

LEVITICUS 18:22 AND 20:13 IN DISCUSSION WITH THE
METHODIST CHURCH OF SOUTHERN AFRICA ON
HOMOSEXUALITY

by
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DECLARATION

I declare that the dissertation, which I hereby submit for the degree Master of Arts (Theology) Old Testament Studies at the University of Pretoria, is my own work and has not previously been submitted by me for a degree at this or any other tertiary institution.

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ABBREVIATIONS

A	Anima
BHS	Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia
BN	Biblische-Notizen
BR	Bible Review
BS	Bibliotheca Sacra
BTB	Biblical Theology Bulletin
CSA	Christian Social Action
CT	Christian Today
C	Cuneiform
CTM	Currents in Theology and Mission
D	Dialog
DEWCOM	Doctrine, Ethics and Worship Committee of the Methodist Church of South Africa
EQ	Evangelical Quarterly
E	Exchange
ET	Expository Times
EQ	Evangelical Quarterly
FJ	Fundamentalist Journal
HR	Hill-Road
HR	Hill-Road
HT	History Today
I	Interpretation
ITQ	Irish Theological Quarterly
JBL	Journal of Biblical Literature
JETS	Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society
JH	Journal of Homosexuality
JHS	Journal of the History of Sexuality
JSR	Journal of Sex Research
JSH	Journal of Social History
JQR	Jewish Quarterly Review
JSOT	Journal for the Study of the Old Testament

JTSA	Journal of Theology for Southern Africa
LF	Lutheran-Forum
M	Missionalia
MCSA	Methodist Church of South Africa
OH	Oceanic Homosexualities
OTE	Old Testament Essays
OTS	Old Testament Student
PRS	Perspectives in Religious Studies
QR	Quarterly Review
RHR	Radical History Review
RHSP	Riches Hidden in Secret Places
RSA	Republic of South Africa
SLR	Stanford Law Review
TDOT	Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament
TBW	The Biblical World
TPJT	The Pacific Journal of Theology,
VE	Verbum et Ecclesia
WW	Word and World

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Inene Intaka yakha ngentsiba zenye (indeed a bird builds its nest by the feathers of the other).

Mtshiselwa, Vincent Ndikhokele Ndzondelelo

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ABSTRACT

Leviticus 18:20 and 20:13 in discussion with the Methodist Church of Southern Africa on homosexuality

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In recent times, the texts of Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13, has attracted the attention of Old Testament scholars, clergy and the laity alike. In my view, such an attention has been inspired by the readers' quest to the possible light which the text can shed on the subject of homosexuality. The latter topic is one of the burning issues raised in present day South Africa. It thus comes as no surprise, that interpreting texts such as Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13 becomes pertinent in our context. This research aims at coming up with a constructive dialogue between the Methodist Church of Southern Africa (hereafter referred to as MCSA)'s readings of this text, scholars' interpretation of the same and the Xhosas' reception of homosexuality in the Republic of South Africa. Through the use of methodologies such as the Literary, Textual, Canon, Composition and Redaction Criticism, as well as Socio-Scientific Criticism, Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13, will be brought to bear with its MCSA's readings and Xhosas' readings with a view to making a necessary contribution to African biblical hermeneutics.

Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 Actuality and the problem statement

In recent times the texts of Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13 have been increasingly studied by Old Testament scholars, clergy and the laity alike. In my view, such attention has been inspired by the readers' quest for the possible light which the text may shed on the subject of homosexuality. The latter topic is one of the burning issues raised in present day South Africa. It thus comes as no surprise that interpreting texts such as these becomes pertinent in this context. The critical questions that are posed are: what does the Bible say about homosexuality and how does the Bible inform our understanding of God's view on this issue? What guidance does the Bible offer regarding the issue? The way Scripture is interpreted will influence one's attempt at answering these questions.

There is a wide spectrum of views on the Same-Sex issue in the Methodist Church of Southern Africa (MCSA). There are liberals and conservatives who are at opposing poles. The state's legislation on marriage has pressed the church with moral, theological and pastoral challenges. Adopting an informed position is a matter of urgency. Failure to conduct an informed, healthy and guided dialogue towards mutual understanding and / or compromise in the Church has the potential for dividing her.

The first approach to Scripture is that of reading Leviticus 18:22; 20:13 and Romans 1:26-27 literally as conveying objections to homosexuality. This approach fails to recognise or to be aware of the historical and cultural distance between the 21st century and the times when the text was produced. The question of relevance and appropriation of ancient texts in the RSA context, with specific focus on Xhosa ethnic group remains unattended and has to be engaged. The fact that paradigms are shifting is ignored. The inconsistency in accepting and / or rejecting biblical texts creates

injustice in the interpretation of Scripture.¹ Some sanctioned sexual mores in Scripture are not adhered to in modern times, which include the punishment of adultery by stoning (Deut 22:22) and the prohibition of sexual intercourse during a menstrual period (Lev 18:19, 29).²

The MCSA's Doctrine, Ethics and Worship Committee (hereafter referred to as DEWCOM) describes the second approach to Scripture as subjecting any biblical text to the wider witness of Scripture as a whole (DEWCOM 2003:5) which therefore reads texts in relation to other biblical texts on a thematic basis. Themes that recur throughout Scripture about God are those of inclusion, of the intrinsic dignity and sacred worth of all people and the denunciation of all discrimination, oppression and injustice (DEWCOM 2003:5). Therefore the attitude of the Church is to be characterised by inclusion instead of dehumanisation, rejection and oppression. The themes of holiness, purity, morality and consecration are ignored in the DEWCOM's document on Same-Sex relationships.

DEWCOM (2003:6) notes that the third approach to Scripture regards the Bible as a living document in the life of the Church, which is enlivened by the activity of the Holy Spirit, who comes to interpret the words of Scripture and so lead the Church into all truth (Jn 16:12-14). The entrenched assumptions and traditional interpretations are challenged and the Church ventures to a new and fuller understanding of the biblical witness and truth about God.³ The fact that the Holy Spirit can embrace the traditional interpretation is ignored.

Contributions from the academics in the MCSA are significant. Within the controversy, Sjadu Nkomonde (<http://www.spirituality.org.za/files/DEWCOM/AFRICAN%20SEXUALITY.pdf>) from the MCSA approaches the subject of homosexuality from an African cultural standpoint with specific reference to the Xhosa culture. Grounds for arguing for the acceptance of homosexually oriented people are identified in the definition of the concept of ubuntu (humanity), as a

¹ Mott (2000:38) also raises the issue of inconsistency as a problem in the interpretation, understanding and usage of the Bible in Church communities.

² DEWCOM (2003:4) questions the inconsistency in the interpretation of Scripture.

³ DEWCOM (2003:6) further makes reference to the Apostle Peter's rejection of what was traditionally deemed as impure in Acts 15.

dimension in African spirituality that calls people to belong to each other.⁴ Homosexuality in the African culture is also deemed as unnatural, as an illegitimate sexual relationship and as a corruptor of the moral fibre of that society.⁵ The policy of the MCSA regards Holy Scripture as the supreme rule of faith and practice. Alistoun (<http://www.spirituality.org.za/files/DEWCOM/SCRIPTURE%20AND%20SAME%20SEX%20RELATIONS.pdf>) claims that where the Bible mentions homosexual behaviour at all, it clearly condemns it and then argues that this is to be continuously upheld in the MCSA. According to the fundamental doctrine of creation as embedded in Genesis 1 and 2, the sexual relationship between a man and a woman is the only divinely designed intimate relationship which is meant to fulfil God's procreative and unitive purpose.⁶ Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13 are texts that are regarded as unequivocally condemning Same-Sex sexual behaviour.⁷

There is a need for an extensive study on human sexuality in which relationships are given prominence with regards to physical acts. The subject of marriage with reference to homosexuality needs to be studied in giving guidance to the controversy in this respect. Andrews (<http://www.spirituality.org.za/files/DEWCOM/HOLDING%20HANDS.pdf>) remarks that the second creation story recounted in Genesis 2:24 places a greater emphasis on the companionship between Adam and Eve than on their procreative imperative and it is on these grounds that a Same-Sex sexual relationship is advocated.⁸

The Wesley Quadrilateral (Scripture, tradition, reason and experience) approach utilised in the MCSA has its own limitations, which include being restricted as regards tradition, not having adequate access to African culture and not doing justice to Scripture.

⁴ Nkomonde (<http://www.spirituality.org.za/files/DEWCOM/AFRICAN%20SEXUALITY.pdf>) in his argument at one level limits the implications of the term homosexuality.

⁵ The culture and the moral values of a society are constructed by it and are dynamic. Nkomonde does not draw attention to this fact.

⁶ Alistoun (<http://www.spirituality.org.za/files/DEWCOM/SCRIPTURE%20AND%20SAME%20SEX%20RELATIONS.pdf>).

⁷ Alistoun (<http://www.spirituality.org.za/files/DEWCOM/SCRIPTURE%20AND%20SAME%20SEX%20RELATIONS.pdf>) strongly objects homosexuality based on his interpretation of Scripture.

⁸ Andrews (<http://www.spirituality.org.za/files/DEWCOM/HOLDING%20HANDS.pdf>) further substantiates his arguments by noting the recognition of Same-Sex relationships as a matter of love and justice, underpinned in conventional Christian theology's emphasis on Jesus' command to love God and ones' neighbour.

While readers of the Bible read their preconceived ideas that are shaped by their culture, environment and worldview into the Scriptures, the discipline of exegesis urges the exegete to be aware of and minimise presuppositions that influence the investigation. The critical area in addressing the controversy of homosexuality in the MCSA is the interpretation of the Scriptures. It is not being handled with care and justice is not done to the interpretation of the Bible.

The Hebrew Bible does not make reference to, and hence does not condemn, homosexuality as a sexual orientation (Stiebert and Walsh 2001:119-152).⁹ In a different context, Ellis (2003:313-323) examines Philo's objection to homosexual behaviour in which he maintains that such behaviour is in contrast to nature in that it involves an unnatural indulgence in pleasure, in that it does not involve procreation and that it places the male partner in the role of the female, thus demeaning and weakening him.

A literature review of contributions by Old Testament scholars is therefore essential. Boughton (1992:141-153), in affirming a traditional understanding on homosexuality, maintains that the Old and New Testaments are thoroughly opposed to homosexual activity.¹⁰ In the Ancient Near East the practice of homosexuality was well known and was only condemned in certain cases where being coerced by one party was implied: this condemnation was rooted in the doctrine of creation and the command in Genesis 1: 28 (Wenham 1990:359-363).

There is certainly no doubt about the objection to homosexuality as reflected in Genesis 19 and in legal provisions in Leviticus 18:20 and 20:13 and the view that these absolute prohibitions of homosexuality remained the law of God (Ukleja 1983:259-266).

⁹ The social construction of masculinity and femininity is discussed with reference to narrative accounts in Gen 19, Jdgs 1 and the laws already mentioned in Leviticus. (Stiebert and Walsh 2001:119-152).

¹⁰ Boughton (1992:141-153) in building his case critiques the exegetical foundations of John Boswell's Christianity, social tolerance and homosexuality and argues that Boswell is unreliable and revisionist in his treatment of the Sodom narrative in Gen 19 and Old Testament legal codes in Lev 18:22 and 20:13.

The phrase **הוא תועבה** (it is a detestable act) in Leviticus 18:22, is in a declaratory formulae that serves as a motivation against the act and expresses the defiling and immoral nature of these illicit practices.¹¹ **תועבה** depicts ritualistic and moral behaviour that is repugnant to Israel's neighbours (Hartley 1992:283). Gaier (1990:161-169) notes that apodictic and casuistic laws in Leviticus were meant to preserve and protect relationships within family units.¹² From an evangelical Christian perspective it is argued that homosexual conduct is sinful, a threat to and violation of the social, religious and cosmic order, a violation of the order of creation and a desecration of the image of God (Wold 1998:238). Malchow (2004:465-472) maintains the principle that Scripture is to be regarded as normative for the churches in deciding faith and morals.¹³

It is observed that the Old Testament view with regard to sexuality is first seen in its Ancient Near Eastern context, where Yahwism's monotheism and close association of morals with religion set it in sharp contrast with the common fertility pattern.¹⁴ Milgrom (1993:11) reads the construed prohibition in Leviticus 18:22 as addressed only to Jews and those non-Jews who happened to reside in the Holy Land. The anthropological literature on Mediterranean and Middle Eastern honour and shame is made use of by Stone (1995:87-107) in constructing a social framework that depicts a homosexual act and rape as being construed and interpreted as a process by which a male subject threatens the masculinity and honour of another male.

Feldman (2000:255-292) examines Josephus' retelling of Judges 19-21 which includes an attempt of avoiding overtones of homosexuality in the biblical story by portraying the men of Gibeah experiencing lust for women. Carden (1999: 83-96) in noting the readings of Genesis 19 and Judges 19 in relation to Leviticus 18:22 and

¹¹ Hartley (1992:289) further points out that male homosexuality is identified as **תועבה** in Lev 20:13, translating 'something detestable and repugnant', and that this act carries the death penalty.

¹² Gaier (1990:161-169) concludes his investigation on homosexuality in the Old Testament by restating the difficulties involved in attempting to relate the Bible's treatment of the topic to our contemporary situation, while also acknowledging the need for further investigation on the medical, psychological and sociological dimension.

¹³ Malchow (2004:465-472) further recommends that a degree of care in relating and applying ancient scripture in the contemporary context is necessary.

¹⁴ Collins (1977:149-265) further investigates Old Testament sexual morality that includes marriage and family, homosexuality, fornication and procreation.

20:13, ignores the different historical and cultural contexts behind these texts and the contemporary politics in which these texts are enmeshed.

Injunctions against male homosexuality in the Hebrew Bible are aimed at cultic prostitution supposedly practised by non-Israelites but the historical basis for this claim has been questioned.¹⁵ De Young (1991:157-177) investigates and critiques recent appeals to the Septuagint (LXX) to defend homosexuality and in his historical-comparative and linguistic-contextual study points out that the word *qades* does have religious (cultic) and sexual overtones (homosexual practice).

In academic circles within both the past and the recent, MCSA discussions, exegesis of Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13 and African hermeneutics have not been studied synthetically in addressing homosexuality. This dimension makes an essential contribution in the debate on homosexuality. There is a need for the application of comprehensive hermeneutical tools in MCSA's approach to Scripture and to engage the controversy on Same-Sex relationships. Differing contestations need to dialogue with each other.

1.2 Aims and objectives

The aims and the objectives of this study are as follow:

- Analyse the MCSA's discussions on homosexuality. Such an analysis includes a critic of the MCSA's position; a study on the Church's policy, doctrines and her understanding of her mission; an investigation of the application of the Wesley Quadrilateral and a discussion of ideological contestations from MCSA persons.
- Analyse Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13 employing selected exegetical paradigms. Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13 are analysed with the aid of Literary Criticism, Textual Criticism, Canonical Criticism, Composition and Redaction Criticism and Social-Scientific Criticism.
- Explore dimensions of Africanisation and inculturation in discussing homosexuality. This investigation includes a discussion of socio-scientific

¹⁵ This argument by Stone (1997:36-41) is deduced from Scripture explicitly in Lev 18 and 20, as it is going to be shown later in the investigation.

dimension of RSA; a portrayal of African culture and tradition religious experiences; an exploration of the honour and shame concept in RSA-Xhosa and the analysis of the cultural construction of marriage in RSA-Xhosa culture.

- Synthesise the conclusions drawn from the analysis of the said discussion, the investigation of dimensions of Africanisation and inculturation and the analysis of Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13 in discussing the issue of homosexuality within the MCSA.

1.3 Research methodology

This is a literature and exegetical study.

Exploring the traditions of biblical world and of primal people in parallel with those of modern people is commendable in the world of biblical scholars. In this investigation a fusing of the MCSA's readings as an interpretation model with the exegesis (literary-historical investigation) of the texts in discussion and with African hermeneutics is intended in discussing homosexuality.

1.3.1 MCSA's discussion

The discussion within the MCSA focuses on the mind of the Church as embedded in the doctrine and the mission imperatives with reference to homosexuality; as a first step the traditional method of approaching Scripture, the Wesley Quadrilateral, is critically studied and contributions by Methodist academics are investigated. Attention will be paid to the position of the MCSA and its history. The point of departure in the Wesley quadrilateral is Scripture which requires an interaction with the biblical text. The second step is engaging with the Church traditions, studying how issues were addressed in the life of the Church. Reasoning constitutes the third step: the discipline of applying one's mind rationally so as to actualise the biblical text in the modern context. The fourth step is an exploration of the life experiences of people in a particular field or issue (DEWCOM 2003:4). Studies by academics in the MCSA are tabled and engaged.

1.3.2 Analysis of Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13

1.3.2.1 Literary Criticism

Hayes and Holladay (2005:73-82) define Literary Criticism as a study of the composition and rhetorical style of a text. Literary Criticism denotes a broad range of topics that include the composition, structure and character of a text, techniques or styles, the employment of images and symbols by an author, the aesthetic and dramatic effects in a work (Hayes and Holladay 2005:73-82). Labuschagne (1986:107) argues that literary criticism with respect to the Bible is a method of investigating the history of the development of the text. The criteria utilised include an investigation of tensions within the text, distortion in the logical development of ideas, non-stylistic repetition, contradiction and differences in the use of language and in the theological point of view.¹⁶ In demarcating the textual unit from preceding and succeeding pericopes and in determining whether the text underwent a process of growth, Literary Criticism is of importance.¹⁷

1.3.2.2 Textual Criticism

This discipline represents a pursuit of the legible text or understandable reading; exploring how ancient writings were composed, how they were copied, preserved, transmitted, translated and quoted and thereafter construing how and why variations in the wording of a biblical passage resulted (Hayes and Holladay 2005:33-44). This tool presupposes that the Hebrew text of the Old Testament at the disposal of today's exegete is not the same as that produced by the biblical authors. Textual Criticism helps the exegete to locate the text within the broad context of its many versions and translations (Hayes and Holladay 2005:35). Such criticism also explains textual variants within the manuscripts of the original biblical language that are due to intentional and unintentional corruptions of the text.

¹⁶ Labuschagne (1986:107) is in agreement with Hayes and Holladay (2005:73-82).

¹⁷ Barton (1984:20-29); Barth and Steck (1980:30-39) are in consensus on the point of demarcation.

1.3.2.3 Canonical Criticism

Brevard Childs (1979:69-83) advocates the canonical exegetical approach that stresses that each and every text in the Bible should be read as part of the canon. The meaning of the biblical text is also regarded as subservient to the canonical meaning so that it is argued that Childs' approach runs the risk of developing into a completely a-historic one.¹⁸ The text is approached with pre-understanding and heard within the context of faith. Hayes and Holladay (2005:125) suggest that the importance of Canonical Criticism rests on the fundamental truth and challenge that the biblical text is to be read as part of the Hebrew Bible and not in isolation.

1.3.2.4 Composition and Redaction Criticism

Redaction Criticism, in investigating the final viewpoint and theology of a text, focuses on the editorial stage/s that led towards and produced the final written form and composition of a passage, the final stage/s of the tradition, as it was, that has become crystallised in written form (Hayes and Holladay 2005:101-109). Redaction Criticism has the task of establishing how and by whom the different units were combined in the compilation of the present form.¹⁹

1.3.2.5 Social-Scientific Criticism

Elliott (1993:72-74) suggests that the purpose of Social-Scientific Criticism is to investigate and seek to comprehend the biblical text in terms of its genre, content and rhetorical strategy as a medium of meaningful, persuasive interaction in a particular historical, social and cultural context. Theories and perspectives of social science are utilised in this paradigm. This investigation seeks to study the social, geographic, cultural context of the original readers and the ideology of the author.

¹⁸ Barton (1984:77-103) and Loader (1986:139-140) share the same sentiments in this regard.

¹⁹ Barton (1984:45-55); Barth and Steck (1980:50-55) and Beuken (1986:173-175) are in agreement.

1.3.3 African Hermeneutics

In this approach the Bible is read in the context of the Republic of South Africa (hereafter referred to as RSA). Western and Northern American interpretation of the Bible in Africa is defined as cultural imperialism; as an alternative it is argued that indigenous culture is to be related to the biblical message (Mbiti 1977:28). Mosothoane (1973:86ff) maintains that Euro-centric biblical scientific methodologies, with an emphasis on form criticism, source theories and redaction theories are not relevant to Africans.

A paradigm that seeks to read Scripture through African lenses is advocated for by Ukpong (1995:3-13): it is termed inculturation hermeneutics. Kalu (1999:1) argues that African traditional lenses furnish correct indigenous readings concerning what had occurred before the advent of Western, Islamic or other external influences in Africa. In line with this sentiment a hermeneutical approach that is rooted in African culture and traditional religious experiences is recommended by Mugambi (1994:9-16). Along these lines a process of indigenisation in interpreting the Scripture is presupposed. An inculturation hermeneutical approach to Scripture harmonises the text of the bible with the present socio-economic, political and religious realities and context. This exegetical approach includes the dimension of contextualisation²⁰ and departs from a sense of being aware of African context and culture.²¹ The context of the ancient text is then approximated and intertwined with the contemporary context of the RSA. The goal of inculturation is the actualisation of the biblical text in today's context so as to forge interpretative links between faith and life and engender commitment to personal and societal transformation (Ukpong 1999:325).

Synonymously with Ukpong's recommended inculturation hermeneutics Adamo advocates for an African cultural hermeneutical approach to Scripture (Adamo 2001:3-4). This synthesizes the fundamental biblical truth with African traditions, noting significant parallels in the biblical ancient world and the African contemporary

²⁰ Tracy (1987:79); Hierbert (1994:61) and Theron (1996:18) further propound that contextualisation in Africa means developing its own indigenous theology. In this process of theologising, cultural, socio-economic, political and religious contexts and realities are to be taken into consideration.

²¹ Following this step, the exegete's context is spelt out clearly and harmonised with the text, not read into or imposed on the text.

world.²² The ancient biblical world and the African reasoning, worldview, culture and experience, are to be reappraised and made to complement each other.²³

Mugambi (1999:1-2) prefers the concept ‘encounter’ rather than contextualisation on the grounds that the biblical text encounters an African in his or her own culture and that its understanding is within the parameters of African reasoning and experience.

Schoonhoven (1989:13) suggests that reinterpretation and contextualisation should be within the parameters of the continuing context or situation in which people find themselves. Africanisation and contextualisation requires a defining of the South African context and of who is an African. Africans are urbanised, secularised, modernised and christianised yet that they still cling to their traditions and customs.²⁴ Mahlangu (2006:9) observes that the history of the coming of Christianity in Africa adds a dimension of understanding how the Bible is perceived, read and interpreted today in Africa. Reading the Bible in an African, the RSA context, one observes the interaction of Africans with Christianity and the Bible in the context of their traditional culture and religion.²⁵

Ukpong (1999:318) propounds the need for a facilitated encounter or dialogue between biblical texts, African religion and culture and thereafter the development of new theological underpinnings resulting from the encounter. In this case exegetical tools are utilised to analyse biblical texts while anthropological and / or sociological approaches are employed in analysing the situation concerning homosexuality in the MCSA.

1.4 Hypothesis of the study

Acceptance and / or rejection of homosexuality as a love relationship cannot be based on Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13. There is an inability to provide sound rationale to reject homosexuality in the MCSA. Acceptance of homosexuality objects to dimension (s)

²² Adamo (2001:3-4) advocates for a dialogue between Scripture and African culture so as to make Scripture relevant in Africa.

²³ It is further argued that the literary-historical context of the text be given prominence in the exegesis so as to venture towards a trusted interpretation (Nthamburi and Waruta 1997:48).

²⁴ Mazrui (1980:47) and Tienon (1990:24) share the same sentiments.

²⁵ Mahlangu (2006:10) embraces an interaction of an African person and the Bible.

of Africanisation and inculturation, with explicit focus on RSA-Xhosa ethnic group. A common and compromise position and / or celebration of diversity are possible when there is a dialogue between the findings stemming from the MCSA discussions, the exegesis of Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13 and the dimensions of Africanisation and inculturation in discussing homosexuality.

1.5 Chapter division

Chapter 1 is an introduction and outlines the study by stating the actuality and the problem statement synthetically; aims and objectives; research methodology and hypothesis of the study.

Chapter 2 presents a study on the MCSA approach on homosexuality. The position of the MCSA and its history is investigated. The MCSA doctrines and mission in discussing homosexuality is researched. The Wesley quadrilateral as a hermeneutical model is practically illustrated. This includes a study on homosexuality with reference to scripture, tradition, reason and experience. Contributions from the MCSA clergy and laity are engaged.

Chapter 3 comprises of an analysis of Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13. Literary Criticism unfolds the composition and rhetorical style of the text. Textual Criticism is persuasive for the original wording, exploring how ancient writings were composed and to construe how and why variations in the wording of a biblical passage resulted. Canonical Criticism reads Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13 in relation or in consultation with other texts in the Canon of Scripture and not in isolations. Composition and Redaction Criticism depicts the development of the texts of Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13. Social-Scientific Criticism studies the social, geographical and cultural context of the original listeners and the ideology of the author of Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13.

Chapter 4 presents deductions from dimensions of Africanisation and inculturation in the discussion of homosexuality. This includes exploring socio-scientific dimension of RSA. African culture and traditional religious experiences on homosexuality are related. Cultural dimension that rejects and accept homosexuality are investigated.

Chapter 5 presents an interaction between the MCSA discussions, an analysis of Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13 and dimensions of Africanisation. An indication for further investigation is presented.

1.6 Orthographical remarks

1.6.1 Introduction

The adjusted Harvard reference system is used in this research

Unless otherwise indicated the Bible translation of choice is the Jerusalem Bible Version (JB). For purposes of comparison the New International Version (NIV), the New King James Version (NKJV), the Revised Standard Version (RSV) and the Masoretic Text (MT) of the BHS are utilised.

1.6.2 Transliteration

For the purpose of this study and since it is essential in this field the Hebrew and Greek language is utilised and translation is given.

Chapter 2

Methodist Church of Southern Africa (MCSA) and homosexuality

2.1 Introduction

The MCSA is at the stage of wrestling with the issue of homosexuality. In this chapter discussions within this Church are engaged critically. The MCSA's position is analysed with a view to understanding the said denomination's mind. In line with the Church's policy, her doctrines and her understanding of her mission are studied. The application of a theory that was historically constructed by John Wesley in engaging societal concerns and issues, the Wesley Quadrilateral, is investigated. A discussion document prepared by DEWCOM, which displays the use of this Quadrilateral in discussing homosexuality is analysed. Clergy and laity in the MCSA have approached Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13 independently and analytically. Contributions from these Methodists shed light on the MCSA reading of Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13 and the discussion of homosexuality. A discussion of ideological contestations within the MCSA from persons, individually, and from structures is the aim of this chapter.

2.2 The position of the MCSA and its history

2.2.1 Introduction

The developments in the construction of this position on homosexuality are engaged with. A specific focus is directed to the statements in this regard that stem from the MCSA conferences, the ultimate decision-making structure. Those from the 2001, 2005 and 2007 MCSA conferences are tabulated and prove to make a contribution in understanding and engaging the mind of the MCSA.

2.2.2 Conference Statements

The 2001 MCSA conference made a commitment to being a community of love rather than rejection while the 2005 conference invited Methodists to embrace many different and even opposing views on homosexuality to journey collectively. The 2007 MCSA conference pursued a way forward that respected and held in tension differing views among the clergy and laity.²⁶ Its resolutions²⁷ are bulleted below, followed by discussion.

This conference therefore resolved:

- That the grace, affirmation of diversity, and commitment to the unity of the church central to the Same-Sex resolutions of the 2001 and 2005 Conferences be re-affirmed;

At one level this statement is biased, the reason being that it only advocates the *acceptance* of homosexuals, though the word ‘grace’ redresses the punitive reception of homosexual people. Grace by definition in the MCSA and other churches is undeserved love and is mostly regarded as an attribute of God. Being gracious means loving all people, including homosexual persons. The phrase ‘affirmation of diversity’ opens the doors for differing views. The phrase as used in this context extends to behaviour and orientation and supposes the acceptance of people uniquely as they are. The statement on the commitment to the unity of the church places the decision making focus on the possible division rather than solely on righteousness or wrongness or acceptance or rejection of homosexual orientation.

- That our ministers and people continue to engage this issue in Christian conversation and respectful listening, so that all of us may more fully understand and articulate the variety of viewpoints held within our church;

This resolution is commendable. It entails a view which looks toward a consultative approach and projected outcomes. Such an approach fosters a journey towards the

²⁶ These deliberations are as I have recorded them in the conference session.

²⁷ Methodist Church of Southern Africa (2006:45) constructed these resolutions in the spirit of celebrating diversity.

affirmation of various voices which are currently silenced in discussing homosexuality.

- That we will seek to be a Christ-honouring community: Celebrating the rich diversity of those called to follow Jesus, honouring the sacred worth of all people and practicing our Wesleyan heritage of warmth, welcome and hospitality;

Faithfulness of Christians to their identity in Christ is essential. Identification in this sense requires imitating Christ's actions and approach to social issues. Being a Christ-honouring community is not restricted to a celebration of diversity, honouring the sacred worth of people and practising Wesley's heritage of warmth, welcome and hospitality. Being such a community also includes values of nurturing the family, adhering to discipline, solid moral values and treating people with redemptive love.

