in the contemporary setting. He writes: “Today,

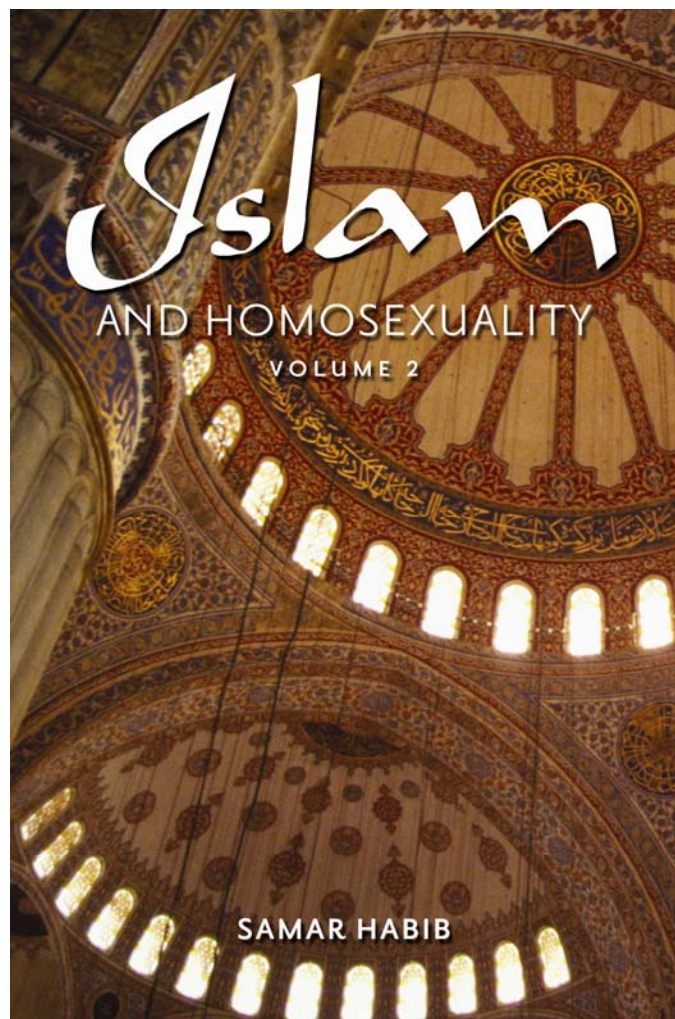
Islamic nation-states are the ones that are most repressive in their legal prohibitions as well as in their public social condemnation of homosexuality, but it is unclear if or why this normative consensus is religiously grounded. Is homosexuality rejected due to religion or is it—just on the contrary—accepted due to factors related to the modernization of societies, that is, human development and democracy?” Beckers is not overly concerned with the debate regarding the meanings and historical life of the homosexual as a purportedly recent concept. He masterfully obviates the impasses resultant from these debates in order to pursue an international study of responses to sexuality. Beckers’s findings concur with those of others in the collection, where homosexuality, due to its relegation to the private sphere, can be tolerated in Muslim societies so “long as the prolongation of the family tree is guaranteed and no possessions are lost in the homosexual relationship.” Beckers’s research also demonstrates that virtually all the countries surveyed, not only the Muslim nations, espouse clearly homophobic values and attitudes, with only “seven out of 58 countries with mean values higher than the midpoint of the scale.” In a substantive way, Beckers demonstrates what Rabab Abdul-Hadi intuitively addresses as the need to overcome colonialism and neocolonial oppressions (...). For Beckers, the need for love and sexual

fulfillment comes after other more basic needs are met, those of food, shelter, and security. In a world where individuals continue to struggle and are preoccupied with securing the basic needs for survival, it is much more difficult for emancipative values to develop or even to be considered relevant. (...)

Beckers also finds that wherever the status of women in a society is leaning toward equality this positively correlates with the status of homosexuals. In other words, in states where gender bias against women continues to manifest itself as a “culturally-unique way of life,” homosexuals also continue to suffer.“

Abstract/Anfang des Kapitels von Tilo Beckers zum Thema “Islam and the Acceptance of Homosexuality: The Shortage of Socioeconomic Well-Being and Responsive Democracy”, S. 57-98 in: Samar Habib (ed.): Islam and Homosexuality (in two volumes). Santa Barbara, Denver, Oxford: Praeger.

“Homosexuality has been among the most controversial moral issues in the world, according to both public debates around the decriminalization of the acts and the legalization of civil unions or marriages. Cross-national surveys of people’s attitudes demonstrate that the subject of homosexuality remains controversial. 1 Strong dissent in favor of the acceptance of homosexuality usually exists in highly modernized societies. Only those countries where norms (and sometimes laws) against homosexuality are very rigid show a higher degree of consensus in rejecting homosexuality. There are significant differences in its acceptance across countries and cultures. Muslim societies are, by and large, very much opposed to the acceptance of homosexuality, as demonstrated in several rounds of the World Values Survey that was conducted in more than 60 societies across the world. 2 I will report the mean values of acceptance in the empirical part of this chapter. However, from a sociological point of view, it is even more important to explain and understand the reasons for these differences in acceptance, especially the manifestly low values of acceptance in Muslim societies. To this aim, I offer a multilevel perspective to answer this open question by examining both people’s individual attributes and motivations (level 1) as well as countries’ qualities (level 2).”



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