- Recognising the authority of Scripture, and noting that in our quest for understanding, there is no one, monolithic and incontrovertible interpretation of it;
- Acknowledging that there are therefore some issues upon which there may never be total unanimity within the church and upon which we must "agree to differ" without reducing our respect for, and trust of, one another;
- Conference approves the publication of Bible Study material which will assist members of the Church to reflect on the issue of Christians and homosexuality and Same-Sex relationships;
- Conference directs that a meeting be convened to consider the wide spectrum of viewpoints on the civil unions of Same-Sex couples in order to listen to each other, identify points of agreement and differences and seek a way forward that will enhance the unity of the church. DEWCOM is mandated to convene this engagement;
- Conference recognizes that any decision and subsequent action on the issue of civil unions between Same-Sex partners must await the outcome of the ongoing process of engagement as specified by Conference 2005 (MCSA 2006:75) and, in the interim, expects Methodist ministers to continue to offer pastoral care to homosexual individuals as to all others.

These resolutions are commendable on the whole. The statement, ‘Recognising the authority of Scripture, and noting that in our quest for understanding, there is no one, monolithic and incontrovertible interpretation of it’ is questionable, though. It ignores the fact that there are irresponsible interpretations and approaches to Scripture. The phrase ‘agree to differ’ in the statement, ‘Acknowledging that there are therefore some issues upon which there may never be total unanimity within the church and upon which we must "agree to differ" without reducing our respect for, and trust of, one another’ is problematic. The phrase closes doors to a possible journey towards the common and consensual understanding that could be conceived by responsible interpretation of Scripture and approach to the debate. The concepts of upholding solid moral fibre, the themes of holiness and consecration, are not alluded to in the resolution.

2.2.3 Conclusion

There are essential thoughts to be drawn from this process of constructing a position in the MCSA. The concept of grace as understood by Methodist people is important in redressing the prejudice which displays itself in the treatment of homosexual people. The affirmation of diversity allows a possible listening to differing voices in the MCSA. The openness to a consultative approach and projected outcomes is laudable. A commitment to the unity of the Church seems to be a priority for the MCSA. The manifestation of such unity should not imply the silencing of other voices or a compromising of other beliefs and values. The Methodist’s identity in Christ as a phenomenon in engaging homosexuality should reflect various aspects of Christ’s nature and work. Depictions of rejection of homosexuality are not evident in the position of the MCSA.

2.3 MCSA doctrines and mission

2.3.1 Introduction

The mission of God as understood by the MCSA and spelt out in the four mission imperatives covers areas of spirituality; evangelism and Church growth; justice and service; and human and economic development and empowerment. Methodists in the

MCSA are called to practise these imperatives. Over five years these imperatives have become the pillars of the MCSA and clearly depict the vision and the mind of the Church. The MCSA maintains that an authentic service is based on Scripture, tested in community, affirms life and seeks the peace of God's reign. The said imperatives are based on Scripture and aim at affirming life in communities. The MCSA stands in solidarity with all people who seek freedom, peace and justice and homosexual persons at this juncture fall into this category.

2.3.2 Implications of MCSA mission imperatives

2.3.2.1 Spirituality

The outcome of the imperative of spirituality is for people to enjoy a relationship with God, which then makes them eligible to be members of the Church (<http://www.methodist.org.za/?q=history>). Homosexuals and heterosexuals do have a relationship with God alike, irrespective of sexual orientation. If evidence could be adduced that homosexual people do not have faith and a relationship with God, then a Same-Sex relationship could be regarded as sinful. If evidence beyond reasonable doubt can be presented that homosexuality is sinful then it could be categorised as immoral and unacceptable.

2.3.2.2 Evangelism and Church growth

The rejection of homosexual persons without an informed diagnosis that homosexuality is sinful contradicts the intention of the MCSA that is presented under the imperative of evangelism and Church growth as 'inviting people to personal faith in Christ and His gospel and to belong in the community' (<http://www.methodist.org.za/?q=history>). This imperative seeks to establish a relationship between all people and God and to create a sense of belonging in the community and amongst all people. It supposes a fostering of healthy relationships between heterosexuals and homosexuals and also supposes a celebration of cultural and ideological diversity.

2.3.2.3 Justice and service

The imperative of justice and service aims at promoting the values of justice, unity and reconciliation and the healing of national ills, physical, environmental and social

(<http://www.methodist.org.za/?q=history>). Homosexual persons experience rejection, discrimination and prejudice in society and in the Church. It can be argued that rejection does not embrace or subscribe to the value of justice. The value of unity does not imply favouring one view or person over the other but includes the dimension of celebrating diversity. If the rejection of Same-Sex relationships and homosexual people can be defined and labelled as a national social ill, then the Church would be expected to be faithful to her mission statement²⁸, which aims to achieve healing and transformation.

2.3.2.3 Human and economic development and empowerment

Human and economic development and empowerment focuses on the care and growth of children, the plight of the poor, education, quality of life and nation building (<http://www.methodist.org.za/?q=history>). Ideals for human existence are constructed by each community and its culture. An environment which is acceptable and conducive to the care and the development of children is also created by the community. In some circles homosexual relationships are deemed not to be the ideal model of family structure and relations, which should be portrayed to children. On the other hand, paradigms may shift and nation building might require an eradication of prejudice towards and rejection of homosexual persons.

2.3.3 Implications of MCSA doctrine

2.3.3.1 Office of Christian ministry

The MCSA in her doctrine as reflected in paragraph 1.20 and 1.9.5 is convinced of the universal conviction of the Methodist people and that the office of the Christian Ministry depends upon the call of God who bestows the gifts of the Spirit, the grace and the fruit of which indicate those whom God has chosen (MCSA 2008:12). Yet the MCSA objects to the ministry of the homosexual.

²⁸ The mission statement of the Methodist church of Southern Africa declares: ‘God calls the Methodist people to proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ for healing and transformation’.

2.3.3.2 Maintenance of the tradition of the Church

In accordance to paragraph 1.6 and 1.17²⁹ the MCSA considers the revelation recorded in the Holy Scripture as the supreme rule of faith and practice. The significance of the Church's tradition is emphasised in the phrase 'rejoices in the inheritance of the Apostolic Faith'. With reference to discussing the issue of homosexuality, therefore, Scripture is vital and the maintenance of the tradition of the Church is encouraged. Discussion on Scripture and tradition is presented in the exploration of the Wesley Quadrilateral.

2.3.3.3 The witness of the Church

The statement 'to ensure the continued witness of the Church to the realities of the Christian experience of salvation'³⁰ can be interpreted in various ways. It does presuppose that the historical witness of the Church, as embedded in Scripture, is not dynamic and cannot be re-shaped by the changing experiences of Christians. The witness of the Church is nonetheless to be applied to the realities of Christian experience. Scripture is meant to ensure the continued witness of the Church, not to impose a system of formal or speculative theology in approaching debates like that of Same-Sex relationships.

2.3.3.4 Membership

In accordance the MCSA (2008:25) all people are welcomed to be members of the MCSA, if they desire to be saved from their sins through faith in Jesus Christ and show the same in their life and conduct; as well as seek to have communion with Christ and His people. Sexual orientation is therefore not the determinative factor for membership in the MCSA and based on this it cannot be argued that homosexual persons cannot be members. The incongruity, as mentioned, is that in the MCSA homosexuals are accepted as members of the Church, but they cannot assume leadership offices.

²⁹ MCSA (2008:15) edition further notes that the doctrines upheld by the MCSA are based upon the divine revelation recorded in the Holy Scripture.

³⁰ See MCSA (2008:15) in paragraph 1.17.

2.3.4 Conclusion

Based on the fact that it cannot be proven that homosexual persons do not have faith in God, homosexuality is not to be classified or defined as sinful. The intention and principle of inviting ‘all people’ to personal faith in Christ and His gospel and to belong in the community of faith is contradicted by the rejection of homosexuality and the ministry of such persons. This does not subscribe to the value of justice and unity within the MCSA. The imperative of human and economic development and empowerment may either constitute a tool to argue for the acceptance of homosexuality or not.

Any objection to a homosexual person’s ministry is invalid if Christian ministry is dependent upon the call of God. Such objections may be based on the appeal to maintain the tradition of the Church. The witness of the Church is not static and realities of present scientific age present another dimension in which opposition of homosexuality may be invalid. In this vein the acceptance of homosexuality based on progressive rationalisation is to be advocated. The documentation of the policy on membership directs the MCSA to redress the rejection of homosexuality and the ministry of homosexual persons. Based on the discussion of the MCSA doctrines and mission there is no concrete ground to based the argument of rejecting homosexuality.

2.4 Wesley Quadrilateral in the discussion document

2.4.1 Introduction

DEWCOM prepared a discussion document on Same-Sex relationships, in which the Wesley Quadrilateral is used as an approach in discussing homosexuality. The Quadrilateral is four dimensional. Scripture, deemed as being the Supreme Rule of faith and practice, is given first priority. Scripture as a reference point is used to discuss homosexuality and biblical texts related to homosexuality. Secondly, DEWCOM’s mind is applied to the traditions of the Church locally and globally, denominationally and ecumenically. Thirdly, developments from the age of the Enlightenment are studied. Engaging homosexuality and biblical texts from the perspective of experience represents the fourth dimension in the Wesley

Quadrilateral. Thoughts stemming from these four dimensions are critically investigated and engaged.

2.4.2 Wesley Quadrilateral

2.4.2.1 Scripture

DEWCOM (2003:3) pointed out that one of the approaches to interpreting Scripture is reading the text literally. In this paradigm one focuses on what is deemed as explicitly stated in the Scripture about homosexuality³¹ and then perceives it to be absolute, as being the position of the Bible, as being the mind of Christ and as being God designed behaviour. On the other hand it is noted that this approach is inadequate and therefore does not do justice to the reading and interpretation of Scripture.³²

The literal approach to Scripture fails to recognise and to be aware of the historical and cultural distance between the 21st century and the times of the production of these texts. It assumes that the biblical writer's conclusions about homosexual behaviour are directly translatable into our modern context.³³ The authority and relevancy of the Bible is not questioned. At one level the question of contextualisation is to be entertained in this regard because trends, traditions and trajectories changes and what was applicable in biblical times might not be in the 21st century South African context. The fact that paradigms are shifting is ignored in the literal approach to Scripture. It is unethical and unjust to impose an ancient biblical Jewish culture on the culture of South Africans and Methodists in Southern Africa. An interaction and / or dialogue between the people's cultures during the eras when biblical texts were produced and the culture of the Bible readers of today in South Africa makes a contribution which is essential in biblical scholarship and in the Churches' quest to find common ground and / or diversity celebrating ground in discussing homosexuality.

³¹ Lev 18:22; 20:13 and Rm 1:26-27 are deemed to be clear in their unequivocal condemnation of homosexual behaviour.

³² DEWCOM (2003:3) does not elaborate on the limitations of this approach to Scripture, though.

³³ DEWCOM (2003:3). It could be concluded that historical and cultural differences between the 21st century and biblical times are to be taken into account and that it cannot simply be assumed that biblical references condemning homosexual behaviour can be directly translated to and applied in the 21st century context.

DEWCOM (2003:4) notes that some sanctioned sexual mores in Scripture are not adhered to in modern times, which include punishment of adultery by stoning (Deut 22:22) and the prohibition of sexual intercourse during a menstrual period (Lev 18:19, 29). Such inconsistency in accepting and / or rejecting biblical texts creates injustice in the interpretation of Scripture. I would argue that the literal approach to Scripture proves to be an unreliable hermeneutic tool in the discipline of biblical text interpretation and usage, especially when it is not used in line with other hermeneutical paradigms. The argument of acceptance and / or rejection of homosexuality that is deduced from the literal approach to Scripture is therefore illogical.

The second paradigm in interpreting Scripture is to subject any biblical text to the wider witness of Scripture as a whole.³⁴ This approach presupposes that a text is to be read in relation to other biblical texts on a thematic basis. DEWCOM (2003:5) observes that there are broad themes that recur throughout Scripture, which pertain to what God is like; the attitude of God towards humanity and the lifestyle that God expects from people. DEWCOM (2003:5) cites that the only two themes that are noted are those of inclusion and of the intrinsic dignity and sacred worth of all people and the denunciation of all discrimination, oppression and injustice. Therefore the attitude of the Church is to be characterised by inclusion instead of dehumanisation, rejection and oppression. The themes of holiness, purity, morality and consecration are ignored in the DEWCOM document. In subjecting Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13 to the wider scope of the Bible on thematic bases there cannot be a clear position on the homosexuality discussion. A sentiment of accepting homosexuality based on themes of inclusion and denunciation of all discrimination is not to be argued without being mindful of themes of holiness, purity and morality. Subjection of Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13 to other biblical texts on a thematic basis proves not to be of assistance in arguing towards acceptance or rejection of homosexuality.

In principle, the idea of subjecting biblical texts to the wider witness on a thematic basis is crucial. Reading a biblical text in relation to other texts requires a study of why and how the author of a later source made reference to an old source. An

³⁴ DEWCOM (2003:5). This approach sounds more like Canon Criticism in principle and not in practical terms.

investigation into the world of the author of the later source and the world of the original text (the text being appealed to) is to be conducted. An understanding of who, when, why and how ancient biblical texts were used by later authors sheds light on the ways in which such ancient texts were interpreted and construed over the years, being applied to different contexts and times.

The third approach in the interpretation of Scripture as suggested by DEWCOM (2003:6) is that of seeing the Bible as a living document in the life of the Church, which is enlivened by the activity of the Holy Spirit, who comes to interpret the words of Scripture and so lead the Church into all truth (Jn 16:12-14). In this process the entrenched assumptions and traditional interpretations are challenged and the Church ventures to a new and fuller understanding of the biblical witness and truth about God.³⁵ The fact that the Holy Spirit can embrace the traditional interpretation is ignored, however.

The crux of the matter in the argumentation of this approach seems to be the challenging of entrenched assumptions and tradition. This motive and / or conviction, which seem only to be responsive to conservativeness at one level, is not healthy in the discipline of interpreting ancient texts. Approaching Scripture with pre-conceived ideas, convictions and motives is not always constructive. In terms of this third approach the process of reading and interpreting ancient texts is being spiritualised. There seem not to be clear criteria and / or a methodology for interpreting texts. From the academic point of view, the manifestation of the activity of the Holy Spirit in the process of interpreting the Scriptures is unclear, even nonsensical, and it is at this point that reluctance in accepting this approach also displays itself.

While these three approaches to Scripture make a contribution to the discipline of interpreting ancient text there are limitations: areas that are not investigated and insights that are not unearthed. Historical and literary investigation and its contribution to the study of biblical texts is not taken into account nor recommended in the DEWCOM document. Hence in the MCSA discussions arguments for acceptance and rejection of homosexuality based on Scripture are not convincing.

³⁵ DEWCOM (2003:6) further makes reference to the Apostle Peter's rejection of what was traditionally deemed as impure in Acts 15.

This disregard devalues the supposed approach to the debate through the study of Scripture. In the next chapter, therefore, a comprehensive investigation will be conducted in unearthing the meaning of Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13 when discussing homosexuality.

2.4.2.2 Tradition

This dimension points to the mind and position of the Church over the ages and also to the wider witness of the contemporary Church. The focus is first placed on the Methodist church and then on the wider witness of the Church globally.

From the outset DEWCOM (2003:14) remarks that ‘drawing from the resource of tradition is not to be confused with a rigid and uncritical adherence to the things of the past, that asserts that the way things have been is the way they always shall be’. Negative sentiments and positions towards homosexuality existed in the history of the Christian Church and were shaped by the rationale of Natural Law. Homosexuality was taken to be immoral and unnatural, because natural law maintained that the purpose of sexual intercourse was procreation so that any intention contrary to that was unacceptable (DEWCOM 2003:14).

Denominations of the contemporary Church differ in their positions on the issue of homosexuality. These range from the condemnation of homosexuality as a manifestation of a depraved nature and a perversion of divine principles; to a conditional acceptance of homosexual people as long as they do not engage in homosexual acts; to conditional acceptance of homosexual people as long as they do not take leadership positions; to a full acceptance of homosexuality as part of the diversity of God’s good creation, which includes the blessing of Same-Sex unions and the ordination of homosexuals.³⁶

A study conducted by DEWCOM (2003:16) on world Methodism shows that the British Methodist Church is not opposed neither to homosexuality nor to ministry by homosexuals. It located the sexual relationship in the context of marriage and is silent on the issue of Same-Sex marriages. The said Church’s position is reflected in the

³⁶ DEWCOM (2003:15) does not explicitly mention the denominations individually according to their positions.

1993 annual conference resolutions which affirmed the joy of sexuality as God's gift; declared that all practices of sexuality which are promiscuous, exploitative or demeaning in any way are unacceptable forms of behaviour and contradict God's purpose; stated that a person shall not be debarred from the Church on the grounds of sexual orientation in itself; re-affirmed the traditional teaching of the Church on sexuality, namely chastity for all outside marriage and fidelity within it, and recognized, affirmed and celebrated the participation and ministry of lesbians and gay men in the Church (DEWCOM 2003:16).

DEWCOM (2003:16) notes that the United Methodist Church's Social Principles on human sexuality affirm the worth of the homosexual and the availability of God's grace to all. It does not condone the practice of homosexuality. The principles contain the following paragraph on homosexual people:

'homosexual persons no less than heterosexual persons are individuals of sacred worth; all persons need the ministry and guidance of the Church in their struggles for human fulfilment, as well as the spiritual and emotional care of a fellowship that enables reconciling relationships with God, with others and with self; although we do not condone the practice of homosexuality and consider this practice incompatible with Christian teaching, we affirm that God's grace is available to all; we implore families and churches not to reject or condemn their lesbian and gay members and friends; and we commit ourselves to be in ministry for and with all persons' (DEWCOM 2003:16).

The World Methodist Council asserts that Methodists believe that Methodists are the friends of all and the enemies of none; and seeks to understand and respond to the context and situations in which Methodists live, so that their witness will have integrity and stand in solidarity with all people who seek freedom, peace and justice (DEWCOM 2003:16).

It is noted that in the history of the Church there are major examples of the Church moving from attitudes and practices of exclusion and rejection to ones of inclusion and acceptance in its approach to and dealings with marginalised groupings.³⁷

The contribution from DEWCOM (2003:18-20) predominantly makes reference to points that underpin the argument for the inclusion of homosexual people. This contribution is biased also in the sense that reference is not made to instances where the Church was faced with heresies which challenged the holy values, beliefs and practices of the Church. The standard of faithfulness in marriage and abstinence for the unmarried is maintained as the normative position of the Church.³⁸ This dimension and implication of the understanding of marriage throughout the history of the Church is not explored and substantiated. Marriage has been deemed to be the valued setting where sexual relations can manifest themselves. The regard for marriage (if not redefined) in the history of the Protestant Church make it not feasible to accept Same-Sex relationships.

The Methodist Church, globally, is not objecting to homosexuality, while various denominations within ecumenical circles do embrace the latter (DEWCOM 2003:20). The MCSA embraces homosexual people but rejects their ministry and therefore does not affirm homosexuality. It seems that the MCSA position at present is formulated independently of the Church globally and ecumenically. The questions arise: how does the MCSA locally relate to Methodists globally and to denominations ecumenically, and what are the implications of such a relationship for policy making? It seems as if the relationship is for consultative purposes and not for joint formulation of policy. The MCSA is not obliged to implement the decisions taken at global Methodist structures and can be autonomous. The emerging critical question is: what is the point of consulting traditions and trajectories of other denominations, the global Methodist church and the Church universally, if such thoughts cannot be engaged and used? In consultation with the global Methodist Church and the Church universally

³⁷ DEWCOM (2003:18-20). Reference is being made to the inclusive attitude towards gentiles; inclusion of people who were mentally handicapped in the Eucharist within the medieval Church; inclusion of black people in the South African apartheid regime and inclusion of women in ministry to the level of ordained ministry and Episcopal office.

³⁸ DEWCOM (2003:20) bases this position on Scripture but on ethics.

the MCSA does not engage and use traditions and trajectories of the wider Church community.

2.4.2.3 Reason

In employing reason, DEWCOM (2003:10) emphasises Natural Law and the scientific age as major influences on moral-theological thought. The Natural Law of the cosmos was conceived by the Stoic school of philosophy, which believed that there is a purpose behind everything created:³⁹ in the case of sexuality, the purpose of sex is procreation. It is on these grounds that sexual intentions that are contrary to the purpose of procreation are deemed to be unnatural and therefore unacceptable. In modern times sexual intercourse not only fulfils this purpose but also serves to enhance intimacy.⁴⁰

The scientific age presents a new dimension which was unknown to the ancient biblical world: the concept of human sexual orientation. According to DEWCOM (2003:10) developments in thought within the natural and social sciences have led to the following conclusions⁴¹:

- The ways in which the complex reality of human sexuality is understood and described are constantly evolving.
- While the exact process whereby a person's sexual orientation is formed is unknown, the evidence suggests that a person's sexual orientation is in place relatively early in life.
- Sexual orientation is something over which people have little choice and they do not choose to be heterosexual or homosexual.
- Attempting to change a person's sexual orientation is highly questionable.
- As with heterosexual practices, homosexual practice is not uniform and varieties⁴² of homosexual expression exist.

³⁹ DEWCOM (2003:10) focuses on the creation of human beings in this discussion.

⁴⁰ Stone (1998:39) argues for an alternative approach which is gay-affirmative and that avoids historical and ideological problems. He notes that biblical thoughts and language has been shaped decisively by ancient constructs of male and female and that a modern construction of sexuality and gender ideologies is critical and of necessity.

⁴¹ In agreement with the conclusions drawn, objections to homosexuality without considering them are absurd.

⁴² Ruth Fuller is noted by DEWCOM (2003:12-13) as identifying and describing varieties of homosexual expression, which include *Pseudo-homosexuality* (sexual activity in which people of the Same-Sex reflect issues of dependence-independence and / or power-powerlessness rather than sexual

Stanton Jones and Mark Yarhouse (2000:13) contend that science has nothing to offer that would remotely constitute persuasive evidence which would compel people to deviate from the historic Christian judgement that full homosexual intimacy, and behaviour, is immoral. Jones and Yarhouse (2000:13)'s contribution begins by posing the question as to how scholars and theologians should think about the relevance of scientific evidence to moral, religious and theological positions on the subject of homosexuality. In response to this question, three perspectives are cited: perspectivalism⁴³, imperialism⁴⁴ and postmodern relativism⁴⁵.

Perspectivalism suggests that there is not and should not be an interaction between science and faith / religion as far as the subject of homosexuality is concerned. It implies that, with regard to the issue of homosexuality, the idea of natural laws should be upheld by the religious community and that conclusions drawn by DEWCOM from the scientific age should be disregarded.

Jones and Yarhouse (2000:14), in agreement, note that from the viewpoint of imperialism, religion is deemed to be outdated and by the same token the Bible is also viewed as absolute and being the only normative paradigm to engage with the subject of homosexuality.

desire); *situational homosexuality* (Same-Sex practice where people are isolated from people of the opposite sex, as in prisons); *exploitative homosexuality* (complementary sexual activities in which a less powerful individual is exploited by a more powerful individual); *variational homosexuality* (prostitution); *bisexuality* (in which a homosexual person continues to have heterosexual relations); *ambisexuality* (a smaller group of people who experience equal sexual pleasure and performance with either sex) and *preferential homosexuality* (adults whose preference is for emotional and physical intimacy with persons of the Same-Sex).

⁴³ By definition this position denotes an understanding that science and religion are two complementary epistemologies or lines of thinking that deal with alternative and distinct vantage perspectives on reality (Jones and Yarhouse 2000:14).

⁴⁴ It is argued that imperialism depicts science and religion as competing descriptions of the same reality, with one trying to utterly dominate and replace the other. In most instances imperialists believe that scientific evidence replaces perceived magical religiosity, with science being viewed as credible.

⁴⁵ This perspective subverts any real dialogue between religion and science. Scientific imperialism is linked to what is called modernism. The implication of this according to Jones and Yarhouse (2000:15) is that faith is the necessary tool of human rationality through science and that scientific rationality has come to be termed postmodernism.

In debates within ecclesiastic circles on homosexuality, postmodern relativism is often preferred for the presentation of a dialogue with and stories from homosexually oriented people (Jones and Yarhouse 2000:15).

Jones and Yarhouse (2000:15) advocate a dialogue between science (reason) and religion (faith), in which science contributes to religion's understanding and religion contributes to scientific realities.⁴⁶ Certain views advocate that the argued authority of science should overturn traditional Christian moral teachings. These include the argument that the Bible is inconsistent and vague and therefore wrong in many cases. Through advances in human reason, particularly through modern scientific discoveries, people have come to perceive a homosexual orientation as a natural, normal and good human variant (Jones and Yarhouse 2000:17). This suggests that the Scripture is incorrect and is to be superseded by human reason. The argument that Scripture and tradition evidence confusion and inconsistency on the subject of homosexuality leads people to opt for reasoning (with respect to scientific realities). This option disregards the Methodist taking of Scripture as a supreme rule of faith and practice. Jones and Yarhouse's line of thinking and advocacy for dialogue between Scripture, Tradition, Reason and Experience is commendable on the ground that a dialogue fosters a consultative, informative and non-biased engagement.⁴⁷ The question of how that dialogue should translate itself into practice is not addressed. Acceptance of homosexuality is fostered when using Reason as a hermeneutic tool or approach.

2.4.2.4 Experience

The intention of the dimension of experience is to relate people's experiences regarding homosexuality to Scripture, tradition and reason in discussing it. Reflections on experiences depict that a homosexual orientation is not chosen but discovered. On this ground DEWCOM (2003:21) argues that any suggestion, that a homosexual orientation is wilfully chosen, is inconsistent with the weight of experience of homosexual people. DEWCOM (2003:21-24) reports that homosexual people within the Church have felt discriminated against; felt that Christian faith has caused an intense captivity rather than bringing liberation; and have felt as if they are

⁴⁶ In this dialogue reason and faith may be at contrasting poles.

⁴⁷ Jones and Yarhouse (2000:17) also advocates for a consultative approach to societal issues.

abnormal. It is evident that homosexual people enjoy a relationship with God and that it is within this context that they feel loved, special and a unique creation (DEWCOM 2003:21). Some homosexual people are married to the opposite sex and remain in such relationships for the sake of their families and the vows they made. DEWCOM does not, however, present the variety of voices that emerge from various people's experiences. Voices that stem from negative experiences and the adoption of homosexuality are left unnoticed and unsaid.

Testimonies from people whose identities will remain undisclosed in this investigation present another understanding. Converts from Same-Sex relationships to heterosexuality do show that a homosexual orientation is wilfully chosen. This conversion demonstrates a sense of non-fulfilment in homosexuality and negative experiences of Same-Sex relationships. Some converts were influenced into such relationships by an experience of being hurt by the opposite sex and others by the environment⁴⁸ in which they found themselves.

The experiences of sicknesses that are related to Same-Sex sexual intercourse trigger reluctance towards accepting homosexuality. The question is that, if homosexuality is argued to be normal and life affirming, why are there many sicknesses associated with sexual intercourse between Same-Sex partners? Even though this view is valid it does not take into consideration the fact that there are also sicknesses associated with sexual intercourse between persons of opposite sexes. Arguments emanating from the experience of people depict both sentiments for accepting and rejecting homosexuality.

2.4.3 Conclusion

A literal reading of Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13 shows that certain homosexual deed are unacceptable. In terms of the literal approach it is assumed that the biblical writers' conclusions on homosexuality are directly translatable into today's South African context. Subjecting Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13 to the wider witness of Scripture with a specific focus on recurring themes may affect both the acceptance and / or rejection of

⁴⁸ This environment includes that of a prison, the single sex parented home and single sex schools.

homosexuality. Such a focus is limiting and inadequate. Reading a biblical text in relation to other texts requires a study of why and how the author of a later source made reference to older sources, as mentioned earlier.

As mentioned, the MCSA only notes traditions and trajectories of other denominations, global Methodist Church and the Church universally without engaging and / or using them. Both arguments for the acceptance and rejection of homosexuality are deduced in the tradition of the MCSA, global Methodist Church and the universal Church.

Arguments stemming from Natural Law and the scientific age, as well as from other sources, were also noted. These arguments move from the direction of rejection to acceptance of homosexuality. Acceptance and rejection of homosexuality is underpinned on the diverse experiences of people in the MCSA

2.5 Contributions from Methodist academics

2.5.1 Introduction

It is important to listen to differing independent voices within the MCSA. The independent thinking of the MCSA clergy and laity is applied to the DEWCOM discussion document on Same-Sex relationships and to the discussions that manifest themselves in local churches. Contributions that are analytically engaged with in this section emanate from the thoughts of Dave Morgan, Sjadu Nkomonde, Ray Alistoun, Greg Andrews and Faan Myburgh: this selection of contributors presents differing views and is aimed at celebrating varying voices in discussing homosexuality.

2.5.2 Dave Morgan

Dave Morgan remarks that the findings of DEWCOM's Same-Sex discussion guide are biased. Findings are biased in a sense that conservative contestations which reject homosexuality are disregarded. Morgan (<http://www.spirituality.org.za/files/DEWCOM/christians%20and%20same-sex%20relationships%20-%20conference%202003.pdf>) remarks that with reference to Scripture, tradition, reason and

experience Same-Sex relationships are not in accordance with orthodox Christian theology. In Morgan's contribution Scripture is clear in condemning homosexuality. Orthodox Christian theology is based on Scripture and therefore objects homosexuality. Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13 objects homosexuality. Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13 is said to be clearly condemning homosexuality without an in depth exegetical analysis of the text and a discussion on dimensions of Africanisation.

2.5.3 Sjadu Nkomonde

Within the controversy, Sjadu Nkomonde (<http://www.spirituality.org.za/files/DEWCOM/AFRICAN%20SEXUALITY.pdf>) approaches the subject of homosexuality from an African cultural perspective with specific reference to the Xhosa culture. Grounds for arguing for the acceptance of homosexually oriented people are adduced in the definition of the concept of ubuntu, 'humanity', as a dimension in African spirituality that directs people to belong to each other.⁴⁹ Ubuntu implies the celebration of diversity, which in turn supposes the acceptance of homosexual people in communities.

The other side of the coin, which is not mentioned by Nkomonde, is that if ubuntu concerns collectiveness and belonging to one another, then this does imply that social values are collectively constructed by the community. Therefore a person is to subscribe to these values. Social values regarding purity, moral fibre, ancestors, marriage and reproduction can be regarded as normative and as a basis for objecting to homosexual behaviour. Through the education systems⁵⁰ that are in place in the African culture, with reference to Xhosa tradition, sex outside marriage is not encouraged and young girls and boys are taught not to engage in sexual practices until they are married. It is within the context of marriage that reproduction is of importance and a relationship which does not subscribe to this value is unacceptable.

⁴⁹ Nkomonde (<http://www.spirituality.org.za/files/DEWCOM/AFRICAN%20SEXUALITY.pdf>) adds that people belong to the soil, and that people belong to one another, as do people and the ancestors.

⁵⁰ Education systems are the rite of passages that are in place. In the entry to adulthood there are umeluko (male initiation) and intonjana (female initiation), and it is in these rites of passage that education on issues of sexuality takes place. It is also in marriage that education regarding such issues occurs, including raising of children, creating a household environment that is conducive to this, providing a model of sexual orientation and including the subject of procreation.

Nkomonde (<http://www.spirituality.org.za/files/DEWCOM/AFRICAN%20SEXUALITY.pdf>) also noted that homosexuality in the African culture is deemed as unnatural, as an illegitimate sexual relationship and as a corruptor of the moral fibre of the society.⁵¹ Contrary to this argument is the understanding that African traditional societies were prone to social disruption caused by the various ways in which desire was regulated in practices such as clitoridectomy, pledging of young girls to older men (child abuse), polygamy and forceful inheritance of wives (Nyarenchi 2004:51). Making heterosexuality compulsory was a political institution requiring women to be sexually available to men and sustaining their dependence on the latter. The patriarchal paradigm contributes to this understanding.

In terms of Nkomonde's contribution, the acceptance of homosexuality can be argued for on the basis of interpreting ubuntu (humanity) as supposing the celebration of diversity even in areas of sexual orientation. On the other hand an argument for the rejection of homosexuality displays itself in the construction and / or constructed beliefs that are entrenched in an African culture, explicitly, RSA-Xhosa culture. RSA-Xhosa culture is cited as basis to support rejection of homosexuality. Acceptance and rejection of homosexuality can be argued from the perspective of ubuntu (humanity).

2.5.4 Ray Alistoun

The policy of the MCSA regards Holy Scripture as the supreme rule of faith and practice; Alistoun (<http://www.spirituality.org.za/files/DEWCOM/SCRIPTURE%20AND%20SAME%20SEX%20RELATIONS.pdf>) claims that where the Bible mentions homosexual behaviour at all, it clearly condemns it.⁵² Alistoun (<http://www.spirituality.org.za/files/DEWCOM/SCRIPTURE%20AND%20SAME%20SEX%20RELATIONS.pdf>) remarks that Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13 are texts that are regarded as unequivocally condemning Same-Sex sexual behaviour. According to

⁵¹ Karecki (2000:45) contends that in enculturation a critical question of in what spirit faith views a culture that has teachings which are against the Christian message. Nkomonde does not explicitly relate African culture to Christian faith principle and / or values.

⁵² Via and Gagnon (2003:115-17), Wells (2004:174) and Myers (1992:48) agree that homosexuality is unconditionally condemned in Scripture. A point of difference among these scholars is that Gagnon maintains that Scripture is clear on the matter and that should not be overridden whilst Via contends that homosexuality is not to be regarded as sin. Based on the authority of Scripture same-sex marriage is not an option for Christian (Stott 1985:22).

the fundamental doctrine of creation as embedded in Genesis 1 and 2 the sexual relationship of a man and woman is the only designed intimate relationship which is meant to fulfil God's procreative and uniting purpose. Alistoun (<http://www.spirituality.org.za/files/DEWCOM/SCRIPTURE%20AND%20SAME%20SEX%20RELATIONS.pdf>) further pointed out that the subject of marriage with reference to homosexuality needs to be studied, in giving guidance to the controversy around homosexuality. The traditional picture of marriage as ideally being between two persons of opposite sexes seems to be the underlying factor in Alistoun's contribution. Regard for the family shapes Alistoun's contentions and his construction of an ideal family image is characterised by the concepts of and values accorded to reproduction and / or procreation and to children.

Alistoun is avoiding and arguing against the supposed deconstruction and reconstruction of the image of marriage. Alistoun's biblical interpretation is not inclusive of other voices and does not show awareness of such.

2.5.5 Greg Andrews

Andrews (<http://www.spirituality.org.za/files/DEWCOM/HOLDING%20HANDS.pdf>) remarks that the second creation story recounted in Genesis 2:24 lays more emphasis on the companionship between Adam and Eve than on their procreative imperative. Andrews (<http://www.spirituality.org.za/files/DEWCOM/HOLDING%20HANDS.pdf>) further regards the recognition of Same-Sex relationships as a matter of love and justice which is underpinned in conventional Christian theology's emphasis on Jesus' command to love God and one's neighbour. The reason for marriage, with reference to Jesus' quotation and interpretation of Genesis 2:24, is companionship⁵³ which therefore demeans the value of family life. Jesus' supposed re-reading of Genesis 2:24 is taken to be a hermeneutic tool, in this case to speak to the acceptance of Same-Sex relationships. It is on these grounds that a Same-Sex sexual relationship is advocated.

⁵³ Andrews (<http://www.spirituality.org.za/files/DEWCOM/HOLDING%20HANDS.pdf>) offers a reinterpretation of the Old Testament text (Gn 2:24).

Andrews (http://www.spirituality.org.za/files/DEWCOM/HOLDING_%20HANDS.pdf) questions the appropriateness of some biblical texts for determining Christian norms⁵⁴ and, with reference to Romans 1:26, argues that St Paul's selectiveness and inconsistency in using Leviticus laws⁵⁵ causes Romans 1:26 not to be normative. Andrews (http://www.spirituality.org.za/files/DEWCOM/HOLDING_%20HANDS.pdf) further suggests that St Paul's thinking was restricted within the confines of temple prostitution, pederasty and paedophilia. This claim is not substantiated. An investigation into the historical context of the author of Romans is not conducted and therefore one may be reluctant in valuing Andrews' interpretation and understanding of St Paul. Andrews (http://www.spirituality.org.za/files/DEWCOM/HOLDING_%20HANDS.pdf) approaches Scripture and the debate from the dimension of experience.⁵⁶ Therefore personal prejudice and presuppositions which are rooted in experience are being read into the biblical texts and the debate. Preconceived ideas that are encoded in experience are creditable at one level if they are conscious of other voices and if the reasons for a certain reading, being chosen, are addressed. An ethical reading of any presuppositions should consider the question whether a given reading and / or interpretation is life affirming or not. An understanding of love and justice which is based on Scripture forms basis to argue for the acceptance of homosexuality.

2.5.6 Faan Myburgh

According to Myburgh (<http://www.spirituality.org.za/files/DEWCOM/Undoing%20disclosure.pdf>), homosexuality cannot be addressed if the issue of an ethics of interpretation is not engaged with. The suggested ethics is also a response to the problem concerning the historical gap between the ancient biblical world and the 21st century MCSA one. The thesis of Myburgh's contribution is that prejudices⁵⁷

⁵⁴ In this questioning the relevance of biblical texts is critiqued and objected. Houston (2002:160) in reviewing the book by Gagnon (2001) titled *The Bible and Homosexual Practice: Texts and Hermeneutics* notes the following: Gagnon objects the arguments that deny the relevance or the comprehensiveness of the text or in showing that biblical tradition is unanimous and consistent in rejecting homosexual behavior in all circumstances. Gagnon (2001: 20) is clear that biblical text such as Lev 18:22 and 20:13 objects homosexuality.

⁵⁵ Food laws and circumcision laws are ignored by St Paul.

⁵⁶ Balka and Rose (1989:29) project a need to know gay and lesbian persons and then moves from tolerance to acceptance.

⁵⁷ Myburgh (<http://www.spirituality.org.za/files/DEWCOM/Undoing%20disclosure.pdf>) describes prejudice as including judgements, preferences, facts that people accept, as well as values and aesthetic judgments, and adds that it constitutes a person's historical reality.

constitute the link between the ancient text and the current interpreter.⁵⁸ It is further suggested that the responsible interpretation of the Bible is possible only when prejudices are conformable to the ways in which responsibility should qualify Christian ethics in general.⁵⁹

Myburgh ([http://www.spirituality.org.za/files/DEWCOM/Undoing%20 disclosure.pdf](http://www.spirituality.org.za/files/DEWCOM/Undoing%20disclosure.pdf)) notes that there is no interpretation without prior understanding and further argues that prejudice⁶⁰ is valid when it is based on the things of the text itself and not on people's self-referential notions. This argument weakens the weight of experience⁶¹ as an interpretive paradigm in the Wesley quadrilateral.

On one level this may certainly be the case, if not all experiences are weighing equally so that some are thus not important. However, if prejudices are the factor which makes all understanding possible, they must be seen as positive and important.⁶² Our prejudices as a result of our historical situatedness are thus all important in our ethical decision-making, in relation to a specific ethical matter at hand as well as in terms of our ethics of interpretation.⁶³ These two can never be separated.

Ethically, however, we can compare prejudices so as to ascertain which makes for

⁵⁸ Myburgh ([http://www.spirituality.org.za/files/DEWCOM/Undoing%20 disclosure.pdf](http://www.spirituality.org.za/files/DEWCOM/Undoing%20disclosure.pdf)) asks the question; 'which prejudices are to shape and influence hermeneutical work in the Christian ethical decision making and which not?'

⁵⁹ Myburgh ([http://www.spirituality.org.za/files/DEWCOM/Undoing%20 disclosure.pdf](http://www.spirituality.org.za/files/DEWCOM/Undoing%20disclosure.pdf)) also investigates different approaches to the use of the Bible in Christian ethics. In the prescriptive approach the interpreter sees the law of God in an objective manner. In the second approach, which is an ethic of principles, the Bible is taken as a written code laying down universal principles. The third approach focuses on an encounter with God; the interpreter receives ethical guidelines in the process of reading Scripture. The fourth way emphasises the interpreter's response to a situation of encounter. It is supposed that historical and literary exegetical methods take precedence over the approaches used in Christian ethics and that they complement each other.

⁶⁰ Myburgh ([http://www.spirituality.org.za/files/DEWCOM/Undoing%20 disclosure.pdf](http://www.spirituality.org.za/files/DEWCOM/Undoing%20disclosure.pdf)) is opposed to the prejudice that contemporary people's historical context and their pre-understanding has nothing to do with interpretation; that the Bible speaks the same in every interpretation; that ethical decision making only concerns people's judgments; that application is something that is carried out after an interpretation is arrived at; that interpretation is merely a reconstruction of the intention of the author and that understanding is only possible within one or other objective method.

⁶¹ Experience constitutes an interpreter's historical reality and setting and therefore his/her prejudice.

⁶² Punt (2006:886) shows that the reading of the Bible is influenced by other readings and / or traditions, especially, traditions of interpretation. Prejudices are evident in all interpretations of the Bible.

⁶³ Balch (2000:278-304) contends that Scripture is to be approached with regard and respect to ethical questions.

responsible moral action and which not. Not all ethical work, not all interpretative acts, can be responsible. Hence we need to develop criteria so as to ascertain which will lead to responsible moral acts and which will not. The criteria can be had from the ways in which responsibility should qualify Christian ethics in general. In other ways, in other contexts, we can use the Bible differently, but in our ethical work, in our relating the Bible to the ethical issues we are confronted with, we must ascertain whether our fundamental starting points will lead to responsible moral action or not. And responsible moral action includes both principles and context for ethical decision-making. If prejudices are that which makes understanding possible in the first place we need to liberate them, celebrate them, but we also have to compare them or let them come face to face with other prejudices to ascertain whether they will lead us to responsible moral action. In this way, I would argue that they, instead of weakening experience, strengthen it for this helps us to 'sort out' our prejudices so that we may become more responsible in our moral action. Prejudices and / or presuppositions unearth silent and silenced voices.⁶⁴ A distinction should be made between unacceptable prejudice which does not lead to responsible use of the Bible and legitimate prejudice. The use of the Bible and / or an ethics of historical reading of it, together with an ethics of accountability to humanity, is vital in discussing homosexuality in the MCSA.

An approach to Scripture that considers context and making ethical decision within the community is advocated by Myburgh (<http://www.spirituality.org.za/files/DEWCOM/Undoing%20disclosure.pdf>). The context of South Africa is to be considered. This paradigm of biblical interpretation leads towards an understanding of ancient texts, Thiselton (1980:11) contends, and a tool to apply this understanding is essential. This approach is contextualisation. Myburgh (<http://www.spirituality.org.za/files/DEWCOM/Undoing%20disclosure.pdf>) implicitly phrases the concept of contextualisation in saying that hermeneutics should merge the horizons of the text and of the contemporary interpreter. The main point is that a responsible interpretation takes the context of the biblical texts seriously as well as that of the interpreter; in this process a dialogue between different historical times is to take

⁶⁴ Bradshaw (2004:19) embraces the contestation of differing voices as the way forward in the debate.

place, also in the sense of celebrating the distance between the text and the contemporary interpreter.

2.5.7 Conclusion

Contributions from the Methodist academics depict rejection of homosexuality based on Scripture with no critical approach to texts such as Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13. Experience and presuppositions are read into the text of Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13 to suggest that the text does not forbidden homosexuality. Reference to RSA-Xhosa culture is made in rejecting homosexuality with allusions to the concept of ubuntu (humanity) supporting acceptance of homosexuality.

2.6 Conclusion

A discussion on homosexuality within the MCSA, in this chapter, is displayed. Insights emanating from the MCSA's position which was analysed; the MCSA's policy, doctrines and understanding of her mission; the Wesley Quadrilateral and contributions from MCSA clergy and laity, enable a realisation and reception of varying voices in the discussion of homosexuality.

Important readings present themselves in the process of constructing this position in the MCSA. The concept of grace in the MCSA is an essential tool in redressing prejudices that are evident in the treatment of homosexual people. The affirmation of diversity that opens the door for a possible listening to differing voices in the MCSA is vital in discussing homosexuality. A commitment to the unity of the Church is a priority for the MCSA, which hinders a taking of a stand on homosexuality. The manifestation of unity in the MCSA should not imply silencing of other voices or the compromising of other beliefs and values. The Methodist's identity in Christ as a phenomenon in engaging homosexuality should reflect various and balanced aspects of Christ's nature and work. The MCSA in her adopted conference resolutions and position is not rejecting homosexuality. Rejection of homosexuality cannot be safely argued based on the MCSA doctrines and mission.

As shown, a literal reading of Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13 indicates that homosexuality is condoned. It is assumed that the biblical writers' conclusions on homosexuality are directly translatable into today's South African context. The literal approach to Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13 present illogical argumentation on acceptance and / or rejection of homosexuality.

Subjecting Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13 to the wider scope of Scripture with specific focus on recurring themes may lead both to the acceptance and / or rejection of homosexuality. A focus on recurring themes only is limiting and inadequate as is an appeal to the manifestation of the activity of the Holy Spirit in the process of interpreting Scriptures.

The purpose of sex, according to Natural Law has been discussed, as have the views of the scientific age and the perspective of experience. Based on this traditional ideology homosexuality is rejected. The MCSA position at present is formulated independently. In any case, the historical witness and / or tradition of the church as embedded in Scripture is not dynamic and cannot be re-shaped by the changing experiences of Christians. On the other hand contextualisation directs to taking account the fact that culture and tradition is dynamic and that the MCSA can move from rejection of homosexuality to acceptance.

DEWCOM's Same-Sex discussion guide is found to be biased. Ubuntu (humanity) embraces the celebration of diversity in areas of sexual orientation. The rationale for the rejection of homosexuality as manifested in the constructed beliefs that are entrenched in the African culture, explicitly, the Xhosa culture.

Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13 condemns homosexuality with the rationale being the reception of the doctrine of creation as contending that the intimacy in a sexual relationship is only designed to fulfil God's procreative and uniting purpose. The foundation for arguing for the acceptance of homosexuality is on the understanding of Genesis 2:24 as displaying companionship between Adam and Eve, more so than the procreative role. The argument that St Paul's selectiveness and inconsistency in using Leviticus' laws makes Romans 1:26 not to be normative, is not substantiated and is therefore void.

Based on the fact that it cannot be proven that homosexual persons do not have faith in God homosexuality is not to be associated with sinfulness nor classified as such. The rejection of homosexuality and the ministry of homosexual persons contradict the objective of the principle of inviting ‘all people’ to personal faith in Christ and His gospel. The value of belonging in the community of faith is also contradicted. Rejection of homosexuality does not subscribe to the value of justice and unity within the MCSA. The imperative of human and economic development and empowerment can either form the basis for arguing for the acceptance of homosexuality or not.

The dependence of Christian ministry upon the calling of God invalidates the objection to a homosexual person’s ministry. This objection is based on the appeal to maintain the tradition of the Church. The witness of the Church is static and the realities of the scientific age, regarding the issue of homosexuality, are invalid. In this vein, the acceptance of homosexuality based on progressive rationalisation is to be objective. Arguments for the acceptance of homosexuality are soundly depicted in the contributions from the MCSA academics and arguments for rejection of homosexuality are not sufficiently substantiated.

Chapter 3

Exegetical analysis of Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13

3.1 Introduction

In chapter 2 it is noted that in the discussion on the MCSA, justice is not done to the interpretation of Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13 in discussing homosexuality. In this chapter the historical and literary contexts of these texts are studied with a view to shedding valuable insight on the discussion of homosexuality.

3.2 Literary Criticism

3.2.1 Introduction

Hayes and Holladay (2005:73-82) define Literary Criticism as a study of the composition and rhetorical style of the text. Literary Criticism denotes a broad range of aspects that include composition, structure and the character of a text, technique of styles, the employment of images and symbols by an author as well as aesthetic and dramatic effects in a work. The criteria especially where biblical texts are concerned include an investigation of tensions within the text, distortion in the logical development of ideas, non-stylistic repetition, contradiction and differences in the use of language and in the theological point of view (Labuschagne 1986:107). In demarcating a textual unit from preceding and succeeding periscopes and in determining whether the text underwent a process of growth, literary criticism is of utmost importance (Barton 1984:20-29; Barth and Steck 1980:30-39). A literary study on Leviticus 18 and 20 includes investigation of its composition and structure, within which style and techniques are studied. The character of the text is also investigated and a morphological analysis of some significant verbs and nouns is performed.⁶⁵

⁶⁵ A syntactic analysis of Lev 18 and 20 is presented in Appendix A.

3.2.2 Leviticus 18 – An analysis

3.2.2.1 Content

Leviticus 18:1-5 introduces Leviticus 18 and pertains to religious purity and exclusive worship of יהוה. Verses 6 to 23 form one unit of laws on sexual deeds: verse 6 pertains to the next of kin; verse 7 is about uncovering the nakedness of the father and mother, with the emphasis⁶⁶ falling on mother; verse 8 concerns אשת-אביו father's wife; verse 9 is about אחותו sister; verse 10 is concerned with the son's daughter or the daughter's daughter; verse 11 pertains to the father's wife's daughter; verse 12 deals with the father's sister; verse 13 is concerned with the mother's sister; verse 14 pertains to the father's brother and his wife; verse 15 is about the daughter-in-law; verse 16 relates to the brother's wife; verse 17 pertains to the woman and her daughter and the woman's son's daughter or her daughter's daughter; verse 18 is concerned with taking a woman as a rival to her sister; verse 19 deals with a woman in her customary impurity; verse 20 pertains to defilement⁶⁷ resulting from sexual intercourse with the neighbour's wife; verse 21 focuses on a cult of Molech; verse 22 is concerned with male Same-Sex intercourse while verse 23 forbids sexual intercourse with an animal, which is a violation of order.

3.2.2.2 Foreign religious cults

Leviticus 18:1-5 serves as an introduction to Leviticus 18. Verse 3 is central to this introduction and conveys a prohibition of the acts of the Canaanites and Egyptians.⁶⁸ The repeated phrase אני יהוה אלהיכם (I am Yahweh your God) in verses 2 and 4, which encircle verse 3, seems to suggest an emphasis on religious purity and exclusive worship of יהוה amidst the worship of other gods. The verbs דבר (speak) and אמר (say) connect verses 1 and 2. This connection depicts the source of the law in Leviticus 18 as יהוה. The laws that are introduced by Leviticus 18:1-5 pertain

⁶⁶ Emphasis is reinforced by the repetition of אִמְךָ 'your mother' in a single verse.

⁶⁷ This is communicated by the usage of a nominal sentence לְטַמְאֵתָהּ 'to defile yourself with her'.

⁶⁸ The question asked by Wright (1989:291) that, did the Mosaic Law reprobate behaviour simply because the Canaanites indulged in it, seem to be the case. Cohen (1990:4) also agrees that Lev 18 presents practices both in Egypt and Canaan.

to religious purity and exclusive worship of יהוה. Sexual acts attached to, and associated with, a foreign religious cult are rejected and not homosexuality. The author's objective is to urge his audience not to be culturally, social, ethically and religiously influenced by neighbouring communities.

3.2.2.3 Enhancing family relationships

The phrase לא תגלה (you shall not uncover) closely links verses 6-17. These verses prohibit sexual acts with the next of kin, which are labelled as wicked by the usage of a nominal sentence הוא זמה (it is wickedness), in verse 17. The preposition ל (to) attached to גלות (uncover) is a piel infinitive construct verb, and connects verses 18 and 19. The verbs connect verses 18-19 to 6-17. This prohibition enhances the relationship within the family. The relationship between Leviticus 18:22 and verses 6-17 discloses the motive of family orderliness behind the former verse.

3.2.2.4 Violation of the natural and the orderly

לא תתן (not give or not let) associates verses 20 with 21. The feminine noun אשה (woman) relates verse 22 (Same-Sex sexual intercourse) to verse 23 (sexual intercourse with an animal which is a violation of order) which are related by the usage of the nominal sentences הוא תועבה (it is an abomination) in Leviticus 18:22 and תבול הוא (it is perversion) in Leviticus 18:23. This association suggests that they are both concerned with confusion and violation of what is deemed to be natural and orderly. The root שכב (lie down) enables a connection between verses 20 and 22. Mackenzie (2006:137) remarks that the word תועבה (translated as abomination) is a technical term used for anything associated with idolatry. Leviticus 18:22 is located immediately after a reference to Canaanite religion, which involved various forms of sexual activity (Mackenzie 2006:137). Therefore the issue is not homosexual orientation per se. Leviticus 18:22 is not concerning homosexual orientation per se but sexual behaviour related to Canaanite religion and therefore an argument of rejection of homosexuality is void.

3.2.2.5 Immediate context of Leviticus 18:22

Verses 20-23 form a unit and an immediate context for Leviticus 18:22, which must be read as such, relating to defilement (Lev 18:20) in a cult of a foreign god which involves sexual intercourse (Lev 18:21) and a violation of order (Lev 18:23). In the context of verses 6-23, Leviticus 18:22 is to be read as being a prohibition of sexual acts. Possibly, it points to a cultic practice of foreign nations, violation of order and defilement stemming from the sexual act. The phrase **תועבה היא** (it is an abomination) in this verse, is situated in a declaratory formula that serves as a motivation against the act and expresses the defiling and immoral nature of these illicit practices (Hartley 1992:289). Verses 24-30 function as a summary and conclusion of Leviticus 18. The negative sentence which is in the form of a command **אל-תטמאו בכל-אלה** (do not defile yourselves with any of these things) in Leviticus 18:24, points to the sexual acts cited in verses 6-23. The phrase **הגוים נתמאו** (the nations are defiled)⁶⁹ together with the usage of the niph'al third person plural common perfect verb **נתמאו** (defiled) indicates that the prohibited sexual acts mentioned in Leviticus 18 have made the neighbouring countries of the Israelites unclean. The root word **טמא** (defile) relates to verses 24, 25, 27 and 28 and denotes the uncleanness of the nations which resulted from engaging in the prohibited sexual acts (Lev 18:6-23). The definite article **ה** (the) attached to a feminine plural absolute noun **תועבות** (abominations), forming **התועבות** (these abominations), links the verses 26, 27, 29 and 30. The consequential sentence **הנפשות העשות מקרב עמם ונקרתו** (the persons who commit them shall be cut off from among their people) depicts social isolation as being a result of uncleanness. The feminine singular absolute noun **תועבה** (abomination) in Leviticus 18:22 connects verse 22 with verses 24-30 and therefore with verses 1-5.

3.2.2.6 Stylistic techniques

The negative and nominal sentences which are dominant in Leviticus 18 serve as a stylistic device to legislate against the prohibited sexual acts. The causal sentence

⁶⁹ This phrase is within a consequential sentence.

וְאֶפְקֹד עֲוֹנָהּ עָלֶיהָ (therefore I visit the punishment of its iniquity upon it) as a device in language is utilised to show the result of uncleanness. The consequential sentences used in Leviticus 18 (Lev 18: 24, 25, 29) serve as a tool to describe the condition which is the result of anything said in the main clause and explicitly portrays the cost of being involved in the prohibited sexual acts. The preposition לְ (to) is utilised to formulate sentences of purpose which communicate the facts that to live is to keep the statutes of יְהוָה (Lev 18:5), the purpose and / or result of engaging in sexual intercourse in a relationship with the next of kin and the neighbour's wife (verses 5, 17- 20), the intention of keeping the ordinances of יְהוָה (verse 30) and the consequence of being defiled (verse 28).

3.2.3 Leviticus 20 – An analysis

3.2.3.1 Content

Verses 2 to 21 form one unit which consists of prohibitions of sexual acts. Verses 2-6 are directed towards the worship of and / or association with Molech; verse 7 urges the Israelites to make themselves holy; verse 8 is a command to keep the statutes of Yahweh; verse 9 pertains to cursing parents; verse 10 prohibits committing adultery with a man's wife and neighbour's wife; verse 11 is concerned with a man having sexual intercourse with his father's wife; verse 12 refers to a man engaging in sexual intercourse with his daughter-in-law; verse 13 pertains to a man having sexual intercourse with another man; verse 14 forbids a man marrying a woman and her mother; verse 15 deals with a man having sexual intercourse with an animal; verse 16 addresses the issue of a woman engaging in sexual intercourse with an animal; verse 17 prohibits a man's sexual act with his sister and his father's daughter or his mother's daughter; verse 18 concerns a man's sexual act with a menstruating woman; in verse 19 the sexual act of a man with his mother's sister or father's sister is prohibited; verse 20 pertains to a man's sexual intercourse with his uncle's wife; while verse 21 censures a man engaging in a sexual act with his brother's wife.

3.2.3.2 Worship of Molech

The adverbial sentence of manner לֵאמֹר (saying) which is dependent on the statement sentence אֶל-מֹשֶׁה יְהוָה יְדַבֵּר (then Yahweh spoke to Moses) in Leviticus 20:1, introduces the laws in Leviticus 20. The command sentence תֹּאמַר (again, you shall say to the children of Israel) in Leviticus 20:2 is attached to the first prohibition that is concerned with the worship of Molech⁷⁰, while verse 1 and verse line number 2.1 introduce Leviticus 20. Leviticus 20:13 seem to be a prohibition on the worship of Molech and not homosexuality.

3.2.3.3 Laws not devalued by time

The preposition אֶל attached to the conjunction וְ to form וְאֵל (again), supposes that the prohibitions in Leviticus 20 are a repetition of some text or prohibitions. וְאֵל suggests that the laws of Yahweh are not devalued by time and this presupposes that they are still relevant in present times. Although there are similarities between Leviticus 18 and 20, it does seem that Leviticus 20 is a later production which probably used Leviticus 18.

3.2.3.4 Religious purity

The phrase מְזִרְעוֹ לְמוֹלֵךְ (descendants to Molech) links verses 2, 3, 4 and prohibits the worship of Molech. Verses 5 and 6 are linked by the root verb זָנָה (prostitute) which denotes people committing harlotry with Molech. The reference to Molech connects verses 2-6. The phrase אֲנִי יְהוָה (I am Yahweh) associates verse 7 with verse 8 which displays motives as regards maintaining holiness. The repetition of the first person common singular independent pronoun אֲנִי (I) links verses 3, 5-9, all of which call for religious purity and holiness. The repeated consequential phrase יָבִיט מוֹת (shall surely be put to death) links verses 2, 9-11, 13, 15 and 16 and describes a condition that results from not adhering to the legislation on sexual acts in Leviticus 20. Leviticus 20:13 is to be read and interpreted as a call for religious purity and holiness due to this literary context. The cult of Molech and the fertility cult of his

⁷⁰ The prohibition is directed to Israelites and non-Israelites who are residing in Israel.

goddess Ashtoreth reflect the cultic practice of pagan nations; the word abomination in Leviticus 18 is used within this context.⁷¹ Snyman (2008:21) maintains that it was deemed that Ashtoreth's male followers worshipped her by offering their seed in male anal sexual acts. The Molech cult is labelled and rejected as abominable in Leviticus 20:1-5. Leviticus 20:13 is introduced by Leviticus 20:1-5 and therefore the objection to the homosexual act in Leviticus 20:13 could be associated with pagan cults.

3.2.3.5 Enhancing family relationships

The phrase **וְאִישׁ אֲשֶׁר יִשְׁכַּב** (if a man lies with) is repeated in verses 11- 13, 18 and 20 and connects them. Verses 11-13, 18 and 20 are concerned with a man engaging in sexual intercourse with his father's wife, daughter in law, with another man and with a menstruating woman. The penetrated person in these verses is a woman, except in verse 13 which, at one level, presupposes that engaging in sexual intercourse with a man womanises the penetrated. Verses 11 and 12 are concerned with maintaining family relationships. Verse 18 pertains to nature which should be allowed to take its course.⁷² Taking this literary context into account, Leviticus 20:13 could be interpreted as being intended to enhance family values and relationships and also to embrace the value of nature. Gaier (1990:161-169) notes that apodictic and casuistic laws in Leviticus were meant to preserve and protect relationships within the family unit.⁷³ **וְאִישׁ אֲשֶׁר יִשְׁכַּב** is located within a conditional sentence that is followed by a consequential sentence (Lev 20:11-13). The consequential sentence which also resembles an element of a nominal sentence **וְדַמָּיהֶם בָּם** (their blood shall be upon them) closely links verses 11-13. Repetition as a stylistic device is used to highlight the significance and the seriousness of these sexual prohibitions. homosexual act is rejected on the basis of family relationship preservation and enhancement.

⁷¹ Snyman (2008:21-22) adds that Same-Sex male intercourse violates the boundaries that separated Israel from the other pagan nations and constitutes an offence to the values of male honour.

⁷² The interpretation of menstruation as allowing nature to take its course is a 21st century self imposed understanding which probably could not have been thought of in the ancient biblical world.

⁷³ From an evangelical Christian perspective it is argued that homosexual conduct is sinful, that it is a threat and violation of the social, religious and cosmic order, that it is a violation of the order of creation and a desecration of the image of God (Wold 1998:238).

3.2.3.6 Violation of the natural

Verses 14-15 and 17 begin with a conditional sentence and the phrase **וְאִישׁ אֲשֶׁר** (if a man) connects them. Verses 15 and 16 are both concerned with people engaging in sexual intercourse with animals. Mixing different types of creatures which are deemed to be distinctively created is displayed in verses 15-16. White (1995:18-19) shows that holiness is an underlying fact in Leviticus 18 and 20 and further argues that holiness required that individuals conform to the class to which they belong and that they avoid mixing persons of different classes and nature. The noun **עֶרְוַת** (nakedness) and the piel verb **גִּלָּה** (uncover) relate and juxtapose verses 17-19, 20-21. From an anthropological approach which embraces gender distinct role Sayler (2005:81) argues that mixing of gender role categories is that which is at stake in the condemnation of Same-Sex relationships in Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13. Schiffrin (2005:90) reacts to Sayler's contribution by deconstructing homosexual identity from the perspective of doxological anthropology and argue that Sayler fails to pay attention to the image of God that is in human beings. Based on evidence on the text of Leviticus 18 and 20 the image of God is of no matter and Sayler's argument find ground in the text.

3.2.3.7 A call for consecration

Verses 22 to 27 seem to form concluding prohibitions. Verses 22-24 and 26 display a law to be faithful to Yahweh's laws and not to associate with and be morally and religiously influenced by neighbouring nations. Verse 25 is related to 13 by the noun **תּוֹעֵבָה** (abomination) and conveys a command to separate clean animals from unclean ones. The verb **בָּדַל** (separate) links verse 25 to verses 26 and 24. The consequential sentences formulate verse 27 which condemns a woman with unnatural and impure spirits. It does not make sense for verse 27 to be a concluding verse and it does seem that it was a later addition. Central to verses 22 to 27 is the call to be consecrated and set apart from impurity.

3.2.3.8 Inclusion of the male penetrator

The verbs and nouns in Leviticus 20 are mostly presented in a plural state, including verse 13. The plural state shows that the penetrated and the penetrator are both at fault

in an act of Same-Sex sexual intercourse. The inclusion of the male penetrator in the prohibition of Leviticus 20:13 brings into question the validity of the honour and shame theory which stipulated that the penetrator was demonstrating his power, authority and honour. Causal and consequential sentences are used to formulate the laws in Leviticus 20 except in verses 2, 7, 8, 19, 22-26 where a command sentence as a stylistic device is used. The command sentences are used to validate the legislation in Leviticus 20.

3.2.4 Conclusion

An emphasis on religious purity and exclusive worship of יהוה, amidst the worship of other gods is depicted. Sexual acts attached to and associated with a foreign religious cult are rejected. The relation of Leviticus 18:22 to verses 6-17 discloses the motive of family orderliness behind Leviticus 18:22. The association of Leviticus 18:22 (Same-Sex intercourse) and Leviticus 18:23 (sexual intercourse with an animal) suggests a concern for a confusion in and violation of what is believed to be natural and orderly. Leviticus 18:20-23, being the immediate context of Leviticus 18:22 suggest the possibility of Leviticus 18:22 pointing to a cultic practice of foreign nations, violation of order and defilement stemming from the sexual act.

ואל (again) suggests that the laws of Yahweh are not devalued by time and this presupposes that they are still relevant in present day. Leviticus 20:13 is to be read and interpreted as a call for religious purity and holiness due to its literary context. The Molech cult is labelled and rejected as abominable in Leviticus 20:1-5 and not homosexuality. Leviticus 20:13 is introduced by Leviticus 20:1-5 and therefore the objection to the homosexual act in Leviticus 20:13 could be associated with pagan cults. Taking the literary context of Leviticus 20:11-13, 18 and 20 into account, Leviticus 20:13 would be interpreted as being intended to enhance family values and relationships and to embrace the value of nature. The inclusion of the male penetrator in the prohibition in Leviticus 20:13 brings into question the validity of the honour and shame theory which stipulated that the penetrator was demonstrating his power, authority and honour. The author's objective is to urge his audience not to be

culturally, socially, ethically and religiously influenced by neighbouring communities. Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13 are not responding to homosexuality per se.

3.3 Textual Criticism

3.3.1 Introduction

Hayes and Holladay (2005:33-44) define Textual Criticism as a pursuit of a readable text by exploring how ancient writings were composed, copied, preserved, transmitted, translated and quoted. Textual Criticism also seeks to understand how and why variations in the wording of a biblical passage resulted (Hayes and Holladay 2005:33-44). Textual Criticism presupposes that the Hebrew texts of the Old Testament at the disposal of the exegete in the present day are not the same as those produced by the biblical authors. Textual Criticism helps the exegete to locate the text within the broad context of its many versions and translations.⁷⁴

3.3.2 Samaritan Pentateuch and the BHS usage of the verb תִּדְבֹר

The Samaritan Pentateuch⁷⁵ uses the verb תִּדְבֹר (speak) instead of תֵּאמַר (say) in Leviticus 20:2 as embedded in the Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia (hereafter referred to as BHS) which is a qal second person masculine singular imperfect verb. In both translations these verbs carry the same sentiment of God's mind being communicated to the Israelites and strangers that sojourn in Israel. The legislation in Leviticus 18 and 20 is addressed to Israelites and people from other nations who associate and identify themselves with the Israelites and יִהְיֶה.

⁷⁴ Hayes and Holladay (2005:35) add that Textual Criticism explains textual variants within the manuscripts of the original biblical language that are due to intentional and unintentional corruptions of the text.

⁷⁵ The Samaritan Pentateuch is the Pentateuch (the Torah) regarded as a Bible by the Samaritans who were the descendants of inhabitants of the northern kingdom (Israel) who escaped deportation by the Assyrians in 722 B.C. During the 4th century BC these Samaritans parted ways with the Jews who were hostile to them and took the Torah as their authoritative text.

3.3.3 וְחָיָה in the Samaritan Pentateuch and the BHS

In the Samaritan Pentateuch וְחָיָה is used instead of יָחַי (he shall live) in Leviticus 18:5, which is the waw consecutive attached to a qal perfect verb in the third person masculine singular states in the BHS. וְחָיָה (stay alive) is a qal infinitive absolute verb. The Samaritan Pentateuch raises the issue of the possibility of Israelites being influenced and changed in the process. In both translations the sentiment of faithfulness to יְהוָה and His legislature which brings and sustains life is conveyed. It presupposes that unfaithfulness results in death. Leviticus 18:22 is placed in this context and adhering to this law was deemed by the Samaritans in the 4th century B.C to display faithfulness to יְהוָה and a means to life.

3.3.4 Worship of Molech in the Septuagint (LXX), Samaritan Pentateuch and the BHS

In the Septuagint (LXX),⁷⁶ according to the edition of Gottigen ὁ θεὸς ὑμῶν (that is your god)⁷⁷ was added after אֲנִי יְהוָה (I am Yahweh) in Leviticus 18:5. This Greek translation (250 BC) was written for the Jews living in Alexandria, which presupposes that the existence of many gods and their worship is the context and background of Leviticus 18:22. לְהַעֲבִיר (to pass through) as in the BHS (Lev 18:21) is rendered as ending with יִר in the Samaritan Pentateuch. Comparing the phrase with that which is cited in the LXX, λατρεύειν (worship or serve), captures that which is done to Molech. Leviticus 18:22 is located in a context of cultic practices to foreign gods.

A reference to לְמוֹלֵךְ (to Molech) in Leviticus 20:2-3 is also made in Leviticus 18:21 and displays the existence of the cult and worship of gods, which defiled the nation. וְלִחְלֹל (and to profane), which is a conjunction ו attached to a preposition ל and to a

⁷⁶ The Septuagint (LXX) is a Greek translation that was probably written by Jews for Jews living in Alexandria. The Pentateuch section was created at about 250 B.C.; the Prophets at about 200 B.C. and the majority of other books at about 100 B.C. This translation became the authoritative version for Christians.

⁷⁷ Hereafter the BibleWorks 4 programme is consulted in translating Greek.

piel infinitive construct verb, is recorded in the BHS (Lev 20:3). The Samaritan Pentateuch records וְהִלַּל (and profane) with the preposition לְ being omitted. The preposition in the BHS is appropriate and it presents the action and the result of worshipping Molech, which is profaning the holy name of יְהוָה. The concept of holiness is presented. From the perspective of Priestly writers, the essence of holiness is separation and this contentions is also based on Leviticus 19:19 (Sayler 2005:81). εἰς τοὺς ἄρχοντας (to that ruler) is used in the LXX. This phrase is formulated by an accusative preposition εἰς (to) and τοὺς (that) which is an accusative masculine plural definite article and ἄρχοντας being an accusative masculine plural noun (ruler). The phrase in the LXX describes immorality associated with the rulers.

In the BHS (Lev 20:5) the phrase אֶחָרִי הַמְלִיךְ (harlotry with Molech) conveys immorality associated with the worship of gods. אֶתּוֹ which is the object marker attached to a third person masculine singular suffix in the BHS (Lev20:6) is presented in the Samaritan Pentateuch and LXX in a feminine state as אֶתָּהּ. Leviticus 20:6 displays the consequence of worshipping gods and prostitution. The LXX and the Samaritan Pentateuch feminises the people who are involved in such cultic rituals. The implication of this feminisation is that a person involved in such cultic ritual was shamed. Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13 responds to immoral act associated with the worship of gods and therefore claim on rejection of homosexuality are void.

3.3.5 לְטִמְאָה in the Samaritan Pentateuch, the Septuagint (LXX), the Syriac translation and the BHS

לְטִמְאָה (to become unclean) in Leviticus 20:25, the preposition לְ (to) is attached to a piel infinitive construct verb טִמְאָה (become unclean) is recorded in the Samaritan Pentateuch, LXX while in the Syriac translation, לְטִמְאָה (from⁷⁸ uncleanness) is recorded. טִמְאָה denotes a state of cultic uncleanness (Holladay 1988:124).

⁷⁸ According to BibleWorks 4, in recent translations לְ is occasionally translated as ‘from’.

Therefore the prohibition on Same-Sex sexual intercourse is placed in a context of cultic life and is intended to maintain cultic purity and holiness.

3.3.6 Purity and holiness in the Hebrew Codex, Septuagint (LXX) and BHS

τὸ ἄγιον (the upright or the holy or the consecrated) in the LXX (Lev 18:21) is used to describe the name of the Lord. This is comparable to and identical in Leviticus 20:3; 22:2, 32. The concept of purity is captured and emphasised by the use of the phrase. וְהִתְקַדְּשִׁיתֶם (consecrate yourselves therefore) in the BHS (Lev 20:7), a waw consecutive attached to a hithpael perfect second person masculine plural, is missing in the Samaritan Pentateuch and in the original Greek text. In the BHS the phrase emphasises the act of the Israelites setting themselves apart from defiling customs for the purpose of holiness. Not engaging in a homosexual act is meant for such a purpose. After the preposition כִּי in Leviticus 20:7 קָדוֹשׁ (holy) is added in a few Hebrew Codex manuscripts and in the LXX as it is comparable to Leviticus 20:26. Holiness is being emphasised in this verse. Holiness motives underpin the intention of the composer and the redactor of Leviticus 18 and 20 and therefore Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13.

3.3.7 יוֹמָתוֹ in the BHS, Samaritan Pentateuch, Septuagint (LXX) and the Arabic translation

In the BHS (Lev 18:27) הָאֵל which is a particle attached to an absolute plural adjective, is presented as הָאֵלֶּה in the Samaritan Pentateuch. It makes no difference and it is appropriate in the BHS. The adjective collectively labels the acts cited in Leviticus 18:6-23 as abominations that defile the nation. The consequence of committing an abomination, in Leviticus 20:13, of engaging in Same-Sex sexual intercourse is presented severely and as an uncompromising יוֹמָתוֹ (death) in the Samaritan Pentateuch, LXX and in the Arabic translation. The noun abomination in Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13 is utilised to describe a homosexual act. תוֹעֵבָה (abomination) relates the narrative of Genesis 19 to the law in Leviticus 18:22 and

20:13. De Young (1991:160) remarks that the consideration of the use of this term and its translation by *bdelygma* (abomination) and *anomia* (lawlessness) in the LXX demonstrates that a homosexual meaning is intended in Genesis 19:5.⁷⁹

3.3.8 אֶת־הַגּוֹי and בְּהֵן in the Targum, Septuagint (LXX), Hebrew Codex and the BHS

An object marker אֶת attached to a particle ה and attached to a masculine singular absolute noun גּוֹי (nation) to form אֶת־הַגּוֹי as in the BHS (Lev 18:28) is in a plural state in the LXX and Targum according to Sperber as compared with Leviticus 18:24. A reference to the neighbours of the Israelites is being made; they need not be influenced by the former's culture, beliefs and behaviour. Leviticus 18:22 points to the customs of the neighbouring nations of the Israelites. In Leviticus 18:30 בְּהֵן is lacking in the Targums and in the Samaritan Pentateuch. In the BHS the phrase is rendered as בְּהֵן a preposition בְּ (in) attached to a third person masculine plural suffix הֵן (yourselves). Israelites are told not to make themselves unclean by abominable customs from the past⁸⁰.

הַגּוֹי as in the BHS (Lev 20:23), which is a particle ה attached to a masculine singular absolute noun גּוֹי (nation) is recorded in a plural state in the Hebrew Codex manuscript⁸¹ and in the Samaritan Pentateuch. In the BHS, the existence of many nations is omitted and according to these other translations the existence of the Israelites is located in a multi-cultural context. *πάπτωυ* (other or every kind of) in the LXX has been added in the middle of מִן־הָעַמִּים (from the people)⁸² to be (from

⁷⁹ De Young (1991:161), in the supplement says that the Targums link Leviticus with Gen 19 in that *Targum Neofiti* uses Lev 18:22 and 20:13 to translate Gen 19:5 into Aramaic and uses *hakam* in Gen 19, literally 'to be wise', with the metaphorical sense; have sexual intercourse.

⁸⁰ A reference to the past is made by the usage of the phrase לַפְּנֵיכֶם 'which were committed before you'.

⁸¹ This is a Hebrew codex manuscript, according to Kennicott, De Rossi and Ginsburg (Schader 2007:10).

⁸² Lev 20:24 in the BHS.

other people). This phrase is written in the same way in Leviticus 20:26 and the concept of consecration or holiness is emphasised.

3.3.9 הִיא in the BHS, Samaritan Pentateuch, Syriac translation⁸³, Codex manuscripts according to Sperber's notes and in the Targum Pseudo – Jonathan

לְרַבְּעָה (to lie down) is a qal infinitive construct verb, attached to a third person feminine singular suffix, comparable in both Leviticus 18:23 and 20:16. This verb is used to highlight the violation of nature and the divine order in the sexual acts cited in Leviticus 18:23; 20:16. A third person masculine singular independent pronoun הִוא (it is) in the BHS (Lev 18:23) is rendered differently as הִיא being in a feminine state in the Samaritan Pentateuch, Syriac translation, Codex manuscripts according to Sperber's notes and in the Targum Pseudo-Jonathan,⁸⁴ according to Ginsburger (Schader 2007:10). The gender state of the pronoun makes no difference. The statement that the sexual act in Leviticus 18:23 is a confusion and a violation of nature is still communicated and is clear. The relation of Leviticus 18:23 and 20:16 to Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13 enables an interpretation of Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13 as a prohibition against violating nature and the divine order. Homosexual act is regarded to be a violation of nature and the divine order and therefore the act is rejected.

3.3.10 ὕπ' αὐτοῦ in the BHS, Septuagint (LXX) and Syriac translation

ὕπ' αὐτοῦ (with self) in the LXX and Syriac translation is used to denote the act and the result of violating the divine order by a woman engaging in sexual intercourse with an animal. In the BHS the sentiment of a woman committing a sexual act with an animal is captured by the object marker הָאָהָרָה attached to a third person feminine

⁸³ The Peshitta or the Syriac translation is a Syriac version that was created over an extended period of time probably by both Jews and Christians.

⁸⁴ Targums are Aramaic paraphrases of the Hebrew Bible that came into existence during the post-exilic period and were later written down (Schader 2007:10). Targum Neofiti is a Palastinian Targum on the Pentateuch (Schader 2007:10). Targum Pseudo-Jonathan is an unofficial Targum on the Pentateuch of Palastinian origin (Schader 2007:10).

singular suffix הָ to form אִתָּהּ in Leviticus 20:16. This is also noted in Leviticus 18:23.

3.3.11 יָדַע in the Septuagint (LXX), BHS, JKV, RSV, NIV and NEB

The KJV and the RSV translate the Hebrew term וַיִּדְעוּ in Genesis 19:5 as ‘that we may know them’ while the NIV translates it as ‘have sex with them’. The NEB translates וַיִּדְעוּ as ‘have intercourse with them’ and the LXX translates it as ‘we may know them’. יָדַע in the LXX is translated as ‘have known’. De Young (1991:157) notes that the two different Greek words *syngenometha* (‘we may know’ in Gen 19:5) and *egnosan* (‘have known’ in Gen 19:8) are used to render the same Hebrew term.⁸⁵ This variation is explained as, ‘the translation by the LXX projects that homosexuality was not the sin of Sodom and the cause of its destruction’ (De Young 1991:158). The interpretation of Genesis 19:5 as being concerned with the homosexual act is in contrast to the explanation of the variation. De Young (1991:162) is convinced that a sexual connotation for *synginomia* is plausible.

יָדַע refers to heterosexual coitus while שָׁכַב seem to be used of homosexual (Lev 18:22 and 20:13), bestial and heterosexual unions. The term יָדַע is used of men knowing wives or women in intercourse (Gen 4:1, 7, 25; 24:16; 38:26; 1 Sam 1:19; Jdg 19:25 and 1 Kgs 1:4), of women knowing men sexually (Gen 19:8; Num 31:17, 18, 35 and Jdg 11:39; 21:11) and of Same-Sex intercourse (Gen 19:5 and Jdg 19:22). The evidence of a homosexual environment for the term יָדַע in Genesis 19:5 and Judges 19:22. Genesis 19:8 and Judges 19:23 create an immediate setting of homosexuality. De Young (1991:160) thinks that the argument of inhospitality as the cause of Sodom’s destruction is insufficient and therefore that the homosexual interpretation is substantive.

⁸⁵ De Young (1991:158) further argues that these Greek terms mean ‘to become acquainted with’ and that they faithfully represent the Hebrew.

3.3.12 Conclusion

The laws in Leviticus 18 and 20 are addressed to the Israelites and people from other nations who associate and identify themselves with the Israelites and יהוה. In the Samaritan Pentateuch and BHS translations the sentiment of faithfulness to יהוה and His legislature which brings and sustains life is maintained. The Septuagint (LXX), a Greek translation written about 250 BC for the Jews living in Alexandria, presupposes that the existence of many gods and their worship is a context and background of Leviticus 18:22. Comparing the phrase with that which is cited in the LXX, λατρεύειν (worship or serve) captures the acts performed to Molech. Leviticus 18:22 is located in a context of cultic practices to foreign gods. Holiness motives underpin the intention of the composer and the redactor of Leviticus 18 and 20 and therefore Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13.

Leviticus 18:22 points to the customs of neighbouring nations of the Israelites. Reference to their neighbours is being made and the latter need not be influenced by their culture, beliefs and behaviour. The verb לְרַבְעָה (to lie down) is used to highlight the violation of nature and the divine order in the sexual acts cited in Leviticus 18:23; 20:16 and therefore Leviticus 18:22. In the BHS the existence of many nations is omitted and according to the Hebrew Codex manuscript and the Samaritan Pentateuch the existence of the Israelites is located in a multi-cultural context. Leviticus 20:26 and the concept of consecration or holiness is emphasised.

3.4 Canonical Criticism⁸⁶

3.4.1 Introduction

Brevard Childs (1979:69-83) advocates for the canonical exegetical approach which stresses that the reading of each and every text in the Bible should form part of the canon. The meaning of the text is also seen to be subservient to the canonical meaning and it is argued that Childs' approach runs the risk of developing into a completely a-

⁸⁶ Canonical Criticism bears resemblance to the intertextual investigation.

historic one (Barton 1984:77-103; Loader 1986:139-140). Hayes and Holladay (2005:125) suggest that the importance of Canonical Criticism rests on the fundamental truth and challenge that the text is to be read as part of the Bible in relation to other Scriptures and not in isolation.

3.4.2 Genesis 19 and Judges 19

Carden (1999:83-96) suggests that Genesis 19 and Judges 19 are related to Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13. Stiebert and Walsh (2001:119) define homosexuality as a sexual orientation. From this definition it can be argued that the Hebrew Bible (and explicitly Genesis 19 and Judges 19) does not make reference to and hence does not condemn homosexuality as a sexual orientation.

Stiebert and Walsh (2001:121) concede that Genesis 19 and Judges 19 are not primarily concerned with relational sexuality and therefore not with homosexuality or heterosexuality, but focus on maleness (the social value system and conventional construction of masculinity). The departure point in substantiating this position is the fact that female homosexuality (lesbianism) is not mentioned in the Hebrew Bible.

Carden (1999:83) notes the usage of the terms ‘homosexual rape’ (8 times), ‘homosexual contact and homosexual intercourse’ (37 times) and rape referred to as ‘women rape’ (17 times). Carden’s view (1999:83) is in contrary with the description of Genesis 19 and Judges 19 as making a clear reference to homosexuality in the Hebrew Bible, based on the deemed offensive nature of Carden’s statement to homosexual people and the perceived misleading terminology utilised. The point regarding Ken’s misleading terminology as cited by Carden is supported by McMullen⁸⁷ who is influenced by his experience of rape.

The argument that ‘homophobic violence arises from homosexual panic’ is read into the Genesis 19 and Judges 19 account (Carden 1999:89). This statement is developed on the grounds of the sentiment that rape is to be understood as sexual violence grounded on issues of power and anger. Studies of Western society showing that male

⁸⁷ Carden (1999:83) notes McMullen as arguing that Ken’s terminology generates homophobia and should be replaced by the term ‘male rape’.

rapists are primarily heterosexual men⁸⁸ are employed in this argument. Sedgwick's definition of homosexual panic as the most private and psychologised form in which many men experience their vulnerability to the social pressure of homophobic blackmail⁸⁹ shapes Carden's argument on homophobic violence.

Gagnon (2005:367-394) in his contribution critiques Phyllis Bird's (2000) article on the Old Testament contributions to Christian ethical discussion of homosexuality. Gagnon (2005:380) remarks that Bird misconstrues the story of Sodom as indicting only coercive male-male intercourse by neglecting Genesis 9:20-27 and Ezekiel 16:49-50.⁹⁰ Judges 19:22-25 and the qedesim texts are not connected. The effect of introducing such variables as consent and equality is misread. Gagnon's objection of Bird's argument is underpinned by a reading of Judges 19 in consultation to the wider witness of Scripture and by a conviction to the authority of Scripture.

Dover's contribution that male rape was also employed to signify victory over foreign enemies in wars⁹¹ supports the idea of a male engaging in intercourse with another male. Dover (1978:104) further substantiates this point by stating that anal penetration in Ancient Athens was treated neither as an expression of love nor as a response to beauty but as an aggressive act of demonstrating the superiority of the active to the passive partner.⁹² Carden's interpretation of Lot's offering of his daughters in place of his male guest as being a prerogative act of protecting the male honour of his guests according to the law of hospitality, supports the interpretation of Genesis 19 as not referring to homosexuality or homosexual orientation. Intertextual investigation reads and appropriates this understanding into Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13. On these grounds the act of sexual abuse of foreigners is condemned (Lev 18:22 and 20:13) rather than homosexuality. Prohomosexual interpretation fails to find homosexuality in Scripture. De Young (1990:353) claims that texts referring to homosexuality are irrelevant to

⁸⁸ These studies are accounted for by McMullen (1990:118).

⁸⁹ Sedgwick (1985:88-89) agrees to the depiction of homophobic blackmail.

⁹⁰ In line with Grath and Carden, in depicting male rape and / or coercive male-male intercourse Bird argues.

⁹¹ Dover (1978:105) deduces this argument from a study on the historical and social context of Judges 19.

⁹² Dover's contribution is also noted by Carden (1999:95).

Christians today, because they concern a form of homosexuality and not sexual orientation.⁹³

The social construction of masculinity and femininity is discussed with reference to the narrative accounts in Genesis 19, Judges 1 and the laws of Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13 (Stiebert and Walsh 2001:119-152). There is no doubt about the objection to homosexuality as reflected in Genesis 19 and in the legal provisions in Leviticus 18:20 and 20:13 and that these absolute prohibitions of homosexuality remained the law of God (Ukleja 1983:259-266). Carden (1999:96) is of the opinion that homosexuality as an interpretive device in Genesis 19 and Judges 19 fails to consider the different historical and cultural contexts of these texts. From the perspective of anthropological literature on Mediterranean and Middle Eastern culture, Carden (1999:96) argues that Genesis 19 and Judges 19 reflect a phallogentric construction of gender and male sexuality.

It is purported that Sodom's greatest sin includes pride and ill-treatment of foreigners (Stiebert and Walsh 2001:129). Reading this social dimension into Genesis 19 one gains a sense that sexual intercourse with a man who was Lot's visitor was meant to ill-treat him as a foreigner. The citation of Sodom's sin in the deuterocanonical book the Wisdom of Solomon as being its lack of hospitality towards foreigners buttresses this interpretation. This ill-treatment was therefore intended to demean and disgrace a man's masculinity and honour by placing him in a feminised role.

Offering hospitality is connected to and associated with honour; undermining it displayed that the citizens were not in control of their space.⁹⁴ The behaviour of the Sodomites in Genesis 19 is also interpreted as their attempt to challenge Lot's honour by questioning his control over his household and threatening to penetrate both his house and his guests (White 1995:20). The literary context of Genesis 19 depicts instances of hospitality;⁹⁵ therefore this context supports the association of Genesis 19 with hospitality. Genesis 19 and Judges 19 are both preceded by stories of

⁹³ Cohen (1990:4) shares the same sentiments in saying the Torah pays no attention to the question of sexual orientation and text is not concerned with orientation.

⁹⁴ White (1995:20) adds that Lot shamed the Sodomites by doing what they were supposed to do in maintaining the city's honour.

⁹⁵ Gen 18 displays Abraham's hospitality to the divine visitors; Gen 20 shows King Abimelech's realisation of his duty of hospitality to Abraham.

hospitality;⁹⁶ Abraham's warmth towards the visitors in Genesis 18 and the hospitality of the father of the concubines' in Judge 19:3-10 (Stiebert and Walsh 2001:133). This literary context of Genesis 19 and Judges 19 presupposes that the issue in these texts is hospitality and the humiliation of foreign men by placing them in the position of being a sexual object, rather than that of homosexuality.

The men of Sodom are therefore violating the value of hospitality and in terms of the honour-shame model they are dishonourable on the grounds that the old man tells them not to carry out this senseless act.⁹⁷ Dickson (2002:357) agrees that the honour of a leading member in the community, that is, Lot, is being challenged. If the men acted in a manner that was proper to their kind and it was right for them to demonstrate their power, authority and honour by penetrating the foreigners then they would have been granted the honour by being allowed to do so. Therefore the issue in Genesis 19 is hospitality which is also intended to demonstrate the honour of the group and Israelites.

Wink (1999:34) is of the opinion that Genesis 1-29 is to be interpreted as being a case of ostensibly heterosexual males being intent on humiliating strangers by treating them like women, thus demasculinising them. Snyman (2008:21) suggests that reading Same-Sex penetration into the Sodom story, as the issue, depicts the reader's presuppositions rather than the focus of the story. Genesis 19 is a narrative and / or story about heterosexual men intent on humiliating strangers by treating them like women and demasculinising them in the process. In the context of the times and of war, the men of Sodom became suspicious and wanted to display their masculinity to the intruders (Snyman 2008:19). This is done with the intention of penetrating and therefore humiliating them.

Ukleja (1983:259) defines homosexuality as confusion. In order to substantiate this definition he (Ukleja 1983:260) contends that it involves the effect of achieving union with a mirror image of oneself. The men of Sodom were anxious to interrogate the

⁹⁶ The suggestion of the hospitality image that precedes Gen 19 is advanced by Mr J Walsh and the image that preceded Judges 19 by Martti (1998) in the book titled 'Homoeroticism in the Biblical World'. These observations stem from the depicted thematic style that is underscored by verbal and structural parallels.

⁹⁷ Dickson (2002:357) in this case makes a sound contribution.

strangers to find out if they were spies. This understanding is underpinned by the argument that the Hebrew word for ‘know’ is translated ‘to get’ acquainted with or to have knowledge of or to have intercourse with. The word ‘know’ appears in the Old Testament 943 times but only 12 times with reference to intercourse. The circumstances in Sodom could not fit the sexual connotation of the word ‘know’ based on the understanding that intercourse as a means to personal knowledge depends on more than copulation (Ukleja 1983:261). Contextual evidence and dimension cannot be substantiated by statistics. A reaction to a request for credentials could not have been an offering of a daughter with sexual connotations. In Genesis 19:8 the same verb ‘know’ is used in verse 5, with the negative particle attached to it, and describes Lot’s daughter as having ‘not known’ a man. This has sexual implications. On this basis, in the narrative literature of this sort it would be very unlikely and inconceivable to utilise one verb with different meanings so closely together without being explicit with regards to the intended different interpretations. Intertextual investigation unearths that the author of Judges 7 construed and interpreted Genesis 19:5 as containing sexual implications and that this is captured in the reference to and definition of the act as sexual immorality.

Relation of Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13 to Genesis 19 would therefore depict that the texts in discussion do not speak about homosexuality but address issues raised in this section.

3.4.3 Leviticus 10:10

The theme of holiness relates Leviticus 10:10 to Leviticus 18 and 20. From Leviticus 10:10 it is evident that קֹדֶשׁ (holy) is linked to הֵל (profane) and is written parallel with טָהוֹר (clean) and טָמֵא (unclean).⁹⁸ קֹדֶשׁ often takes a linguistic and theological emphasis which is lacking in הֵל but which it shares with טָמֵא. Chiastically structured, holiness is akin to cleanness and profane to uncleanness. Profane הֵל implies impurity טוֹמְאָה. Unclean is the weakest term and usually

⁹⁸ To distinguish between the holy and the profane
And between the unclean and the clean.

ולהבדיל בין הקדש ובין ההל
ובין הטמא ובין הטהור

indicates minor impurity, whereas impurity, defilement, and pollution have stronger overtones and are more appropriate to major impurity (Jenson 1992:45).

Abomination refers to that which is not holy. The word ‘abomination’ used in Leviticus 20:13 in the context of death penalties qualify it as a term utilised for major impurity. An abomination falls under the category of defilement, pollution, impurity. According to Jenson (1992:48), when defining the word ‘holy’ as that which belongs to the sphere of God it becomes a statement of association or proximity to his cultic presence and is therefore associated with יהוה . The concept of holiness constitutes Israel’s identity and it distinguishes Israel from other nations. Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13 are framed within this understanding of holiness. Normal life is characterised by being in a state of purity and holiness. Defilement and profanation can also describe activities that were not strictly associated with the sanctuary but which had a serious effect on the relationship between God and his people (Jenson 1992:53). The term abomination served the same purpose.

Jenson (1992:88) notes two theories of holiness and purity in the priestly conception of the world. The first is idealist and focuses on the human ability to classify the world and to fuse together cultural, social and theological meaning. From this perspective holiness is wholeness and freedom from imperfection and abnormality, while impurity refers to defect and mixture. The second is realist and concentrates on the inescapable realities of death and life. Impurity points to death and expresses the negative aspect of the priestly concern with life before God. Based on the first theory (idealist), the homosexual act in Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13 might be deemed as impure, since impurity refers to defect and mixture. Based on the second theory (realist), homosexuality can be perceived to be impure. Impurity points to death and unproductivity in sexual intercourse between Same-Sex people. Same-Sex intercourse was understood as killing the life deemed to be contained in a male sperm.

3.4.4 Numbers 31 and Judges 21

Olyan (1994:184) notes the existence of the idiom *miskab zakar* (the lying down of a male) in discussing *miskebe issa* (as with a woman) and claims that *miskab zakar* is a

P expression. In the context of Numbers 31:17, 18, 35; Judges 21:11, 12, the statement *miskab zakar* seems to be referring to vaginal penetration. The sexual dimension in *miskab zakar* and *miskebe issa* relates these statements to *miskeb issa* and describes the role of a woman during intercourse (to be penetrated) while *miskab zakar* describes that of a man (to penetrate). In the context of biblical law⁹⁹ the word *lie* is used to refer to the penetrating or insertive partner. The law in Leviticus 18:22 is directed to the insertive figure. The insertive figure also seems to be at fault because of the possibility that *miskebe issa* (as with a woman) could be interpreted as describing the man's experience with a woman, in vaginal intercourse (Olyan 1994:186).

The honour and shame theory seem to be reflected and the act of proving authority through assuming an insertive role is detected. Rejection of homosexuality cannot be based on the reference to the honour and shame theory.

3.4.5 Deuteronomy 7:25-26

Deuteronomy 7:25-26 exhibits the usage of the word 'abomination' in the context of referring to foreign culture and religion. Abomination seems to be a concept prominent in an honour-oriented and purity-conscious culture in the Ancient Near Eastern communities: this is supported by the observation that it is used in Genesis 43: 32 and 46:34 with reference to foreign cultures. Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13 seem to referring to a foreign culture and not homosexuality per se.

3.4.6 Deuteronomy 23

Wink (1999:34) argues that Deuteronomy 23:17-18 refers to male and female prostitutes involved in Canaanite fertility rites that have infiltrated Israelite worship and that, whether these males are gay or 'straight', a mature Same-Sex love relationship is not under discussion. The composer P and the redactor H of Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13 could be interpreting Deuteronomy 23:17-18 as well as addressing the issue.

⁹⁹ Lev 19:20; 2:11, 12, 18, 20 in H and Lev 15:18, 24, 33; Num 5:19 in P (Olyan 1994:186).

3.4.7 1 Corinthians 6:9 and 1 Timothy 1:10

1 Corinthians 6:9 and 1 Timothy 1:10 are unclear. It is uncertain whether the issue of homosexuality or promiscuity and prostitution is being referred to. It is therefore unjust and scientifically irrational to base the acceptance and / or rejection of homosexuality in these texts in an ideological contestation.

3.4.8 Romans 1:26-27

Romans 1:27 depicts the rejection of a man committing a shameless act with another man. Paul's usage of the word 'shameless' reflects the Mediterranean preoccupation with honour and shame.¹⁰⁰ Mackenzie (2006:137) notes that Paul's denunciation of homosexual acts as being unnatural for heterosexuals follows a reference to non-Christian worship and raises the possibility that Romans 1:26-27 was meant to condemn sexual practices associated with non-Christian religion.¹⁰¹ Natural alludes to nature and nature refers to a determined behavioural biological or social pattern believed to constitute normality. St Paul argues that heterosexually oriented people should practise natural sexual intercourse. Unnatural (Rom 1:26) seems to be understood as being anatomical and as being a denial of the procreative complementarity of male and female.¹⁰² At one level the word 'natural' implies the insertion of a penis into a vagina while mutual and pleasurable stimulation motives are deemed to be unnatural. Snyman (2008:23) remarks that sexual acts that are unnatural may also refer to sexual acts that are not destined for procreation. St Paul's theology of Same-Sex intercourse seems to be shaped by the Genesis 1 and 2 procreation ideology and the legislation in Leviticus 20:13. Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13 are more concern with procreation than a sexual orientation.

¹⁰⁰ White (1995:16) affiliates to this contention.

¹⁰¹ There is insufficient evidence supporting Mackenzie's argument. He argues that Romans 1:18-3:20 is concerned with activities which contrast the sinfulness of non-Christians in the Greek and Roman society with behaviours expected of Christians.

¹⁰² Snyman (2008:23) engages the ideology of procreation.

3.4.9 Matthew 10:14-15

Matthew (Matt 10:14-15) alludes to the Sodom and Gomorrah narrative in Genesis in saying: ‘if anyone will not welcome you or listen to your words, shake off the dust from your feet as you leave that house. Truly I tell you, it will be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah on the Day of Judgment than them’. Matthew seems to be interpreting Genesis 19 as concerned with hospitality in his allusion to Sodom and Gomorrah. Mackenzie (2006:135) labels the attempt of the men in Sodom to engage in sexual intercourse with Lot’s visitors as an intention to assault the strangers. Matthew 10:14-15 and Genesis 19 cannot be used to accept and / or reject homosexuality.

3.4.10 Luke 10:12 and Romans 9:29

An allusion to Sodom is also noted in Luke 10:12, in Jesus’ prediction of the punishment due to towns which refuse to accord hospitality to the disciples he sent out on a mission (Mackenzie 2006:136). St Paul alludes to the punishment of Sodom in Romans 9:29 with regards to the issues of Jesus’ rejection by his own people, the Jews: the issue seems to be the lack of hospitality. Genesis 19, which is related to Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13, if interpreted with Luke 10:12 as an interpretive window proves Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13 as not referring to homosexuality and therefore not rejecting the orientation.

3.4.11 Conclusion

תועבה (abomination) relates the narrative of Genesis 19 to the law in Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13. Genesis 19 and Judges 19, does not make reference to and hence does not condemn homosexuality as a sexual orientation. It is also argued that Genesis 19 and Judges 19 are concerned with socially constructed maleness. Male rape which was also employed to signify the victory over foreign enemies in wars supports the idea of male intercourse with another male.

Genesis 19 and Judges 19 are both preceded by stories of hospitality. This literary context of Genesis 19 and Judges 19 presupposes that the issue in these texts is hospitality and the humiliation of foreign men.

The theme of holiness relates Leviticus 10:10 to Leviticus 18 and 20. The concept characterises Israel distinctively from other nations. Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13 are framed within this understanding of holiness.

The usage of the word abomination in Deuteronomy 7:25-26 in the context of referring to foreign culture and religion associates Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13 with these. The composer P and the redactor H of Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13 could be interpreting Deuteronomy 23:17-18 as referring to male and female prostitutes involved in Canaanite fertility rites that have infiltrated Israelite worship

Matthew (Matt 10:14-15) seems to be interpreting Genesis 19 as being concerned with hospitality. The issue of hospitality is also referred to in Luke 10:12 and Romans 9:29 with the allusion to the Sodom story and therefore the issue in Genesis 19 and Judges 19 is hospitality.

The term 'unnatural' (Romans 1:26) seems to be understood as being anatomical and as a denial of the procreative complementarity of male and female. St Paul's theology of Same-Sex intercourse seems to have been shaped by the Genesis 1 and 2 procreation ideology and the legislation in Leviticus 20:13.

Relation of Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13 to the above explored texts depict that the texts (Lev 18:22 and 20:13) analysed in this research do not speak about and to homosexuality.

3.5 Composition and Redaction Criticism

3.5.1 Introduction

Composition Criticism constitutes the study of the initial production of the text which focuses on the composer and his or her perspectives (Hayes and Holladay 2005:101-

109). Redaction Criticism investigates the final viewpoint and theology which focuses on the editorial stage(s) that led towards and produced the final written form and composition of a passage (Hayes and Holladay 2005:101-109). Redaction Criticism has the task of establishing how and by whom the different units were combined in the compilation of the present form.¹⁰³ A study on the composer and / or the redactor of Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13 will be conducted in this section.

3.5.2 Composer and redactor

According to Wenham (1990:359) P is regarded as the composer of both Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13. Wenham (1990:359) also notes that the condemnation of the homosexual act has developed over time. This suggestion is based on the observation that the earlier laws do not discuss homosexuality, while the later (P) texts demand the death sentence for it as reflected in Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13. Traces of the H writer are evident in Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13. Traditions that are embedded in the Holiness Code and Priestly Document were accorded their literary and legislative form in the Babylonian exile. Therefore, P interpreted ancient tradition to address challenges faced there. Olyan (1994:179) maintains that Leviticus 17-26¹⁰⁴ is attributed to the Holiness School and that H was the editor of the P materials.

3.5.3 Date and context

The dating of P shapes the understanding of the theology of the writer. Anderson (1988:22) dates P's work at 650 BCE or later and was mostly prevalent at the time of Josiah's reform (621 BCE). On the other hand it is contended that P wrote the work in the late exilic or early restoration period in 550-450 BCE (Gottwald 1987:139). The Babylonians were in power when the P writers rendered their work and, later, the Persians, after the end of the exile. Van Seters (1999:43) maintains that P worked during the time when Babylonians destroyed the Temple in 586 BCE (2 Kgs 25:9). During this time the P theologians needed to construct a theology to sustain and renew

¹⁰³ Barton (1984:45-55); Barth and Steck (1980:50-55) and Beuken (1986:173-175) are in agreement.

¹⁰⁴ The unit as a whole is called the Holiness Code or Source (H).

the people who had lost the Temple, the land and the king.¹⁰⁵ It is against this background that P lays a theological emphasis on cultic life. God is approached from a cultic perspective. The P writer(s) pioneered institutional and ritual constitutions (Gottwald 1987:140). The priestly system was primarily a product of the theoretical zeal of the Babylonian priest in the post-exilic period.¹⁰⁶ Leviticus 18:22 is located within the rules for a conjugal relationship. Having noted that, these rules are a product of Babylonian priests of the post exilic period. The reference to Moses is worth noting. It depicts the author's intention of reminding his audience about the dispensation and order under Yahweh's theophany.

3.5.4 Exilic texts and the context of P

Scripture paints the context of the P writers and the background of Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13. 2 Kings 24:9 alluding to 23:35-37 indicates relations with the Egyptian. The worship of the foreign gods is named among the evil that was committed during the reign of Jehoiachin. The Jews were carried into captivity by the Babylonians (Dan 1:2; 2 Kgs 24:11-18) around 597 BC and lived in Tel-Abib, probably South East of Babylon (Ezek 3:15). This implies their bowing down to the Babylonian authorities and adopting their worship of the gods. In Ezekiel the sinfulness in Israel (Ezek 2:3-7; 8:9,10) and other nations (Ezek 25-32) is stressed. The work of Ezekiel, a priest and prophet, is located in the context of the land of the Chaldeans (1:3) or Babylonians and gentiles (4:13).

The object marker is attached to the masculine plural construct noun *מִשְׁפָּטַי* (my judgments) while the conjunction is attached to the object marker, is attached to the feminine plural noun in a construct state and is attached to the first person singular suffix *וְאֶת־חֻקֹּתַי* (my statutes) in Ezekiel 5:6. Ezekiel 5:6 bears a resemblance to Leviticus 18:4-5, 26 and Leviticus 20:22. Defiling abominations and relations with other countries and their customs in Ezekiel 5:5, 7 define the context of Ezekiel and the P writers. To live according to the priestly standards was to function in a society

¹⁰⁵ The reason for the emphasis on land and nation during the exile is that the land had been lost and the exilic preachers proclaimed Yahweh's supremacy over all the nations and even the Empire of Babylon (Massey 2002:1).

¹⁰⁶ Jenson (1992:27) further says P sought to conform the post-exilic order of worship to that of post-exilic orthodoxy, thus legitimating Israel's divine worship.

and in worship with a proper knowledge of order and disorder, clean and unclean, holy and defiled (Ezek 5:5, 7:68). The word ‘abomination’, which in Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13 labels a homosexual act, is attached to the act of playing the harlot with idols in Ezekiel 6:9; 8:10. Leviticus 18:22 is situated within the context and framework of Leviticus 18:24-30. In Leviticus 18:24-30 the violation of sexual laws is said to be an abomination. Walsh (2001:206) concurs with Olyan’s argument that the identification of male-male intercourse as an abomination formed part of the earlier formulation of the laws in Leviticus 18:22 and that it was extended to all the laws of Leviticus 18 by the later redactors who created the framing in Leviticus 18:24-30.

3.5.5 Priestly creation idea

Although no explicit allusions are made to the creation story in Genesis 1:1-2:4a,¹⁰⁷ a priestly creation idea that is grounded on the statement ‘be fruitful and multiply’ cannot be divorced from the contribution of P in the development of Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13. The author of Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13 might be making allusion to the priestly creation idea instead of homosexuality.

3.5.6 Inclusive punishment

Olyan (1994:188), in constructing the development of the prohibitions in Leviticus 18, concludes that at the early stages of the development of the prohibitions, Same-Sex sexual intercourse was forbidden and that the insertive partner was probably executed. Contrary to this conclusion, Same-Sex sexual intercourse was simply forbidden and as entailed in Leviticus 18:22¹⁰⁸ there is no indication of the penalty of death. In the initial law penned by the priestly author, male-male intercourse was condemned as transgressing the boundary between male (active) and female (passive). This priestly reasoning with regards to only condemning a male (active party) who takes a passive or receptive role is identical to the Greek, Roman and Assyrian

¹⁰⁷ Olyan (1994:188) argues this point and in addition, it can be strongly attested that the creation story in Gen 1:1-2:4a, ideologically, shape Lev 18:22 and 20:13.

¹⁰⁸ Supposedly it is earlier than Lev 20:13.

practices.¹⁰⁹ Walsh (2001:208) argues that the rationale behind the H redactor's inclusion of a male who takes an active or insertive role in the law in Leviticus 20:13 represents the differentiation between the practice of Israel and that of Egypt and Canaan.¹¹⁰ The law in Leviticus 18:22 is related to that stipulated in Leviticus 20:13. In Leviticus 20:13 the law is directed to the insertive and receptive figure in a male-male act of intercourse. The penalty attached to such an act in Leviticus 20:13 emphasises the guilt of both participants. This suggests an editorial stage, the early stage at which the formulation of this prohibition was punishment as in Leviticus 18:22; later the act was punitive. Leviticus 20:13 is inclusive of the punitive dimension of the sexual act which shaped the ideology of the redactor. Purity and holiness considerations are evident in Leviticus 18 and 20 and seem to reflect the conviction and ideology of the redactor.

3.5.7 Attachment of the noun 'abomination' to Leviticus 18:22

Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13 is structurally located in the context of legislation in the Holiness Source or Code. In the context of the laws of Leviticus 18 the word 'abomination' is attached only to homosexuality¹¹¹ which presupposes a late redaction addition. In the Tabnit inscription from Sidon the word 'abomination' is used to name the opening of the grave of the goddess Astarte. A connotation of the worship of a god is depicted in Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13. The word is mostly used in cases of unclean animals (Deut 14:3), sacrificial animals with bodily defects (Deut 17:1), cross dressing (Deut 22:5 and 4Q159 4-4 1.7), and the reversal of expected behaviour roles (Prov 17:15). Olyan (1994:180) describes the usage of the word 'abomination' as suggesting the violation of the socially constructed and entrenched boundaries and the reversal of the order of things in which the ancient people believed.

¹⁰⁹ Walsh (2001:208) argues this point when investigating the civilisation of people in the Ancient Near Eastern society.

¹¹⁰ It is also intended to protect Israel's holiness from the abomination of confusion with other nations (Walsh 2001:208).

¹¹¹ In the laws of Lev 18 all the prohibited acts are called an abomination (Lev 18:26-27, 29-30): probably this is a late redaction endeavour by the H redactors.

3.5.8 Leviticus in the context of dietary laws

The redaction location of Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13 in the context of dietary laws is worth noting. In these laws the categorization of clean and unclean is informed by the determination of whether a creature is of its kind. The principle underpinning the construction of the violation of such laws seems to be the respect for diversity and the separation of the creatures into groups according to their kinds and it is argued that this is the typical creation theology of the priestly tradition (Walsh 2001:206). Violation of dietary laws is related to the violation of a sexual law as in Leviticus 18:22 by creatures not crossing the boundaries of their own kind. The H redactor affirms priestly creation theology and underpins Leviticus 18:22 by relating it to dietary laws such as Leviticus 11:27. The laws in Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13 depict an objection to a man who is performing a receptive role which is proper to women; thus the boundary between the male and female is transgressed. The issue in Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13 is gender confusion wherein the male takes on the female role. The notion of gendered sexual roles seems to have shaped the development of Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13, progressively, in the hands of P and H. The insertive role is restrictively attached to males and the receptive role to females.

3.5.9 Association with alien gods.

The product of the final redaction process displays a conclusive punishment in which both partners are at fault. The location of Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13 in its final version of redaction associates the prohibition of Same-Sex sexual intercourse with other sexual acts. Olyan (1994:188) argues that there is an association of the Egyptians with the Canaanites in the H framing materials (18:1-5, 24-30; 20: 7-8, 22-24). The prohibition of child sacrifice to an alleged god Molech¹¹² in Leviticus 18:21 is redactionally located at the centre of the prohibitions of sexual acts in Leviticus 18:19-20 and 22-23. Because of this location Olyan (1994:199) notes that the prohibition of Same-Sex sexual intercourse is a result of its association with the worship of alien gods.¹¹³ This location of Leviticus 18:21 does not provide sound and convincing evidence. Therefore Leviticus 18:22 cannot be associated with idolatry

¹¹² Olyan (1994:198) deduces this thinking, probably influenced by the Reference to Molech in Lev18.

¹¹³ Douglas (1966:347) shares the same sentiments.

and the worship of alien gods.¹¹⁴ On the contrary, the notion of value for creation which underlies Leviticus 18:21; 18:22 and 20:13 is not noticed and connects these prohibitions. This connection probably adds value to the reason to forbid male-male intercourse on the basis of its association with the alien gods; this might be the intention of the redactor.

3.5.10 Holiness motifs behind P and H

Leviticus 18:1-5 as an introduction of the sexual laws displays the holiness motif. The negative particle **לֹא** in Leviticus 18:3 restricts the Israelites from associating themselves with alien nations (Egypt and Canaan). The dependent statement **וְשָׁמַרְתֶּם אֶת** (you shall therefore keep my statutes) in Leviticus 18:5 supports the existence of the holiness motif in the redactor's mind. Holiness seems to be intended to urge and encourage an ethically and morally upright life. Mohrmann (2004:64) agrees that in H, holiness is depicted as the final aim of all the commandments. The nouns **חֻקֵּי** (statute) and **מִשְׁפָּט** (judgement), emerging from the priestly tradition,¹¹⁵ are both cultic and social in nature based on their literary context while the H redactor uses them to define the sexual laws of Leviticus 18 that are introduced by verse 1-5, which pertains to the cultic and social life of the people.

Snyman (2008:21) notes that male-male sexual intercourse is the only forbidden act that receives the label of abomination in the entire Holiness Code¹¹⁶. Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13 occur in the Holiness Code which places the emphasis on the holiness of people and the holiness of **יְהוָה** and therefore objects to the association with the practices of the neighbouring nations. The Holiness Code in Leviticus 17-26 displays uncleanness and that which constitutes it. Uncleanness constitutes disorder and confusion, Via (2003:7) postulate, whereas the Holiness of **יְהוָה** constitutes wholeness, completeness and perfection. Snyman (2008:21) defines completeness and perfection as meaning that classes or categories must be kept distinct and not be

¹¹⁴ Olyan (1994: 199); Walsh (2001:204) also affirms this position.

¹¹⁵ Mohrmann (2004:65) locates the nouns in context of religious life.

¹¹⁶ Lev 18:22 forms a part of the forbidden sexual acts which include incest (vv 6-18), adultery (20), child sacrifice (21) and bestiality (23).

mixed or confounded. This definition finds underpinning in the text of Leviticus 18 and 20.

3.5.11 Concerns for family order

Leviticus 18:6-7 focuses on the life of the extended family and the violation of these laws which jeopardizes the family structure constructed by the society. The redaction shift in Leviticus 18:18 is evident in that it concerns the family from which the wife originated, that is, another family in the clan or in another tribe or nation. Mohrmann (2004:80) contends that verses 18-20 articulate internal boundaries of the society by connecting sexuality with the coherence of the cult or religion. The laws symbolize the next circle of associations with the Israelite nation. Leviticus 18:18-20 is concerned with family order. The law against sacrificing children to Molech in Leviticus 18: 21 displays disregard for the significance of procreation and also pertain to the violation of family order. Violation of family order is detected in the laws against homosexual practice and bestiality in Leviticus 18:22-23. Sexual laws in Leviticus 18:6-23 also depict the prohibited violation of family order. The framework of Leviticus 18: 1-5 and 24-30 as redactionally located suggests that the sexual laws in Leviticus 18:6-23 were intended to separate Israel from Egyptian and Canaanite custom. This framework presupposes that the prohibited sexual acts in Leviticus 18: 7-23 were Egyptian and Canaanite and did not originate from the Israelites.

3.5.12 Conclusion

The final product of Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13 was constructed at the time of the Babylonian exile. The relationship of the Israelites with the Egyptians and the worship of foreign gods is depicted with the implication that the Jews were taken into captivity by the Babylonians and were adopting their worship of gods. A priestly creation idea that is grounded in the statement 'be fruitful and multiply' manifests itself in Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13. Therefore the text is not speaking to and about homosexuality. The issue in Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13 is gender confusion wherein the male takes on the female role. Violation of family order is detected in the laws against homosexual practice and bestiality in Leviticus 18:22-23.

The rationale behind the H redactor's inclusion of a male who takes an active or insertive role as expressed in the law in Leviticus 20:13 is the differentiation between the practice of Israel and that of Egypt and Canaan. The usage of the word 'abomination' suggests the violation of the socially constructed and entrenched boundaries and the reversal of the order of things in the view of these ancient people. The analysis of the stages of texts (Lev 18:22 and 20:13) projects a sense that the texts in discussion do not respond to homosexual orientation or Same-Sex love relationship.

3.6 Social-Scientific Criticism

3.6.1 Introduction

According to Elliott (1993:72-74) the purpose of Social-Scientific Criticism is to investigate and seek to comprehend the text in terms of its genre, content and rhetorical strategy as a medium for meaningful, persuasive interaction in a particular historical, social and cultural context. The present investigation studies the social, geographic, cultural context of the original listeners or readers and the ideology of the authors.

3.6.2 Socio-geographic context

Composition and Redaction Criticism located Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13 in the exilic and post-exilic period and context. The following study of the geographical context of the text enables a depiction of the surrounding nations, and their civilisations, and presupposes cultural, social and religious influences or adaptations. Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13 might be responding to issues in the geographical context constructed from the text of Leviticus.

3.6.2.1 Pre-exilic context

The probability of a Canaanite influence on the religion of Israel is raised on the grounds of the gradual and incomplete manner in which the conquest of Canaan was

effected by the Hebrews¹¹⁷ and the adoption of Canaanite civilisation by the latter.¹¹⁸ Paton (1914:221) contends that the Israelite laws bear a Babylonian imprint. The theory behind this is that the Babylonian traditions migrated to Canaan before the Israelite conquest and were adopted from the Canaanites by the Israelites as they settled in the land. At the time, Canaan was under the influence of Babylonian culture.¹¹⁹ Israelite civilisation was mixed with all sorts of alien influences. Luckenbill (1910:378-379) rightfully suggests that an Egyptian influence on the Israelites is evident in excavations relating to the period of 2000-1200 BC; the Assyrian influence began about 850 BC and the Babylonian influence during and after the Exile. Archaeological finds excavated shed light into the construction of pre-exilic context with possible Egyptian influence on Israel. Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13 might be rejecting alien influences in principle.

3.6.2.2 Exilic context

The Babylonian empire was established during the exilic period and included Judah, Edom, Moab, Syria, Assyria, Elam; the cities were Jerusalem, Samaria, Carchemish, Nineveh, Babylon and Susa. The Assyrian capital was captured by the Babylonians in 612 BC. After the death of King Josiah, Judah became subject to Egypt (2 Kgs 23:29) in 609 BC. Egypt was defeated in 605 BC and became subject to Babylon with Jehoiakim of Judah paying tribute to Nebuchadnezzar. In 597 BC, Jerusalem (Judah) was forced to surrender to Nebuchadnezzar after Judah tried to enlist the help of Egypt against Babylon in 601 BC: following the battle between Pharaoh Neco and King Nebuchadnezzar; the leading citizens of Judah were exiled to Babylon. During the exile certain Jews founded communities in Egypt (Jer 43:1-7; 44:26). Other people who lived in exile in Mesopotamia became integrated with the population and the culture of Mesopotamia. Prior to and during the exilic period the Jews encountered the Egyptians, Syrians, Assyrians, Mesopotamians and Babylonians. In this context, cultural adaptation took place in the sense that the Jews were influenced

¹¹⁷ Paton (1914:205) notes that J and E agree that the Canaanites were not wiped out, but continued to stay in the midst of Israel to date. The prohibition of marriage with the Canaanite that is reflected in Exod 23:33; 34:11-16; Deut 7:1-4 indicates that the Canaanites lived among the Hebrews even after their invasion.

¹¹⁸ Forms of city life, the institution of city government, ancient manners and customs and the worship of Canaanite gods were gradually adopted by Israelites (Paton 1914:205).

¹¹⁹ Carrier (1889:294); Paton (1914:221) comments that the Babylonian records testify that for nearly 2000 years prior to 1700 BC Canaan stood under the influence of Babylonian civilisation; this testimony is confirmed by the discovery of a seal of Canaanite workmanship with a Babylonian inscription at Taanach and at Gezer of the so-called Zodiacal Tablet.

by the other cultures and civilisations while the law on homosexual acts emerged from this geographical and historical context.

3.6.2.3 Post exilic context

Cyrus, the Persian, conquered Babylon in year 538 B.C. and took over the Babylonian empire. The Persians also vanquished Egypt. The Persian Empire in the post-exilic period included Macedonia, Lydia, Cyprus, Egypt, Judah, Cappadocia Assyria, Babylonia, Persia, Parthia, India, Susiana, Media, Phoenicia, Moab, Edom and Ammon. The Persians were in total control of Palestine with their empire stretching from Egypt to India. In 538 BC, Cyrus decreed that the Jews could go to Jerusalem and rebuild the temple of Yahweh; by this time there was a sense of religious and social freedom even though the Jewish civilisation had already been influenced.

3.6.3 Social and cultural context

Hartley (1992:283) remarks that תועבה depicts ritualistic and moral behaviour that is ‘repugnant’ to the neighbours of Israel.¹²⁰ The social and cultural environment of the Israelites was influenced by countries in the Ancient Near East. aspects of homosexuality are evident in the lifestyle of Israel’s neighbouring countries. focus is on Egypt, Middle Assyrian, Mesopotamia, Hittites, Babylonia, Greek and Rome and Athens.

3.6.3.1 Egypt

The usage of anal rape to humiliate conquered enemy soldiers in wars was likely in ancient Egypt and Greece.¹²¹ Departing from the background of the Ancient Near Eastern world with regard to homosexuality, Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13, in prohibiting every type of homosexual intercourse, was just not as forcible as the Assyrians or Egyptians.¹²²

¹²⁰ Male homosexual practice is identified as תועבה in Lev 20:13, translated as ‘something detestable and repugnant’, and this act carries the death penalty (Hartley 1992:339).

¹²¹ Walsh (2001:208) further points to the certainty of male anal rape in Greece from the observation of a mid-fifth-century wine jar commemorating an Athenian victory over the Persians at the Eurymedon river which shows a Persian bent over and about to be penetrated by a Greek.

¹²² Wenham (1990:362). Lev 20:13 states that both parties are at fault not only the deemed rapist. Wenham’s interpretation focuses on the terminology utilised by the author of Lev 18:22 and 20:13.

3.6.3.2 Middle Assyrian

Wenham (1990:360) remarks that amongst the laws in the Middle Assyrian collection, the MAL A 20 indicates that if a man has intercourse with another and he is indicted and proved to be guilty and will be turned into a eunuch.¹²³ In comparison with Leviticus 20:13 in MAL A 20, only the active male partner is punished¹²⁴ which leads Wenham (1990:360) to contend that MAL A 20 is dealing with homosexual rape (coerced sexual intercourse) rather than an act between consenting adults. This argument highlights that homosexuality was known and was an integral part of the people's holistic life.

The occurrence of MAL A 19-20 in the context of offences committed against married women as noted by Olyan (1994:193) has led to the interpretation of MAL A 19-20 as suggesting that the receptive partner in the male-male intercourse was deemed to be equal to a woman.

3.6.3.3 Mesopotamia

It is argued that from iconographic evidence dating from 3000 BC to the Christian era it is clear that homosexual practice was an accepted part of the Mesopotamian scene.¹²⁵ An astrological text of the New-Babylonian period (6th century BC), which can be traced back to probably the early Sumerian times, demonstrates the existence of heterosexuality, male homosexuality and the nonexistence of references to female homosexuality in ancient Mesopotamian culture.¹²⁶ The earliest builders of the Mesopotamian culture were the Sumerians.¹²⁷ Bullough (1971:191) writes that anal intercourse between males is evident in Mesopotamia and that there is no evidence that it was deemed to be taboo.

Gender roles can be deduced by the examination of the images of musical performances in ancient Israel. Burgh (2004:128) focuses on the material evidence

¹²³ An eunuch is a man who has been castrated.

¹²⁴ See also Olyan (1994:193).

¹²⁵ Wenham (1990:360) further maintains that some neighbouring cultures are adjacent to ancient Israel.

¹²⁶ According to Bullough (1971:190) the text shows the effect of the stars on potency and love making and includes the signs of 'love of a man for a woman in the region of Libra'; 'love of a woman for a man in the region of Pisces'; 'love of a man for a man in the region of Scorpio' and 'to have intercourse with a woman in the region of Aries'. Bullough deduces this from Biggs (1967:33).

¹²⁷ See Bullough (1971:185).

from the Iron Age.¹²⁸ In some iconographic depictions in the Near East it is difficult to define sex and gender because of the lack of substantive evidence required for identification.¹²⁹ The Tel ‘Iran figurine which is thought to have had a cultic connection was discovered and depicts a figure holding a musical instrument supposedly played mainly by women.¹³⁰ The breasts which suggest a female physical feature are not clear in this find; it displays male genitalia and a beard and this presupposes that the Tel ‘Iran figurine is a male. A possibility of the Tel ‘Iran figurine occupying the status or position of eunuchs, as known from Mesopotamian texts, is mentioned.¹³¹ An intensive investigation of Mesopotamian plaque figurines that date to the Middle Bronze IIA period (2000-1750 BCE) as suggested by Rashid (1984:134-135) propounds that they may precisely be men dressed as women associated with a feminine role as determined by the socio-cultural system in ancient Mesopotamia. Burgh (2004:130) concedes that men using female classified musical instruments were common and not objected to in Mesopotamia and Egypt, while in ancient Israel this was accepted only in certain cultural contexts. Features of homosexuality were detected but more substantive evidence is needed for a conclusive position.

3.6.3.4 Hittites

In the Hittite Code section 189 the death penalty is called for in order to address the issue of a man having a sexual relationship with his son.¹³² Hoffner (1966:332-333) reads Deuteronomy 22:5 against the background of the Hittite rituals and Ugaritic mythological texts. The objection is against a man or woman who wears the attire and symbol of the opposite sex. This act is labelled as homosexuality and could refer to an

¹²⁸ Burgh (2004:128) also consults the works of Braun (2002:67-184).

¹²⁹ These include finds at Tel el Far ‘ah South (1150 BCE); a three-piece ensemble from a bowl found at Idalion, Cyprus, dating to the eighth century BCE; a figure from Kuntillet ‘Ajrud; a stamp seal from Tel Keisan on Iron Age seals and objects from Megiddo that are presented with prisoners who are preceded by a lyre player in procession (Burgh 2004:130-134). In Pritchard (1975:51), the discussion on sex and gender is not included in the analysis of Tel el Far ‘ah South. Braun (2002:95) categorises the figure in Tel el Far ‘ah South as female, of which the dress is said to be an indicator of male gender. The ensemble from a bowl found at Idalion is identified as a Canaanite orchestra. The figure from Kuntillet ‘Ajrud’ seated with a lyre is a woman and it is possible that she is Asherah, Yahweh’s consort.

¹³⁰ Burgh (2004:129) and Keel (1978:336-338) classify the musical object (frame drum) as a woman’s instrument.

¹³¹ Ringrose (1993:86) defines eunuchs as not only castrated men but adds that the term may also have included those born with sexual deformities and those who were gay men.

¹³² Good (1967:960) further defines Lev 18:22 and 20:13 as a Hebrew Code and locates it in the Ancient Near Eastern laws.

ancient cult practice, whereby the worshipper, dressed in the garb of the opposite sex, venerated a deity considered to be bisexual.¹³³

3.6.3.5 Babylonia

Reference to homosexual conduct is made in the later Babylonian law codes, particularly the Middle Assyrian Law Tablets which date from the time of Tilgath-pileser 1, but it is argued that they deal with incest¹³⁴ and not homosexuality.

3.6.3.6 Greek and Rome

In Greece and Rome homosexuality between the adult men and youth was approved with respect to an educational dimension.¹³⁵ Academics¹³⁶ report that male homosexuality appeared in three main forms which are transgenerational,¹³⁷ transgenderal¹³⁸ and egalitarian.¹³⁹

It was improper for a man to be seen as behaving in a way improper to his kind, that is, in a manner that was regarded as feminine or passive. Stiebert and Walsh (2001: 126) note that in certain ancient literature stemming from the Mediterranean circles, a man's being proper to his kind did not necessarily preclude him from sexual practices with another man. This is exemplified in ancient Greek and Roman cultural dimensions and is epistemologically regarded as the acceptance of male homosexuality. However, sexual penetration of an adult male in this same culture denoted a negative perspective on the man who allowed himself to be penetrated by the other, since this was a role reserved for women, boys and slaves.¹⁴⁰ In Rome, for a

¹³³ This view originates in the work of Robertson Smith and Hoffner who note that the evidence of such a cult was taken from the literature of the Hellenistic era (Hoffner 1966:333).

¹³⁴ Bullough (1971:185) includes the statement that 'If a man violates his own mother, it is a capital crime. If a man violates his daughter, it is a capital crime. If a man violates his son, it is a capital crime'.

¹³⁵ Wenham (1990:360) and Walsh (2001:203). In this social and educational function a young boy is mentored by an adult male and is assisted to develop into an adult.

¹³⁶ Adam (1985:19-33); Carrier (1980:100-122); Herdt (1991:481-504, 1991:603-632); Murray (1992:3-23); Trumbach (1977:1-33), Trumbach (1989:1660-1750) and Williams (1996:416-435).

¹³⁷ Rind (1998:399) argues that transgenerational homosexuality involves sexual relations between old males and young boys.

¹³⁸ According to Rind (1998:399) transgenderal homosexuality concerns sexual relations between a masculine male and a cross gendered male who takes on an opposite gender role and acts as the passive partner.

¹³⁹ Rind (1998:399) defines egalitarian homosexuality as consisting of sexual relations between males who do not change gender roles and are of similar age and social status.

¹⁴⁰ See Stiebert and Walsh (2001:126). This falls into the category of social inferiority.

man to be penetrated was to feminise him; however, this feminisation principle was not applicable if the penetrated man was of inferior class or status.¹⁴¹

In Greece, a male-male sexual relationship between master and slave was deemed to be improper, but in Rome it was acceptable.¹⁴² Israel's legislation as evident in the Holiness Code differs from the Greek and Roman understanding and treatment of male-male sexual relations. In Greece and Rome, the reasoning revolves around class, status and age whereas for the Israelites, it concerns gender. For Greeks and Romans, the object for social and legal harsh criticism was the passive partner while in Rome the active partner would also be condemned if his partner was considered an adult male, based on age.¹⁴³

3.6.3.7 Athens

In Athens¹⁴⁴ male-male intercourse was only permissible with slave foreigners and young people; sex between adult males was forbidden and a male consenting to be penetrated was deemed to have classified himself with women (Olyan 1994:190). This was similar to the Roman context; however, this feminisation principle was not applicable if the penetrated man was of inferior class or status. Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13 is related to reasoning in Athens on grounds of class or status and seems that male-male intercourse in Leviticus is forbidden because the receptive male does not conform to his class.

3.6.4 Kinship and marriage

The significance of kinship and marriage in the discussion of the role of sex and homosexuality in the Israelite community is investigated.¹⁴⁵ Dickson (2002:358) concludes that homosexual acts are a violation of society's sanctioned role of sexual

¹⁴¹ Olyan (1994:191) is informed by the honour and shame theory.

¹⁴² Walsh (2001:203) points to the rationale behind the Greek consideration that male-male sexual relationships should involve males of the same social class.

¹⁴³ Walsh (2001:203) notes that the factor underlying the condemnation of male-male intercourse between an active young person and passive old person was related to the social value of honour and shame.

¹⁴⁴ Athens was an intellectual capital of the European civilized world of the Roman Empire.

¹⁴⁵ Malina (1993:134-136) and Van Eck (1995:206-207) contribute by arguing that the role and the significance of sex is derived from its function in terms of the honour-shame character of the society which is shaped by kinship and marriage ideologies.

intercourse and for this reason are condemned in Genesis 19 and Judges 19. Dickson's conclusion derives from the recent contributions of academics. Malina (1993:134-136) argues that in the first century Mediterranean societies, sexual intercourse served the function of embedment, that is, embedding the female into the male and the male's family and society.¹⁴⁶ Dickson (2002:358) notes that as a final sign of submission to the husband and embeddedness in him, a wife had to share the husband's religion. Numbers 31:17-18, 35 and Judges 21:11-12 support the notion of embedment. Malina (1993:137) demonstrates that in the post-exilic period the focus of marriage falls on offspring and the holy seed, of which production becomes the reason for sexual intercourse.

The word male זָכָר instead of man is used in Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13: this translation implies that what is being forbidden is engaging in sexual intercourse with another man (Stiebert & Walsh 2001:137). Dickson (2002:359) argues that in an honour-shame society the man is the active partner and the woman is the passive partner in sexual intercourse and thus the term זָכָר male refers to a partner who assumes the passive role of a woman in a same gender sexual act. Dickson (2002:360) says the term זָכָר, instead of the term man, points to the difference in the roles played by the two partners (doing) rather than the sameness of their gender (being). Therefore Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13 refer to the role (act) played by the partner rather than to the gender (sexual orientation) of the partner. On these grounds the argument can be advanced that Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13 do not portray homosexuality (as an orientation) but rather, a homosexual act. On the other side, from the perspective of the honour-shame society, Genesis 19, Judges 19, Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13 do not condemn certain sexual acts in a relationship between persons of the same gender but rather, active, penetrative sexual intercourse between persons of the same gender.¹⁴⁷

The distinction between men and women was expressed in terms of vitality in the cultic law.¹⁴⁸ These distinctions manifest themselves within the marriage parameters.

¹⁴⁶ See Dickson (2002:358).

¹⁴⁷ Dickson (2002:366) further concludes that Lev 18:22 and 20:13 condemn homosexual acts and the persons engaging in the acts.

¹⁴⁸ Jenson (1992:142) adds that the role differentiation of men and women in a society is a complex and many-sided phenomenon.

In this sense, Leviticus 18:6-23, 20:10-21 is interpreted and classified as passages in the Holiness Code that define the boundaries of legitimate marriage and sexual intercourse (Jenson 1992:144). According to the author's (P) worldview and ethical law, homosexuality was understood as an illegitimate confusion of classes and / or genders which should be kept distinct.¹⁴⁹ At the centre of the priestly worldview regarding men and women was the traditional belief that marriage and family are the basis of the order of the society. In the light of the covenantal relationship the Israelites enjoyed with יהוה, a deviation from the norm affected the stability and structure of their standing as a holy community. It is within the context of kinship and family unity that the ideology of procreation in the socio-cultural background of Leviticus 18 and 20 translates itself.

3.6.5 Procreation ideology

A cultural phenomenon prominent among the Sumerians, Babylonians, Hittites and Egyptians is the regard for procreation, which is displayed in a ritual to restore the ability to reproduce if this was lost (Hoffner 1966:326-327). The masculinity of the ancient men was determined and measured by his expertise in battle and ability to produce children.¹⁵⁰ Kraeling (1928:134) argued that concepts of creation were important in the religion of Ancient Israelites in that festivals of recreation were of significance. It is propounded that in the Ancient Near East the practice of homosexuality was well known and was only condemned in certain cases where coercion by one party was implied and that the condemnation was rooted in the doctrine of creation and the command in Genesis 1: 28 (Wenham 1990:359-363).

It is argued that to allow the legitimacy of homosexual acts, the world frustrates and disturbs the divine purpose and denies the perfection of God's provision of two sexes (Wenham 1990:363). According to this argument it does seem that Israel's repudiation of the homosexual act and orientation stemmed from the point of having conceptualised the doctrine of creation with explicit regard for procreation or

¹⁴⁹The restriction on priestly marriage can also be understood in structural terms. Widows, divorce and harlotry brought about the possibility of confusion of genealogical lines and names.

¹⁵⁰ Hoffner (1966:327) offers no biblical reference to support this claim and there is reluctance in accepting to contribution.

productivity.¹⁵¹ Ellis (2003:313-323) examines Philo's objection to homosexual behaviour in which he maintains that homosexual behaviour is contrary to nature in that it involves an unnatural indulgence in pleasure, in that it does not involve procreation and that it places the male partner in the role of a female and thus demeans and weakens the partner.

Wink (1999:34), in interpreting Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13, points to the Hebrew prescientific understanding that in male semen is contained the whole of nascent life. This rationale evolved into the perception that the spilling of semen for a non procreative purpose (in coitus interruptus (Gen 38:1-11), the male homosexual act or male masturbation) was considered equivalent to murder. The related question, since male homosexual practice was condemned on the basis of the preservation of creation, could be whether female homosexual practice is permitted. The Old Testament is silent in this regard.

It is observed that the Old Testament, with regard to sexuality, is first to be seen in its ancient Near Eastern context, where Yahwism's monotheism and close association of morals with religion set it in sharp contrast with the common fertility pattern.¹⁵² Paton (1914:213) links the considerations for reproduction with the god Ashtarte who has Canaanite associations, and Astorter of the Greeks, who is deemed to be a goddess of sexual love and reproduction. The worship of Ashtarte by the Israelites is proved by the use of personal names and by the occasional explicit statements while the certainty of its existence is further derived from certain passages which state that Israel served the Be-alim and the Ashtaroth. Evidence supporting this is not furnished by Paton. Archaeological evidence depicts that Astarte figures have been found in the Israelite section at Lachish and Taanach.¹⁵³

White (1995:17) notes that reproduction was essential in the worldview of the Mediterranean people. The metaphoric expression of seed and field suggests that

¹⁵¹ Wenham (1990:363) perceives the doctrine of creation in the discussion on homosexuality as having credibility and importance.

¹⁵² Collins (1977:149-265) further investigates Old Testament sexual morality that includes marriage and family, homosexuality, fornication and procreation.

¹⁵³ Luckenbill (1910:371) observes that a goddess of fertility and reproduction who was frequently also a warrior goddess was worshipped in Babylonia as Belit, Nana, and Inina; in Assyria as Ishtar; in Syria, Phoenicia and Palestine as Astarte.

women provided the field and men produced the seed. White (1995:17) argues that this is evident in the Koran in the statement: ‘women are given to you as fields, go therein and sow your seed’ (Sura 2.223). For a man to adopt the position of a field was regarded as shameful.

3.6.6 Honour and shame theory

Stiebert and Walsh (2001:123) in introducing the honour-shame model and theory concede that biblical texts are shaped by their social and cultural context.¹⁵⁴ The underlying system of social values within which Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13 must be construed is the gender construction of maleness in a society where honour and shame are fundamental social values (Stiebert and Walsh, 2001: 145). According to Stiebert and Walsh (2001:125) the honour and shame theory embodies a differentiation of masculinity and femininity. From the Mediterranean cultural point of view, masculinity is superior to femininity; hence it was regarded shameful and unholy for a man to act like a woman. Carden (1999:87) notes that a descriptively heterosexual male is defined as being the penetrator while the homosexual male is defined as being the penetrated one. This description contradicts the understanding of sexuality on the grounds of orientation.

According to Greenberg male rape served as a punitive form in the context of the Ancient Middle East.¹⁵⁵ It is articulated that a trends that can be traced to an Ancient Near Eastern context depict that men who are penetrated during sexual intercourse are dishonoured, associated with women and transgendered to be equivalent to women, and ceased to enjoy a rightful place in the community.¹⁵⁶ White (1995:16) agrees with Malina and Neyrey¹⁵⁷ that honour indicated a social standing and a rightful place in a society, since values are culturally created.

Anthropologist May Douglas (Stiebert and Walsh 2001:125-126) maintains that holiness requires that individuals conform to the class to which they belong and that

¹⁵⁴ Robertson (2005:17) affiliates to this contention departing from the anthropological reading.

¹⁵⁵ Greenberg (1988:20ff) and Dover (1978:1ff) share the same sentiments.

¹⁵⁶ Schmitt (1992:7); Soffer (1992:119); Wikan (1977:304-19) and Jansen (1992:83-91) are in consensus about the dishonour of the penetrated men.

¹⁵⁷ See Malina and Neyrey (1991:26).

different classes of things shall not be confused. This thinking stems from the proposed interpretation of Leviticus 18:23 and 19:12 as making reference to animals (creatures) in the dietary laws deemed not to be proper and authentic to their kind and therefore abominable. The anthropological literature on Mediterranean and Middle Eastern honour and shame is used by Stone (1995: 87-107) in constructing a social framework that depicts that the homosexual act and rape was construed and interpreted as a process by which a male subject threatens the masculinity and honour of another male.¹⁵⁸

Walsh (2001:138) departs from this notion by citing that the subject ‘you’ in Hebrew possesses grammatical gender in suggesting that sexual intercourse between men is forbidden. The usage of the term ‘male’ appears to imply the difference in gender roles rather than the sameness of gender. Leviticus 18:22 assumes a construction of the gender role of maleness that deems the passive role in sexual intercourse unnatural for males since it is associated with femininity. In contrast to this, what seems to be objected to or forbidden is the act performed by the active figure, that is, the penetrating male figure. If the text was supposing that both men involved in the sexual intercourse were at fault it would say ‘men shall not lie with each other as a man and a woman: that is abominable’. It takes two to form a sexual relationship. On these grounds the text is possibly not addressing a sexual relationship between two men.

Both parties are at fault in Leviticus 20:13. Stiebert and Walsh (2001:144) in agreement, argue that both parties could bring shame upon their social status equally by reducing a party to a passive female and therefore shameful role. The passive or penetrated man was at fault based on the fact of allowing himself to be demeaned and degraded. Activeness or the role of the penetrator was prohibited because it degraded the masculinity of a man. Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13 rejects sexual behaviour shaped by the honour and shame theory and certainly not homosexual orientation.

¹⁵⁸ Stone (1996:170) later interpreted Judges 19 as reflecting men of Gibeah’s attempt to humiliate and subordinate the Levite by treating him as a sexual object. In this case the honour of a male is threatened.

3.6.7 Religious context

Ukleja (1983:263) articulates a line of thinking and reasoning that classifies Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13 as religious prohibitions rather than moral ones. According to Ukleja this line of thinking assumes a distinction between ritual purity and moral preaching. The implication of this is that the issue at hand in Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13 is religious purity. A socio-scientific approach to these texts depicts a prohibition identified with the practice of alien religion within the socio-geographic parameters. It is noted that in Israelite socialisation homosexuality was considered alien behaviour, representing the incursion of pagan civilisation into the life of Israel (Wink 1999:35). Leviticus 18:1-5 locates the law in Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13 in a Canaanite and Egyptian religious context. The Israelites are forbidden to follow the statutes of Canaan and Egypt.¹⁵⁹ The laws of Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13 are deemed to refer to male temple prostitution while this reading is situated in the context of Canaanite cults that practised male temple prostitution as reflected in Deuteronomy 23:17.¹⁶⁰

3.6.7.1 Monotheism

Monotheism¹⁶¹ traces its origin to the period of, that is, in and during, the Babylonian exile; the Israelite religion prior to the exile was polytheistic.¹⁶² Human (1999:498-499) explains that during the monarchical period, a Yahweh-alone-movement originated, that is, pioneered an exclusive worship of Yahweh and the denial of the existence of other gods in order to repel polytheism. The Yahweh-alone-movement developed and, also being influenced by reforms of Josiah, resulted in the cult's centralisation, its purification and the establishment of Yahwism as a state religion (Human 1999:499). Monotheism characterises Yahwism which was prominent in the Babylonian exile. Human (1999:503) concludes that the history of Yahwism, over a

¹⁵⁹ Douglas (1999:343) suggests that Lev 18 refers to the evil statutes of the foreign gods, which are to be contrasted with the good statutes of Yahweh, God of Israel.

¹⁶⁰ Douglas (1999:345) adds that male-male intercourse is rejected because Israel was entering into the idolatrous cults of foreign nations.

¹⁶¹ Monotheism is defined as having faith in one single God (Human 1999:298).

¹⁶² Human (1999:298) notes Bernhard Lang's understanding that Yahweh was only worshipped as a national high god in the early stages of Israelite history and that at certain times during crises and wars he was elevated above other deities. The declaration of the non-existence of other deities only began at the time of Jeremiah (Jer 10:15; 14:22).

period of six centuries, moved from being monolatry,¹⁶³ in a polytheistic reference system, to the absolute monotheism in and after the Babylonian exile.

The Canaanite custom of human sacrifice was prominent and explains the objection to foreign customs attached to the worship of alien gods. Elements of this cultic activity are detected in the Yahwistic religion as evidenced in Scripture.¹⁶⁴ Evidence of human sacrifice appears to be supported by the statement ‘the first born of your sons you shall give to me’ (Exod 22:29-30). The story of Abraham and Isaac in Genesis 22 does not seem to embrace human sacrifice but instead animal sacrifice. Priestly legislation in the exilic and post exilic period rejects human sacrifice as in Leviticus 18:21 and 20:2-5. The rationale for this rejection is based on concerns for purity, which constituted a major factor in undergirding monotheistic belief and practice in the exilic and post exilic period. Because of the argument that monotheism is connected to the identity of Yahweh as the Creator, with reference to Isaiah 45: 5ff, and the God of history with allusions to Isaiah 41:2ff;42:24,¹⁶⁵ it seems that human sacrifice was also rejected on the grounds of value of creation and the creator identity of Yahweh.

3.6.7.2 Polytheism

According to Scripture,¹⁶⁶ worshipping gods other than Yahweh was prohibited. Exilic texts¹⁶⁷ display the denial of the existence of other gods while this shapes monotheism. Advocacy for monotheism presupposes that a polytheist world is the religious context of the Israelites in which polytheism¹⁶⁸ posed a challenge and was rejected. The polytheist world is depicted by the mention of other gods¹⁶⁹ and the prohibition of worshipping gods other than Yahweh. Human (1999:496) notes that the worship of Asherah and other gods of Canaan as well as pagan activities such as sun veneration, the worship of the heavenly host in Jeremiah 7:17, human sacrifice and

¹⁶³ Monolatry is the worship of one god without denying the existence of other gods (Human 1999:492).

¹⁶⁴ Jdg 11:34-40; Josh 6:26; 1 Kgs 16: 34.

¹⁶⁵ Human (1999:500) authentically construct this argument in the study of monotheism.

¹⁶⁶ Exod 20:3, 23; 22:19 23:13; 34:14; Deut 5:7.

¹⁶⁷ Isa 43: 9-10; 44: 6-8; 45:5-6; 46:9.

¹⁶⁸ Human (1999:492) defines polytheism as the faith and worship of many gods.

¹⁶⁹ Gen 31:19; 35:1-4; Jdg 11:24.

cultic prostitution (Asa and Jehosaphath) were criticised and rejected by the deuteronomic-deuteronomistic reformers as evident in Deuteronomy 12-13.

3.6.7.3 Pantheon

A study conducted by Handy (1995:27-43) on the appearance of the Pantheon in Judah¹⁷⁰ sheds light on the religious context of Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13 as reflected in the myths of Ugarit. The operation of deities is hierarchically structured with El¹⁷¹ and Asherah (the fertility goddess and probably the divine Queen Mother) at the apex. Below the highest authority are the functional rulers of the universe as appointed by El and Asherah which include Baal, Anat, Shapshu, and Mot. The third level comprises craft-deities with Kothar-wa-Hasis being the most popular, with the slaves of the divine realm being the messengers at the bottom of the hierarchy.

Handy (1995:38-41) attempts to identify parallels between the Ugarit myths and Judahite religious understanding. In the biblical text אֱלֹהִים holds the highest authority as being the creator of heaven and earth (Genesis 1 and 2). El and אֱלֹהִים were understood to be the same deity. 2 Chronicles 15: 16 acknowledges the existence of a goddess named Asherah who was deemed to be the Queen Mother. Texts such as Psalm 82; Joshua 10:12; Ezekiel 8; Hosea 13:14; 2 Kings 1:2-6; 18: 4; Numbers 21:8-9;¹⁷² Jeremiah 9:20 display an understanding of the existence of the deities on the second and third levels in the hierarchy. The pantheon in Judah in a study of Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13 serves to demonstrate the existence of different deities when the text was written.

3.6.8 Conclusion

Considering the pre-exilic, exilic and post exilic context as well as the geographical location of the nations around the Israelites during this time, light is shed on the geographic context and the socio-cultural dimension of the Israelites. The Israelite

¹⁷⁰ Human (1999:493) further adds that several pantheons existed among Israel's Ancient Near Eastern neighbours.

¹⁷¹ At Ugarit, El was the highest king of a series of deities who were kings over various aspects of the universe (Handy 1995:33).

¹⁷² On the third level of the deities there is a god of snake-bite-cure summoned by Hezekiah and it is believed that Moses was ordered to create the symbol of this deity to cure people (Handy 1995:40).

civilisation was mingled with several kinds of alien influences during this period. The usage of anal rape to humiliate conquered enemy soldiers in wars is likely in ancient Egypt and Greece. In Assyria, homosexual acts were evident and formed an integral part of the community. Anal intercourse between males is evident in Mesopotamia while there is no evidence that it was taboo. For the Hittites, a feminine dress code was acceptable for men. Reference to homosexual conduct is made in the later Babylonian law codes. In Greece and Rome homosexuality between the adult men and youth was approved in terms of an educational dimension while the passive partner would be the object of harsh social and legal criticism; in Rome the active partner would be condemned if his partner was an adult male on the basis of age. In Rome penetrating a man was to feminise him, but this feminisation principle was not applicable if the penetrated man was of inferior class or status. In Athens male-male intercourse was only permissible with slave foreigners and young people; sex between adult males was forbidden and a male accepting penetration was deemed to have classified himself with women. From the perspective of the honour and shame theory, the condemnation of homosexuality was based on the thinking that the penetrated man was shamed. In the light of the aforesaid contexts Dimensions of Africanisation and inculturation are now discussed.

3.7 Conclusion

Literary Criticism proves that Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13 are not addressing homosexuality per se but mainly a sexual behaviour associated with foreign religious cults. Demonstration of power, authority and honour is rejected in Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13. The worship of gods is portrayed as a focal setting of Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13 in the Textual Criticism and homosexuality is not what is being address. Rejection or acceptance of Same-Sex relationship cannot be precisely depicted in the composition and redaction stages of Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13. An analysis of socio-scientific dimension of Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13 does not project a certain rejection of homosexuality but rejection of cultural and religious influence from alien nations.

Chapter 4

Dimensions of Africanisation and Inculturation

4.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on the reception of homosexuality in Africa, in particular, the Republic of South Africa (RSA), with specific attention to Xhosa culture.¹⁷³ The question of how Scripture is received and engaged with by readers in Africa is addressed. Ukpong (1995:3-13) advocates for an inculturation hermeneutics which is a paradigm that seeks to read Scripture through African lenses.¹⁷⁴ The process of systematically approaching Scripture utilising the inculturation hermeneutical paradigm begins with a sense of being aware of the African context and culture. The goal of inculturation is the actualisation of ancient sacred texts in today's context so as to forge interpretation and / or dialogue between faith and life and to engender commitment to personal and societal transformation (Ukpong 1999:325).¹⁷⁵ Africanisation and contextualisation requires a definition of the South African context in this investigation as well as of who is an African. Reading the Bible in an African, RSA context constitutes an interaction of an African with Christianity and the Bible in the context of his / her traditional culture and religion (Mahlangu 2006:10).

A socio-scientific study on RSA with specific focus on Xhosa ethnic group is conducted in this chapter. An African is defined with the aim of depicting people's identity in RSA and to demonstrate the diversity in RSA. The constitution of RSA is

¹⁷³ Unless otherwise mentioned, allusions made to RSA-Xhosa culture in this chapter are informed by self experience of the culture, being a Xhosa man in RSA and growing up within this culture.

¹⁷⁴ In line with this contestation a hermeneutical approach that is rooted in African culture and traditional religious experiences is recommended by Mugambi (1994:9-16) in the interpretation of sacred texts. Substantiating the discipline of interpreting the Bible through African lenses, Kalu (1999:1) suggests that African traditional lenses give correct indigenous readings concerning what occurred before the advent of Western, Islamic or other external influence into Africa.

¹⁷⁵ Ukpong (2000:10) further argue that biblical themes are to be interpreted against the background of African culture, religion and experience. An African interpretation and understanding is achieved in this approach.

tabled and engaged in the discussion of homosexuality with the view of shedding light on its implications. The situatedness of SA, sociologically and politically, is discussed within the framework of democracy and its implications with regards to homosexuality. Attention is directed to the manifestation of homosexuality in RSA culture and traditional religious experiences, with a specific focus falling on the Xhosa ethnic group. The honour and shame concept is studied with the view of understanding the cultural ideologies behind the reception of homosexuality. It is argued that the cultural construction of marriage as an ideological contestation that underlies the objection to homosexuality is crucial to the discussion.

4.2 Aspects of the socio-scientific dimension of the Republic of South Africa

4.2.1 Introduction

The process of approaching Scripture utilising an inculturation hermeneutical paradigm takes its point of departure from a sense of being aware of the African¹⁷⁶ context and culture. Schoonhoven (1989:13) suggests that reinterpretation and contextualisation should fall within the parameters of the continuing context or situation in which people find themselves. Locating the issue of homosexuality in geographic dimensions shows the need for diversity in receiving homosexuality. As mentioned, the context in which RSA-Xhosas¹⁷⁷ find themselves is also characterised by the existence and the usage of the constitution of RSA and the implications of democracy.

4.2.2 Who is an African?

In the recent contributions of African scholars and philosophers, an African is implicitly defined. Rightfully, as contended by Mahlangu (2006:9), an African is any person of African descent who is culturally and historically attached to Africa. An African is a person who embraces African civilisation that is shaped by African traditions and customs regardless of urbanisation, modernisation, secularisation and

¹⁷⁶ The term African is broad and alludes to various races in the African continent. In this investigation, attention is directed to the Xhosas in RSA with the purpose of being focus oriented.

¹⁷⁷ Hereafter this term refers to the Xhosa ethnic group in the Republic of South Africa.

Christianisation. A Xhosa is a person who subscribes and / or embraces Xhosa civilisation, culture and beliefs. The RSA-Xhosa worldview and approach to life is influenced by culture and indicates that their perception of homosexuality is shaped by their civilisation, culture and beliefs. A construction of African identity is vital in engaging Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13 in discussing homosexuality.

4.2.3 Geographical dimension and diversity of the Republic of South Africa

South Africa¹⁷⁸ is a complex and diverse nation: multi-cultural, multi-religious, multi-racial and multi-ethnic. The provinces in RSA are different in character and cultural identity. According to geographical location, Xhosas largely reside in the Eastern Cape. Xhosas live in community with other ethnic races in South Africa with the freedom to hold an independent social identity as well as cultural beliefs. Having attended the synods of the MCSA in the Eastern Cape region on the 4th of June 2009 and observed people taking vote on the subject of homosexuality the following is noted. Homosexuality is rejected and condoned.

RSA-Xhosa civilisation is also shaped and directed by the constitution of the Republic of South Africa. This constitution pertaining to Same-Sex relationships is race and ethnic sensitive and represents the diversity of the country.

4.2.4 Constitution of the RSA and the implications of democracy

In 1996, on 7th May, the RSA parliament ratified a constitution that declared that ‘everyone is equal before the law and has the right to equal protection and benefit of the law’, and that neither the state nor any person may ‘unfairly discriminate directly or indirectly against anyone on one or more grounds that include race, gender, sex, pregnancy, marital status, ethnic or social origin, colour, sexual orientation, age, disability, religion, conscience, belief, culture, language and birth’ (section 9(9) of Act 108 of 1996).¹⁷⁹ The inclusion of ‘sexual orientation’ in the legislature is a transformative and liberative endeavour, since it protects the right of homosexually

¹⁷⁸ South Africa comprises the following provinces: Eastern Cape, Western Cape, KwaZulu Natal, Gauteng, Limpopo, North West, and Free State.

¹⁷⁹ See Openshaw (1997:124).

oriented people. It is in this understanding that affirmative action is appropriated to address any issue of transformation and equality.

The Sexual Offences and Community Affairs (SOCA) Unit, a directorate within the National Prosecuting Authority of the Republic of South Africa (NPA), worked together with a group of service providers from government and from civil society to develop a set of minimum standards for service delivery. Standard 1, for example, states: ‘Service providers shall not discriminate against any victims on any of the following grounds: race, gender, sex, pregnancy, marital status, ethnic or social origin, colour, sexual orientation, age, disability, religion, conscience, belief, culture, language and birth in or out of wedlock’ (Farlam 1997:135).

By the same token, the provision that ‘everyone has the right to freedom of conscience, religion, thought, belief and opinion’ (section 15(1) of Act 108 of 1996) in the Bill of Rights protects the discernment and position/s of the churches and RSA-Xhosas. Paul Farlam (1997:135) raises the interesting point that ‘all rights in the Bill of Rights are capable of being limited, provided the limitation satisfies the requirements set out in the limitation clause of the Bill of Rights’. The clause specifies that all limitations be reasonable and justifiable in an open and democratic society based on human dignity, equality and freedom (section 36 of the constitution). This suggests that if a gay or lesbian in a religious and / or social context is discriminated against, s/he can lay a complaint based on the provision of the right to equality. The religious community can then argue its case based on the provision stipulated in the right to freedom of religion. At this point such a gay or lesbian or the state can argue that the deemed violation of the right to freedom of religion is justifiable based on the limitation clause in the Bill of Rights.

South Africa is a democratic state and its policies are shaped and informed by this democratic dimension. The young democratic dispensation led the South African community to a commitment in ensuring that discrimination is eliminated: the acceptance of all people in RSA irrespective of their social identity and orientation. The constitution of RSA reflects the diversity of the people and is underpinned by the Bill of Human Rights which seeks to embrace the dignity of all.

4.2.4 Conclusion

The position of RSA-Xhosas with regards to homosexuality seems to be shaped by the culture, customs and beliefs that manifest themselves within this ethnic group. This notion remains to be proven in this chapter. The constitution of RSA directs that the RSA-Xhosa perception of homosexuality should not be characterised by discrimination yet it must be authentic.

4.3 African culture and traditional religious experiences

4.3.1 Introduction

A hermeneutical approach that is rooted in African culture and traditional religious experiences is recommended by Mugambi (1994:9-16). The intention of this section is to relate homosexuality to the experiences in the African culture and traditions. In terms of the people's culturally shaped thinking about sexuality there is an assumption that a given pattern of sexuality is native to the human constitution. Homosexuality is a product of cultural realities based on the understanding that gay studies stem from cultural studies. While this is an American perspective, it is also manifested in Africa and South Africa. Cultural trends and perceptions have influenced and contributed to the manifestation of homosexuality. On the basis of the realisation of the importance of culture and its contribution to the comprehension of homosexuality, cultural dimensions are investigated in this research.

4.3.2 Cultural dimension that embraces homosexuality

In rejecting homosexuality, from the African perspective, the phrase utilised is 'it is culturally unacceptable'. Nyarenchi problematises the phrase by saying that it confuses questions of morality with questions of acceptability (Nyarenchi 2004:46). Homosexuality is not necessarily immoral because it is not culturally acceptable nor can the existence and / or non-existence of homosexuality in a certain (African) culture be imposed or predicted based upon that which is deemed to be publicly legitimate. Culture in this case and the discussion of homosexuality is problematic

and therefore cannot constitute a normative device with which to engage the issue of homosexuality (Nyarenchi 2004:46).

The strong condemnation of homosexuality in East Africa is often politically and ideologically inspired and therefore that African culture does not provide an adequate normative basis for the theological ethical engagement with the issue of homosexuality (Nyarenchi 2004:294). The point here is that the arguments regarding the condemnation of homosexuality based on African cultures are rooted in assumptions and not facts and therefore should be ignored and rejected as baseless. Nyarenchi's argument is weakened by the fact that in the tabled contestation, arguments that are claimed to be politically inspired are not presented.

Nyarenchi (2004:49) observes that an African's argument against homosexuality is ideologically based on its implicit rationalisation and justification of a particular form of heterosexuality such as polygamy while not recognising its problematic nature. This observation is consequently interpreted as reducing the morality of heterosexuality to the sexual act. This leads to the argument that what is deemed to be immoral in homosexuality is the nature of the sexual intercourse (anal sex). Within a heterosexual relationship where anal sex is preferred it is not problematised. On these bases, rejecting homosexuality in terms of anal sex depicts a patriarchal approach to defining sexuality since there is a different approach to sexual activity in lesbianism. It is unjust to limit same sex relationships to focusing only on sexual intercourse while ignoring other dimensions in a relationship. In another sense, an ideological rather than a factual view, it is observed that 'it is the tradition or rather the historical absence of a certain practice within the tradition and African trajectories that is used to deny the cultural legitimacy of that practice' (Nyarenchi 2004:51).

The absence of certain practices within tradition is utilised to argue the denial of cultural legitimacy of homosexuality. Antonio (1997:300) defines historically understood absence as being an imagined otherness or foreignness since its identity is nothing but the shadow of a reconstructed absence. In the light of the view that culture is dynamic, to deny the cultural legitimacy of homosexuality is to fix, restrict and imprison a person's ability and act of living.

Rightfully so, Nyarenchi (2004:46)¹⁸⁰ notes that people who argue that homosexuality is new in East Africa do so not with the intention of drawing attention to a historical novelty and / or reality. Instead, they argue with the intention of condemning it as immoral. Evidence of the non-existence of homosexuality in the African history and / or beginning of the realisation that homosexuality exists is not tabled by Nyarenchi. Nyarenchi's contestation is therefore invalidated.

Within the controversy Sjadu Nkomonde (<http://www.spirituality.org.za/files/DEWCOM/AFRICAN%20SEXUALITY.pdf>) from the MCSA approaches the subject of homosexuality from his perspective on African culture with specific reference to the Xhosa culture. Nkomonde (<http://www.spirituality.org.za/files/DEWCOM/AFRICAN%20SEXUALITY.pdf>) also argue that grounds for arguing for the acceptance of homosexually oriented people are found in the definition of the concept of ubuntu (humanity) as a dimension of African spirituality that directs people to belong to each other.

4.3.3 Cultural dimension that rejects homosexuality

Engaging with the non-existence of homosexuality in the East African culture, Nyarenchi begins by defining the word metonym which he then uses to depict an African understanding. A metonym is a word that carries a transferred sense by which it relates to another word, phrase or object through customary usage (Nyarenchi 2004:47). On these grounds he argues that there is no customary usage to render the putative non-existence of homosexuality in the East African culture to approximate anything immoral (Nyarenchi 2004:47). The rationale behind this rendition is that if it is said that homosexuality never existed in the African culture then it is irrational to argue against or for it from an African perspective normatively on the basis of familiarity.

Heterosexuality in the African- (South African) culture is portrayed as historically and culturally valid while homosexuality is deprived of any historical validity. The

¹⁸⁰ See Nyarenchi (2004:46). Nyarenchi's contribution to the African cultural dimension relating to homosexuality is based on manifestations of sexuality and ideologies in East Africa. Similarities between East African and South African-Xhosa manifestations and ideologies are evident and it is on these foundations that Nyarenchi's contribution is pertinent.

historical possibility of homosexuality is denied and heterosexuality is considered to be absolute (Nkomonde 2006:2). The litmus test in this regard is the historical memory transmitted by oral historians. The silence and the absence of documentation capturing the mind of the Africans play a vital role in this regard.

In his hypothesis, Nyarenchi (2004:8) maintains that the East African culture does not provide an adequate normative basis for the theological ethical evaluation of homosexuality. Contrary to Nyarenchi's perception is the affirmation by the respondents in his survey of the validity and usage of culture as a normative device in engaging with the issue of homosexuality. One of the respondents state that 'the Bible was introduced to them by the missionaries who tried to distort their African culture and therefore it is not a reliable tool to be used to evaluate homosexuality' (Nyarenchi 2004:42). This statement presupposes that RSA-Xhosa values, worldview and beliefs as embedded in cultural identity are essential in engaging with the subject of homosexuality. Culture, it is argued, should therefore form the normative basis for doing so.

It is also noted that homosexuality in the Xhosa culture is deemed unnatural, as an illegitimate sexual relationship and as a corruptor of the moral fibre of the society (Nkomonde 2006:3-7). Contrary to this argument is the understanding that African traditional societies were prone to social disruption caused by various ways in which desire was regulated in practices such as clitoridectomy, pledging of young girls to older men (child abuse), polygamy and the coercive inheritance of wives (Nyarenchi 2004:51). Compulsory heterosexuality was a political institution requiring women to be sexually available to men and sustaining their dependence on them. The patriarchal paradigm contributes to this understanding.

In the survey conducted by Nyarenchi (2004:41), the majority of Africans in East Africa maintain that homosexuality is the immoral and shameful conduct of human beings. This understanding is construed to be an African perspective shaded by the African culture. In certain African contexts, specifically in East Africa, homosexuality is deemed to be new, pagan and foreign (Nyarenchi 2004:42). Possibly, this perception emerges from an understanding that homosexuality is Western and that, when the missionaries came to Africa, they intentionally tried to change the lifestyle

of people and in this way affected the cultural life adversely. It is worthwhile to note that in Nyarenchi's survey on the issue, 11 respondents out of 221, with the majority being elderly people, said they used to hear of homosexuality being practised in specific cases such as bachelors who were attached to traditional courts or military camps and were allowed to marry young boys and treated them as their wives (Nyarenchi, 2004: 42).

Nyarenchi (2004:43-45) argues for a connection between sex and other forms of cultural experience in East African culture and the attempt to illustrate how that connection allows a discourse on East African sexuality to emerge. Buttressing this argument is an observation that issues of sex were never disembedded or isolated from culture. According to Nyarenchi (2004: 45) the form and content of desire as well as the character of its manifestation were carried out in publicly sanctioned rituals and symbols. This indicates that issues of sexuality were collectively legitimised and not regarded as an individual matter. The collective and communal construction of sexuality in RSA-Xhosa culture gives reason to reject homosexuality.

Pat Caplan (1987:2),¹⁸¹ a teacher of anthropology in London, engages the subject of the cultural construction of sexuality. In her research, a person's sexual orientation constitutes a very important part of his or her identity. Culturally, explicitly in the western culture, heterosexual relations are viewed as the norm, and homosexual relations are stigmatised. Inculturation in this sense suggests a level of adherence and conformity to the culture of a society that manifests itself in the norms and patterns of a society that are deemed to be natural. Caplan (1987:2) embraces this understanding in arguing that 'nonconformity to the norms of heterosexuality threatens the dominant ideology's view of sex as innate and natural'. Male homosexuality tampers with the superordination based on the understanding that male homosexuals adopt what are deemed to be the characteristics of a female.

From the cultural point of view, Caplan (1987:5) explores the history of sexuality with specific reference to western culture and this contributes to the understanding of inculturation. Weeks (1979:164) remarks that the word 'homosexual' was only coined

¹⁸¹ Caplan's contribution offers a western perspective and yet a culturally sensitive one. It is essential to note the resemblance of African culture and RSA-Xhosa culture.

in 1869 and did not come into common usage until the 1880s and 1890s. This historical observation does not presuppose that homosexuality prior to this time did not exist but possibly suggests that it was treated secretly as was the case in the African culture. It is contended that In the 1880s and 1890s two dimensions developed in the construction of sexuality, namely, the ‘socialisation of procreative behaviour’ and ‘psychiatrization of perverse pleasure’ (Caplan 1987:7). The first dimension propounds an entrenched trend of considering reproduction as a culturally and socially normative behaviour while the second translates into an understanding that a sexual activity is not only about procreation but also about sharing intimacy and an expression of love. Caplan (1987:8) refers to Seidler’s examination of male heterosexuality in the Western society, in which he depicts that since the Enlightenment, masculinity has been identified with reason, while femininity is thought to embody irrationality and unreason. The latter identification shapes the cultural worldview that depicts that it is forbidden for masculinity to be associated with feminine acts. On this understanding homosexuality is forbidden.

Culture is dynamic. Wilson (1983:194) captures this phenomenon in asserting that sexual identity and sexual desires are not fixed and unchanging. The reasoning behind this phenomenon is that the cultural milieu is constructed by people and that culture is dynamic.

Jeffrey Weeks (1987:35) contributes to the cultural dimension relating to homosexuality by exploring the questions of identity. Weeks’s point of departure is an exploration of the history of the concept of sexual identity. Homosexuality was historically defined as a sexual condition peculiar to some people but not others and heterosexuality was invented to describe normality (Weeks 1987:35). The categorization of the diverse manifestations of sexuality and sexual identity referred to sexual orientation as being natural or abnormal. This understanding is conceived and produced in the context of sexological studies that are informed by the culture of the respective societies. Weeks (1987:37), rightfully so, contends that sexology is not simply descriptive but prescriptive in a sense that a sexological account of sexual identity is an imposition. Sexological categorisation of different manifestations of sexual orientation is shaped by cultural milieus. Categorisation is the process of identity formation. On these grounds, homosexual identity is instituted within the

circles set by sexological categorisation and definition. Abnormalisation of homosexuality and naturalisation of heterosexuality is therefore entrenched in cultural ideologies within societies. Tentativeness in accommodating diversity is sourced from the culture of communities in order to correct sexual behaviours.

Weeks (1987:43) notes that the development of a homosexual identity is dependent on the meanings that the actor attaches to the concepts of homosexual and homosexuality. Sexual identification becomes a personal choice. Orientation and identification are influenced by the cultural milieu and setting of controls which limit the worldview of the people and their acceptance of homosexuality.

4.3.4 Conclusion

The problem of regarding culture as normative in discussing homosexuality is grounded in the argument that homosexuality is not immoral because it is culturally unacceptable. Arguments regarding the condemnation of homosexuality based on African cultures are rooted in assumptions and not facts and therefore should be ignored and rejected as baseless. The fact that in heterosexual relationships anal sex is not rejected, problematises the argument that the rejection of gay homosexuality is based on the wrongness of anal sex. The historical absence of homosexuality in African tradition and trajectories is the rationale for denying the legitimacy of the orientation. The argument that homosexuality is new in Africa and therefore to be rejected, is contested as intended to condemn it as being immoral. This contestation is invalidated by the lack of evidence of the non-existence of homosexuality in history and the unknown beginning of its manifestation in the African communities. The concept of ubuntu (humanity) that directs people to belong to each other embraces homosexuality.

If it is said that homosexuality never existed in the African culture, then it is irrational to argue against or for it from an African perspective normatively on the basis of familiarity. The silence and the absence of documentation capturing the mind of the Africans and the existence of homosexuality play a vital role in rejecting it. Understanding RSA-Xhosa values, worldview and beliefs as embedded in the cultural identity are essential in engaging with the subject of homosexuality. Therefore it is

argued that culture should then form the normative basis for engaging with the issues of homosexuality. Homosexuality in the RSA-Xhosa culture is deemed as unnatural, as an illegitimate sexual relationship and as a corruptor of the moral fibre of the society. Furthermore, the rejection of homosexuality also emerges from the perception that homosexuality is Western as well as the collective and communal construction of sexuality in African culture. A level of adherence and conformity to the culture of a society manifests itself in the norms and patterns of a society that are deemed to be natural; hence, homosexuality is demonstrative of this. The rejection of homosexuality is based on the contestation that male homosexuals adopt a role or stance that is deemed to be characteristic of a female. The socialisation of procreative behaviour propounds an entrenched trend of taking reproduction as a cultural and social normative behaviour. Categorisation of diverse manifestations of sexuality and sexual identity depict the labelling of sexual orientation as natural or abnormal. Abnormalisation of homosexuality and naturalisation of heterosexuality is therefore entrenched in cultural ideologies in societies. Tentativeness to accommodate diversity is sourced by the culture of communities to correct sexual behaviours. The identification of orientation is influenced by cultural milieus while its cultural setting controls and limits people's worldview and acceptance of homosexuality. An interpretation of Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13 as rejecting homosexuality is embraced by cultural dimensions of RSA-Xhosa.

4.4 Honour and shame concept among RSA-Xhosas

4.4.1 Introduction

In this section the author discusses how the RSA-Xhosa perception and response to homosexuality is grounded in the honour and shame concept. Allusions are made to gender role constructions in RSA-Xhosa culture.

4.4.2 Honour and shame ideology

The honour and shame ideology contributes to the reaction and response to homosexuality in the RSA context. Within the black communities, particularly in the Xhosa ethnic group, there is evidence of an ideological pattern of this nature. The

honour of men and women is defined according to their respective gender roles as constructed by the culture of the people. The male figure is expected to protect, love, and manage his family as the head of the household (<http://www.everyculture.com/wc/Rwanda-to-Syria/Xhosa.htm>). By the same token the female figure is expected to raise the children, take care of the household duties and to be submissive (<http://www.encounter.co.za/article/126.html>). Failure to uphold these expectations is deemed to be shameful. Within this social and culturally shaped honour and shame ideology, one detects an emphasis being placed on ‘headship’, ‘production and raising of children’ and distinct responsibilities which are categorically gender shaped.

Since an African response to homosexuality is grounded in cultural ideologies, critical questions regarding headship, production and the allocation of responsibilities are posed: For the purpose of order, who is the head of the family unit of a homosexual? How does reproduction by means of sexual intercourse manifest itself between gays and lesbians? How could they raise children in such a manner that it embraces the cultural values in the African-South African context? How do homosexual relationships embrace the linkage of gender and responsibility as valued in the RSA-Xhosa context?

Gender roles are culturally and socially determined. Every society has its own assumptions about how biological men and women should feel, dress, act and work. These are the cultural norms for feminine and masculine behaviour evident in all human beings. In most societies in South Africa men are considered superior to women and are expected to play dominant roles. In these patriarchal societies, masculine characteristics (such as competitiveness) and roles assigned to men are considered superior and are valued above those of females whose characteristics and roles are considered feminine (e.g. nurturing).

4.4.3 Conclusion

Objection to homosexuality is manifested the context of RSA-Xhosa culture and in the gender role constructions, specifically. The honour of men is jeopardised when subscribing to homosexuality and therefore rejection of homosexuality manifest itself.

4.5 Cultural construction of marriage in the RSA-Xhosa culture and its implications

4.5.1 Introduction

Comprehension of marriage dynamics in the RSA-Xhosa culture is crucial in discussing the issue of homosexuality. Same-Sex relationships alongside marriage are to be construed as being constructed by RSA-Xhosas within the parameters of their culture. The approach to the discussion of homosexuality and / or perception of homosexuality is informed and shaped by the understanding of marriage as it translates itself in the RSA-Xhosa culture. Hence, it remains pertinent to engage in the cultural construction of marriage and its implications to the discussion of homosexuality.

In speaking of RSA-Xhosa culture, the assumption that has to be clarified is that only one set of cultural norms exist among the Xhosas, be it rural or urban or in terms of the young and the old. The western world exerts a very strong influence on the upcoming generation. The modern Xhosa person in the city does not necessarily follow all the cultural practices of the Xhosas owing to the changing views regarding culture. Furthermore, the rise of the liberation of women and the influence of civilization has led many to abandon long standing cultural traditions in favour of the western ways. Speaking of Xhosa culture is to rather refer to the dominant cultural practices as observed by those Xhosas who have not been influenced by the western world. For RSA-Xhosas, marriage is sacred and is highly respected by individuals coming into the relationship. It is characterized by the many customs and rituals which prepare the individual physically and emotionally for the relationship.

4.5.2 *Rites of passage* related to marriage

4.5.2.1 Umeluko

Umeluko is the rite of passage for a male. When the family elders deem it appropriate and the right time, the boy (inkwenkwe) goes to initiation school where he is taught

about being a man (indoda). It is here that the male spends about a month in training regarding the customs of the family and the ways of his forefathers (<http://www.africanvoices.cp.za/culture/circumcision.htm>). Ancestors are engaged in this rite of passage and play the role of blessing the boy who enters into adulthood. He is also taught responsibility after which he finally undergoes circumcision. It is a joyous occasion for him as this is the practice of initiating him into manhood. As he returns home, he is now seen as a man and is no longer a boy. He has been advised and even prepared for marriage when the time comes.

In this rite of passage the principles of manhood are entrenched. Manhood becomes the proud and important, integral part of the community and the construction of personality. A male adult who did not pass through this rite of passage is excluded from the circles of men and is deemed to be a boy. Not going to the initiation school becomes taboo. On the basis of this entrenched ideology a male who assumes the characteristics and responsibilities of the female is excluded and not affirmed. Homosexuality is rejected on the grounds of the ideology of manhood which is constructed through the said rite of passage.

4.5.2.2 Intonjane

When a girl reaches puberty, a celebration called intonjane is held (<http://www.africanvoices.cp.za/culture/circumcision.htm>). It is here that she is taught by the elders in her family how to behave as a young lady, on how to look after herself, her responsibilities as a young woman and how to act in the company of young men. This custom and teaching lays the foundation for the type of wife which she will become and her understanding of being a woman. The understanding of a woman stands in contrast to the image of a female homosexual person. Intonjane signifies a woman's exit from childhood and entry into adulthood.

Understanding this rite of passage in the discussion of homosexuality is pertinent. Ancestors play the role of blessing the life and the future of the young woman. Culturally constructed moral behaviour infiltrates the development of the young woman. The ideology of gender role distribution is entrenched. The community constructed role of the female makes it inconceivable to accept homosexuality in the Xhosa culture.

4.5.2.3 Lobola

Lobola is a token of love, which is given by the groom to the father of the bride: the amount depends on the latter (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/marriage>). In some instances it comprises money while in others it consists of cows, depending on the preference of the bride's family. Lobola represents the joining of the two families as one and is also a means by which the groom thanks the bride's family for their upbringing of his soon to be wife. Parents of the couple bless the couple as they embark on building their family. Statements such as 'ichume intsimi yenu' (let your field be fertile) are uttered. The significance of this statement is that a couple is given the blessing of production and / or child bearing. Allusions to child bearing and/or production make it impossible to accept homosexuality. An involvement of the families in this integral part of a marriage makes it difficult to accept and embrace same sex unions.

4.5.2.4 Utsiki

Utsiki is a ritual that takes place when a woman is married.¹⁸² The groom's family slaughters a goat for the bride, A large chunk of meat is given to the woman with the instruction that she finishes it on her own. This instruction signifies that she will attend to her problems as a wife and should not share them with anyone. The problems to be faced by her relate to the female gender roles that are expected in an RSA-Xhosa household. The woman is then introduced to the ancestors and accepted as a member of the family. These gender roles and the significance of the introduction of a woman (the bride) to the man's (the groom's) ancestors underlie the rationale for rejecting homosexuality in the Xhosa culture.

4.5.3 Purpose of marriage in a Xhosa culture

Marriage is ideologically constructed to fulfil various purposes in the Xhosa culture. Amongst these is that marriage is viewed as one of the ways of proving and affirming the manhood of an individual. By his marrying, the dignity of the man is affirmed in and by the community. A man is respected as a result of circumcision, the ability to

¹⁸² This ritual was noted when my wife was being accepted as a member of my family.

pay lobola and the ability to provide for his family. Marriage also fulfils the purpose of building a family or household.¹⁸³ Another purpose of marriage is that of child bearing and rearing. It is imperative for the married couple to produce children.¹⁸⁴ Failure to produce children shames the couple, especially the woman. With the emphasis placed on child bearing, marriage makes available a platform for ensuring the continued existence of the family and the family name. Children who are born carry the name of the clan and / or family.¹⁸⁵ Children are also expected to ensure the continuing existence of the family and / or family identity in their generation.

4.5.4 Gender roles in the marriage relationship

The relationship between the parents wields a strong influence on the children in the family and may contribute to the incidences of divorce in families. Gender roles are thus passed down from generation to generation and the cycle gender role construction is very difficult to end. It is worthy to note that in the present context gender roles are not viewed as being oppressive but rather as the way of life; it is the natural order of life that each gender should perform a particular task. It is noted that the early missionaries to the South of Africa, made the following comment: ‘The head of a family in a particular kraal is a man of moderate means and influence. This is indicated by the fact that he has three wives, for whom he has paid dowry in cattle. The principal wife occupies the centre hut. Unless it is hunting season or a quarrel with some neighbouring community, there is little to occupy the hands of men, they are much concerned about what they should put on, their only garment being a sheepskin Karos. The women folk felt most of the duties of the home, they cared for the children, cooked the food prepared the beer for the consumption of their lord and his companions, and did most of the hoeing of the land’ (Jafta, Maluleke & Mogashoa 2001:71). It is clear from this extract that the role of the woman is to look after the house and children and to keep the family happy whilst the man is the provider.

¹⁸³ In my marriage, a relationship between my in-laws and my family was built.

¹⁸⁴ In my presence my wife was told this by my grandmother and her name will remain undisclosed in this research.

¹⁸⁵ My clan name is ‘Bhele’ and was carried through generations.

These clearly defined roles are still operational amongst rural and urban Xhosa people. Whilst a woman can take a job and also contribute financially, it is still considered as her duty to take care of the household despite the sharing of the role of providing. Each society has its own view with regard to gender roles, thus gender roles are social constructs which people choose to own and adhere to instead of re-evaluating and resisting these (Kretzschmar & Van Schalkwyk 2000:18).

4.5.5 Role players in the marriage relationship

4.5.5.1 Extended family

The life of an African is communal. A person does not live for him or herself nor does he or she die as an individual. The concept of Umntu ngumntu ngabantu (a person is a person by and / or through other person/s) defines the communal life of African-Xhosas. Since life is communal, an individual almost automatically becomes integrated into a network of mutual relationships with the community. The totality of life boils down to the maintenance of dynamic relationships with one's extended family, one's clan or tribe, one's ancestors, nature and God (Kruger, Lubbe & Steyn 2002:35).

The extended family acts as a support structure for persons in a marriage relationship.¹⁸⁶ The couple can consult the senior members of the extended family to seek advice on any marital problems. It is noteworthy that both the husband and wife have a difficult task proving themselves to the other parties' family.¹⁸⁷ A wife needs to prove her ability to be a good wife who can build a warm and loving home. The husband on the other hand needs to display and prove the ability to take care of and provide for the family. In a way, the extended family can add pressure to the marriage relationship. When two people marry, they also marry into the family. The wife and husband carry the responsibility to provide for the extended families if the need arises; this may even imply financial support.

¹⁸⁶ Support has been experience from my in-laws.

¹⁸⁷ This teaching was given to us by ma parents and in-laws in my marriage ceremony

4.5.5.2 Ancestors

The belief in ancestral spirits is very common in Africa. Ancestors are seen as the living dead. They are involved in the life of the communities by directing the community, speaking to it, communicating with it and appearing to it. Ancestors also serve the role of maintaining the ways of the fathers (Gehman 1987:150).

It is believed that people are married and bear offspring so as to be remembered by them (<http://www.shamanicjourney.com/article/6148/Xhosa-tribe-of-south-africa-bantu-ancestry>).¹⁸⁸ People, when dead, become and / or are made ancestors by means of a ritual performed to bring them back to the lives of the people. People who do not have children to remember them slowly fade away and are forgotten (Kruger, Lubbe & Steyn 2002:34). This once again proves the value of children. Ancestors enjoy the privilege of being remembered on family occasions and in decision making processes. On the other hand, the living members of the family depend upon the ancestors for direction, guidance and prosperity. In the marriage relationship, ancestors are consulted for decisions. Incense is occasionally burnt if problems occur. Their role is one of consultation, the removal of ibadi (bad luck) and they are venerated. The ancestral spirits make their appearance through the family totem.

As previously mentioned, the new bride is introduced to the new family through a ritual called tsiki. It is in this ritual that the introduction to the family¹⁸⁹ ancestors is made. After the woman is introduced to the ancestors, she is then considered a full member of the family and her husband's ancestors become hers. The role of the ancestors in the marriage understood in this way further supports the rejection of homosexuality.

4.5.6 Influence of colonization and early missionary methods

The influence of colonization in Africa has left its mark even amongst the Xhosa people. John Bauer (1994:421) observes that in the eyes of the colonizing Europeans, the RSA-Xhosas were savages who needed to be civilized. For colonists or

¹⁸⁸ Kruger, Lubbe & Steyn (2002:34) share the same sentiments.

¹⁸⁹ The groom's family is being referred to in this instance.

missionaries, African culture did not exist but, rather, tribal customs, no religion but only foolish superstitions and devilish cults. With this approach, the colonizers came into Africa and labelled RSA-Xhosa culture as barbaric. The colonizers failed to see the work of God already at work in Africa-South Africa and transported a Eurocentric Christianity clothed in the garments of the West which failed to afford proper regard for RSA-Xhosa culture. RSA-Xhosa culture has always been interlinked with religion.¹⁹⁰ All of life was linked with uThixo (God) but when the colonizers arrived, a dualism was created. No longer was the way a partner treated his or her spouse considered to be pleasing to God. Home life became separated from the church life. Whilst the family was considered the primary congregation, it is no longer the case because of the increasing dualism.

The current state of affairs is such that the upcoming generation has rejected most of the cultural practices with regards to marriage in favour of the western practices. Those who experience a strong influence on their lives by the charismatic Churches are told to leave the evil practices of their culture. Certain Christians hide their involvement in cultural activities lest they be questioned by the Church. It is difficult for an RSA-Xhosa to break away from the teachings of his or her forefathers with regards to their cultural activities. The question that arises is; why should Xhosas choose between culture and religion?

This may all be traced back to the methods of the missionary which infiltrated the RSA-Xhosa culture. All the customs of traditional RSA-Xhosa marriages were prohibited by the missionaries, including polygamy, bride wealth, and a host of associated practices (Fiedler 1996:8). It is clear that there was some failure on the part of the missionaries with regards to inculturation. Today RSA-Xhosa are still faced with the problem of choosing and distinguishing between culture and religion. In the rejection of homosexuality there is an objective response to colonisation. Colonisation is deemed to be the vehicle to reject RSA-Xhosa beliefs and practices.

To the outsider every culture has certain advantages and disadvantages. For example, a feminist theologian would view the RSA-Xhosa culture as being oppressive. Gender

¹⁹⁰ This religion is mostly termed African Traditional Religion.

roles are perceived as restricting, patriarchal and unethical. Feminism has emerged out of the realization that people live in a traditionally male dominated world in which women have been devalued at work, home and in society (De Gruchy & Villa-Vicencio 1994:148). The marriage relationship in the RSA-Xhosa culture raises the ire of any feminist theologian.

The dilemma is that most people are opposed to feminism, especially when it disturbs the traditional way of running a RSA-Xhosa household (De Gruchy & Villa-Vicencio 1994:148). Feminism is regarded as a Western teaching which plays the role of disturbing the family unit. Thus, many people would not even want to hear of women's rights, which mean that the cycle of oppression is given room to expand into the next generation. The issue here is how one convinces someone that they are oppressed when they do not feel, or see, oppression?

The perspectives of feminist theologians have cast different thoughts on gender roles. Biblically speaking, people were created equal and in the light of gender roles we are breaking this code of creation and deeming some as having been created for the purpose of procreation and others not. The main difference between men and women is that men can impregnate and women can bear children. The main gender difference between men and women is that women as a group are accorded a lower status than men (Kretzschmar & Van Schalkwyk 2000:17). Despite the simply biological difference between women and men, the privileges enjoyed by each of these are very different and unequal. Gender roles should be influenced by social change. At a time when the man is not the only bread winner in a home, the gender roles should be re-evaluated. Feminist ideologies have not been fully embraced in the RSA-Xhosa culture and are seen as being western and colonialist in nature. The rejection of homosexuality also translates into the rejection of RSA-Xhosa beliefs and practices in the name of feminist activism.

4.5.7 Conclusion

Homosexuality is rejected on the grounds of the Xhosa ideology of manhood. A community constructed portrait of a man and his personality is central to the rejection of homosexuality. The intonjana (female initiation) custom and teaching lays the

foundation for the type of wife that a woman will become and her understanding of being a woman, a notion which contrasts with the image of a female homosexual. The community constructed image of a female person makes it inconceivable to accept homosexuality in the RSA-Xhosa culture. Gender role distribution and culturally constructed ideal moral behaviour endorsed in the RSA-Xhosa culture are entrenched in the portrait or character of a female person.

Allusions to child bearing or production in the lobola ritual make it impossible to accept homosexuality. The involvement of the families in this (lobola), the role of the wife and the requirement for her to adopt her husband's ancestors further contribute to the said argument. Colonisation, westernisation and feminist ideologies were also considered as grounds for the rejection of homosexuality.

4.6 Conclusion

The problem of regarding culture as normative in discussing homosexuality is based on the argument that homosexuality is not immoral on the grounds that it is culturally unacceptable. Arguments for the condemnation of homosexuality based on African cultures are rooted in assumptions and not facts and therefore should be ignored and rejected as baseless. The fact that anal sex in heterosexual relationships is not rejected problematises the argument that the rejection of homosexuality is based on the wrongness of anal sex. The historical absence of homosexuality in African tradition and trajectories represents the rationale for denying the legitimacy of such an orientation. The argument that homosexuality is new in Africa and must therefore be rejected, should be accepted only with the intention of condemning it as being immoral. This contestation is invalidated by the lack of evidence of the non-existence of homosexuality in history and the beginning of its manifestation in the African communities. The concept of ubuntu (humanity) directs people to belong to each other, and embraces homosexuality to some extent.

If it is said that homosexuality has never existed in the African culture, then it is irrational to argue against or for it normatively on the basis of familiarity from an African perspective. The silence and the absence of documentation capturing the thought form of the Africans and the existence of homosexuality plays a vital role in

rejecting it. African values, worldviews and beliefs as embedded in the African culture are essential in engaging with the subject of homosexuality. Culture, it is argued, should consequently form the normative basis for engaging with the issues of homosexuality. Homosexuality in the African culture is deemed as unnatural, as an illegitimate sexual relationship and as a corruptor of the moral fibre of society. Further arguments regarding the rejection of homosexuality in the Xhosa culture were discussed.

An ideology of honour and shame also contributes to the reaction and response to homosexuality in the RSA context. Homosexuality is also rejected on the grounds of the ideology of manhood, which is constructed through and / or by the rite of passage of Umeluko (male initiation) as well as intonjana (female initiation).

Allusions to child bearing or the reproduction in the lobola ritual make it impossible to accept homosexuality. The involvement of families in this (lobola) and the significance of their ancestors in the marriage forms ground for the objection of homosexuality. The specific roles assigned to the husband and wife in pursuit of smooth running of the household form bases to reject homosexuality.

Marriage is seen as one of the ways of proving and affirming the manhood and womanhood of an individual in the RSA-Xhosa culture. Marriage also fulfils the purpose of creating a family or household while it is imperative for the married couple/s to produce children. Failure to produce children shames the couple and especially the woman. The concept of marriage precludes the acceptance of homosexuality.

Colonisation and the rejection of RSA-Xhosa beliefs and practices as well as feminist ideologies were also discussed. Objecting homosexuality is rejecting colonisation and its contribution in disregard for RSA-Xhosa cultural identity. The rejection of RSA - Xhosa beliefs and practices in the name of feminist activism, as far as the construction of gender roles is concerned, conceived the rejection of homosexuality. In the RSA-Xhosa culture homosexuality is rejected. Acceptance of homosexuality contradicts RSA-Xhosa cultural identity.

Chapter 5

Synthesis

5.1 Introduction

In this chapter the actuality and problem statement is re-articulated. The aims and objectives of this study are mentioned. The research methodology is re-tabulated. Chapter division is re-stated with the aim to draw attention to the formulation of the synthesis. A dialogue between the findings stemming from the MCSA discussions, the exegesis of Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13 and the dimensions of Africanisation and inculturation are synthetically presented. Final conclusions are made. The hypothesis of the study is re-tabulated with the aim to confirm the results of the study.

5.1.1 Actuality and the problem statement

The topic on homosexuality is one of the burning issues raised in present day South Africa. The critical questions that are posed are: what does the Bible say about homosexuality and how does the Bible inform our understanding of God's view on this issue? What guidance does the Bible offer regarding the issue? The way Scripture is interpreted will influence one's attempt at answering these questions.

The state's legislation on marriage has pressed the church with moral, theological and pastoral challenges. Adopting an informed position is a matter of urgency for the MCSA. Failure to conduct an informed and guided dialogue towards mutual understanding and / or compromise in the Church has the potential for dividing her. The Wesley Quadrilateral (Scripture, tradition, reason and experience) approach utilised in the MCSA has its own limitations, which include being restricted as regards tradition, not having adequate access to African culture and not doing justice to Scripture. The critical area in addressing the controversy of homosexuality in the MCSA is the interpretation of the Scriptures. It is not being handled with care and justice is not done to the interpretation of the Bible.

Reading Leviticus 18:22; 20:13 and Romans 1:26-27 literally as objecting homosexuality, fails to be aware of the historical and cultural distance between the 21st century and the times of text production. It is also in this regard that Africanisation is vital in engaging Scripture and the issue of homosexuality. The inconsistency in accepting and / or rejecting biblical texts creates injustice in the interpretation of Scripture. Some sanctioned sexual mores in Scripture are not adhered to in modern times, which include the punishment of adultery by stoning (Deut 22:22) and the prohibition of sexual intercourse during a menstrual period (Lev 18:19, 29).

The Hebrew Bible does not make reference to, and hence does not condemn, homosexuality as a sexual orientation (Stiebert and Walsh 2001:119-152). Homosexuality is in contrast to nature in that it involves an unnatural indulgence in pleasure, in that it does not involve procreation and that it places the male partner in the role of the female, thus demeaning and weakening him.

There is certainly no doubt about the objection to homosexuality as reflected in Genesis 19 and in legal provisions in Leviticus 18:20 and 20:13 and the view that these absolute prohibitions of homosexuality remained the law of God (Ukleja 1983:259-266). From an evangelical Christian perspective it is argued that homosexual conduct is sinful, a threat to and violation of the social, religious and cosmic order, a violation of the order of creation and a desecration of the image of God (Wold 1998:238).

Injunctions against male homosexuality in the Hebrew Bible are aimed at cultic prostitution supposedly practised by non-Israelites but the historical basis for this claim has been questioned.

In academic circles within both the past and the recent, MCSA discussions, exegesis of Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13 and African hermeneutics have not been studied synthetically in addressing homosexuality.

5.1.2 Aims and objectives

The following are the aims and objectives of this research:

- Critic the MCSA's position; study the Church's policy, doctrines and her understanding of her mission; investigate the application of the Wesley Quadrilateral and discuss ideological contestations from MCSA persons.
- Analyse Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13 with the aid of Literary Criticism, Textual Criticism, Canonical Criticism, Composition and Redaction Criticism and Social-Scientific Criticism.
- Discuss socio-scientific dimension of RSA; discuss African culture and tradition religious experiences; explore the honour and shame concept in RSA-Xhosa and analyse the cultural construction of marriage in RSA-Xhosa culture.
- Synthesise the conclusions drawn from the analysis of the said discussion, the investigation of dimensions of africanisation and inculturation and the analysis of Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13 in discussing the issue of homosexuality within the MCSA.

5.1.3 Research methodology

This is a literature and exegetical study.

Exploring the traditions of biblical world and of primal people in parallel with those of modern people is commendable in the world of biblical scholars. In this investigation a fusing of the MCSA's readings as an interpretation model with the exegesis (literary-historical investigation) of the texts in discussion and with African hermeneutics is intended in discussing homosexuality.

5.1.4 Chapter division

Chapter 1 is an introduction and outlines the study by stating the actuality and the problem statement synthetically; aims and objectives; research methodology and hypothesis of the study.

Chapter 2 presents a study on the MCSA approach on homosexuality. The MCSA position, doctrines and mission are discussed. Contributions from the MCSA academics are explored.

Chapter 3 comprises of an analysis of Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13. Such as analysis shed light into the discussion of homosexuality.

Chapter 4 presents deductions from dimensions of Africanisation and inculturation in the discussion of homosexuality. RSA-Xhosa culture is the main focus in exploring dimensions of Africanisation and inculturation.

Chapter 5 presents an interaction between the MCSA discussions, an analysis of Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13 and dimensions of africanisation. An indication for further investigation is presented.

5.2 Synthesis - Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13 and MCSA discussion

The argument that Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13 do not refer to homosexuality presents a problem in regarding Scripture as the supreme rule of faith and practice. Acceptance and / or rejection of homosexuality cannot be based on Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13.

תועבה (abomination) relates the narrative of Genesis 19 to the law in Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13. The argument that the Hebrew Bible, and specifically Genesis 19 and Judges 19, does not make reference to and hence does not condemn homosexuality as a sexual orientation is evident. It is also argued that Genesis 19 and Judges 19 are concerned with maleness (in terms of the social value system and conventional construction of masculinity). Male rape was also employed to signify the victory over foreign enemies in wars. Male rape supports the idea of male intercourse with other males. By the same token, in the context of the wars at the time the men of Sodom became suspicious and wanted to display their masculinity to the intruders. This was done with the intention of penetrating them and therefore humiliating them. When reading this social dimension into Genesis 19 one captures a sense that sexual intercourse with the men who were Lot's visitors was meant to ill-treat them in their capacity as foreigners. Lot's reaction to the request for credentials could not constitute

an offering of his daughter with sexually related connotations, therefore the argument that the word ‘know’ does not have sexual connotations is not valid.

The interpretation of Lot’s offering of his daughters in place of his male guest as being his prerogative to protect the male honour of his guests according to the law of hospitality supports the interpretation of Genesis 19 as not referring to homosexuality or a homosexual orientation. Intertextual investigation reads and appropriates this understanding into Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13. On these grounds the act of sexual abuse of foreigners is condoned in Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13 rather than homosexuality. Based on this understanding that there is no reference to homosexuality in Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13, arguments alluding to Scripture for and/or against homosexuality are invalid. The literary context of Genesis 19 depicts instances of hospitality and this context supports the association of Genesis 19 with hospitality. Genesis 19 and Judges 19 are both preceded by stories of hospitality. This literary context of Genesis 19 and Judges 19 presupposes that the issue in these texts is hospitality and humiliation of foreign men by placing them in a position of being sexual objects rather than that of homosexuality.

Matthew 10:14-15 seems to interpret Genesis 19 as being concerned with hospitality in his allusion to Sodom and Gomorrah. The issue of hospitality is also referred to in Luke 10:12 while Romans 9:29 allude to the Sodom story; therefore the issue in Genesis 19 and Judges 19 is again one of hospitality.

Socio-Scientific Criticism and intertextual investigation reveal that Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13 with reference to other texts concern the ill-treatment and humiliation of foreigners; deal with hospitality and the intention to demonstrate power over foreigners and not homosexual orientation. This reading renders Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13 irrelevant and inapplicable in accepting and / or rejecting homosexuality.

A constructive dialogue between the MCSA’s readings of Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13 and the interpretation of certain scholars is pertinent. Homosexuality cannot be addressed if the issue of an ethic of interpretation is not engaged, which itself also constitutes a response to the problem concerning the historical gap between the

ancient biblical world and that of the 21st century MCSA. Prejudices constitute the link between the ancient text and current interpreter. A responsible use of the Bible is possible only when prejudices conform to the ways in which responsibility should qualify Christian ethics in general.

A literal approach to Scripture is an irresponsible interpretation of it because it fails to recognise the historical and cultural distance between the time of the production of the text and the 21st century MCSA; hence the voices that reject homosexuality are ignorant in terms of this approach. A study on the ancient world at the time of the writing of these texts (Lev 18:22 and 20:13) suggests that there was no evidence of homosexual orientation. Homosexual orientation as a term was coined in 1869. Same-Sex sexual relations and intercourse in particular, were not construed as an orientation. The interpretation of Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13 as not referring to homosexual orientation does not conflict with the understanding of the scientific age and the differentiation between orientation and the sexual act itself. A literal reading of Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13 as rejecting homosexuality in the MCSA circles is not convincing; hence, it is an irresponsible interpretation of Scripture. Historical and literary investigation and its contribution to the study of biblical texts is not taken into account and recommended in the DEWCOM document as well as in the contributions of the clergy of the MCSA. This disregard devalues the supposed approach to the debate in terms of the study of Scripture.

The mind of the MCSA that is reflected in the mission imperative projects the following findings: Homosexual persons do have a relationship with God. The rejection of homosexual persons contradicts the essence of the imperative of evangelism and church growth. The rejection of homosexual people does not embrace and subscribe to the value of justice, unity and reconciliation. The building of the home environment and the nation could require the eradication of prejudice and the rejection of homosexual persons. All people can be called to the ministry irrespective of sexual orientation. The historical witness of the church as embedded in Scripture is not dynamic and cannot be re-shaped by the changing experiences of Christians. The rejection of homosexuality and the ministry of the homosexual contradict the spirit and essence of the MCSA policy and mission imperative. The spirit and the sense of the MCSA policy is not to reject homosexuality. There are no grounds for arguing

against the membership and ministry of homosexually oriented people. An interpretation of Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13 as condemning homosexuality does not harmonise with the policy of the MCSA and its mission imperatives. Based on these reasons, the condemnation of homosexuality based on the interpretation of Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13 is not affirmed in this study.

The position of the MCSA, as reflected in the 2007 Conference resolution on homosexuality embraces the idea of a consultative dialogue. It is biased in the sense that it is self protective and not prophetic. The MCSA strives to maintain unity while it aspires to embrace the celebration of diversity, which exposes the ignorance behind the MCSA resolution and renders the interpretation of Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13 irrelevant and inapplicable. The said resolution ignores the existence of irresponsible interpretations and approaches to Scripture. The conviction of the quest to maintain unity drives the MCSA to interpret Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13 as not rejecting and forbidding homosexuality. The differing contestations that reject homosexuality do not find ground and do not embrace the reception of this MCSA conviction.

The application of Literary Criticism to these texts reflects an interpretation of Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13 as disclosing the motive of family orderliness and therefore the rejection of homosexuality. This reading is irrelevant because the MCSA exists within a society with alternatives with supportive structures available for child development in an environment shared with homosexuals. A life affirming socialisation of a child in the development stages might be argued to be commendable. On this ground, the objection to homosexuality is lifted. By the same token, it is relevant because it guards against an unbalanced gender role social environment. There appear to be limited arguments with regards to the rejection of homosexuality on the grounds of family values and relationships. The rationale of enhancing family values and relationships in terms of the reading of the said Scriptures is not satisfactorily embraced in the voices of the MCSA. Furthermore, in this context, the rejection of homosexuality is based on the motif of enhancing family life and finds favour in the MCSA based on the advocacy for the development of a child in a family environment free from homosexuality.

Textual Criticism indicates that Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13 reject homosexual acts with reference to Israel's neighbours and their cultic practices to foreign gods. The said verses seem to foster religious consecration and isolation. This reading is irrelevant in the current MCSA context because the MCSA lives in a global and interfaith world. Religious isolation is not commendable as an option. On the other hand, being located in the global and interfaith context does not necessitate subscription to other external principles and values, nor does it necessitate losing independent identity. Global and interfaith contexts embrace diversity, which, at this point, also implies freedom to accept homosexuality or reject it with respect to the opposing voices and contestations.

An emphasis on religious purity and the exclusive worship of יהוה amidst the worship of other gods, is depicted in these readings. Sexual acts attached to and associated with a foreign religious cult are rejected. The relation of Leviticus 18:22 to verses 6-17 discloses the motive of family orderliness which underlies Leviticus 18:22. The association of Leviticus 18:22 (Same-Sex intercourse) and Leviticus 18:23 (sexual intercourse with an animal) suggests a concern for the confusion and violation of what is believed to be natural and orderly. Voices that argue for the rejection of homosexuality based on the understanding of it being an unnatural order of sexual relations and intercourse would find the concerns of confusion and violation making sense. Leviticus 18:20-23 constituting the immediate context of Leviticus 18:22 suggest the possibility of Leviticus 18:22, pointing to the cultic practice of foreign nations, the violation of order and the defilement stemming from the sexual act.

Leviticus 20:26 and the concept of consecration or holiness is emphasised as the basis on which to argue against homosexuality, which is in harmony with the religious communities' pursuit of holiness. This link is made impossible by the inability to provide a sound rationale to define homosexuality as a sin.

Allusions are made to the procreative purpose of sexual intercourse and sexual relations in the MCSA circles, hence the rejection of homosexuality based on the understanding that the interpretation of Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13 refers to homosexuality as denying the procreative complementarity of males and females. The

term ‘unnatural’ (Rom 1:26) appears to be understood as an anatomical reference and the denial of the procreative complementarity of male and female. St Paul’s theology of Same-Sex intercourse seems to be shaped by the procreation ideology as in Genesis 1 and 2 and the legislation in Leviticus 20:13. At one level the word ‘natural’ implies that coitus with the motives of mutual and pleasurable stimulation deemed to be unnatural.

An evolving understanding and practice of sexual intercourse indicates that the purpose of intercourse is not merely procreation but also intimacy. Hence, an interpretation of Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13 as rejecting homosexuality on the grounds of procreation is inappropriate, inapplicable and irrelevant in the present South Africa and MCSA. The MCSA in the construction of her policy responds to contextual analysis which projects realities and societal perceptions. In the 21st century South African societal and ecclesial contexts, sexual intercourse is also deemed to serve the purpose of intimacy. This progressive perspective which has developed throughout centuries makes it difficult to accept the rejection of homosexuality on the argued basis of the absoluteness of the procreation objective. The purpose of procreation is not invalidated nor is sexual intercourse limited to reproduction. Intertextual investigation reveals that Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13 was interpreted by St Paul in the New Testament world as condemning homosexuality on the basis that it does not fulfil procreation. However, this reading is relevant because it protects the natural order of things and the divine command of procreation as recorded by the ancient composer and redactor. Nevertheless, sexual intercourse as fulfilling the objective and purpose of procreation is deemed to be the natural order, an objective not to be devalued.

The honour and shame theory expresses itself in the perception that males assuming female characteristics and roles were shamed. On occasion, the motif of homosexual intercourse between males was to shame the penetrated male. While this theory also underpins the rejection of homosexuality in the said readings of Leviticus, they do not find a basis in the MCSA. Such treatment of people is not embraced, particularly from the perspective of the MCSA policy which upholds the dignity of all people.

Thoughts presented as a result of the study in terms of the scientific age show that the idea of homosexuality as an orientation is relatively new and its occurrence is not by choice. Thoughts that stem from the MCSA discussion welcomes the argument that homosexuality refer to an orientation and is not referred to in Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13. Therefore homosexuality is not to be objected to and / or accepted based on the interpretation of Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13.

5.3 Synthesis - Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13 and dimensions of Africanisation

Africanisation in the context of African hermeneutics views the consistency in accepting and / or rejecting biblical texts not as creating injustice in interpreting the texts but as justifiable. Reading Scripture in an African context poses the question of the relevance and appropriateness of an ancient Jewish text in the modern context. Are the findings from the historical and literary study of Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13 relevant and applicable to the current MCSA context?

The first challenge is that the text is to be relevant to the African civilisation; a way of living that is shaped and governed by African tradition and customs. There should be connections between the world of the ancient writings and the world of the 21st century in the context of RSA-Xhosas. The gap between these two different worlds has to be bridged with the questions regarding the relevancy of the text. It is my view that dimensions of Africanisation should not be read into Scripture, but rather that a dialogue should take place with the view of appropriating ancient texts for the present RSA-Xhosa community.

The position that culture does not provide a normative basis for its diagnosis as being politically and ideologically inspired minimises the value of reading Scripture through an African eye, and remains disputed. Scripture must be applicable to the context of the society. The context and the Bible have to speak to each other with a view to transformation. Disregard for an African dimension when reading the Bible disregards the significance of and the need for transformation. The position that culture does not provide a normative basis is buttressed by the rejection of homosexuality in RSA-Xhosa culture which is based on assumptions and not facts, implicit rationalisation and justification of certain forms of heterosexuality which are ethically not ideal, for

example, polygamy. Arguing for a context-oriented approach to Scripture does not necessitate a disregard for africanisation and inculturation.

In the light of the geographical dimensions, the diversity of RSA and her constitution, Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13 would be appropriate if understood as not necessarily referring to an anti-homosexual orientation and if the readings are affirmed as not rejecting homosexuality thus rendering such rejection nonsensical.

The evident human rights culture in RSA which is buttressed by the inclusion of the prohibition of discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation challenges the understanding of Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13 as being opposed to homosexual orientation. Thus, if interpreted as such, becomes irrelevant. Such an interpretation is in contrast to the fundamental principles of building a just community that are characterised by respect for the rights of people and the elimination of discrimination. The value of Ubuntu (humanity) in the light of the said reading, problematises the construed abomination of homosexuality and advocates for the acceptance of homosexually oriented people. People are directed to belong to each other and be in relation to each other, irrespective of their differences. The RSA-Xhosa perception of Scripture is shaped by its socio-scientific dimensions. Consequently, both the acceptance and rejection of homosexuality from the perspective of ancient texts is possible.

The view that missionaries distorted African culture on the advent of Christianity in RSA problematises the alleged Western hermeneutical approach in interpreting Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13 in the discussion on homosexuality. On this note, any interpretation of Scripture is problematic and is not well received by RSA-Xhosa. The African cultural dimension, in addressing societal issues, remains normative. In the African hermeneutic paradigm, culture forms the normative basis of the approach to Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13. The notion that homosexuality is new, pagan and foreign in Africa (RSA), poses a sense of unwillingness to accept homosexuality. This is underpinned by the perception that Christianity arrived by means of a Western vehicle and distorted African culture. On these grounds the understanding of Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13 as prohibiting homosexuality makes sense to RSA ears when taking into account the constituent elements of the arguments against homosexuality. An exegesis

that stems from the Western world is problematic; therefore the dimensions of Africanisation and inculturation remain the normative basis on which to judge and determine the acceptance and / or rejection of homosexuality.

Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13 point to the customs of the neighbouring nations of the Israelites, whose culture, beliefs and behaviour need not influence them. The verb לְרַבְּעָה (to lie down) is used to highlight the violation of nature and the divine order in the sexual acts cited in Leviticus 18:23; 20:16 and therefore Leviticus 18:22. In the BHS the existence of many nations is omitted and according to the Hebrew Codex manuscript and the Samaritan Pentateuch the existence of the Israelites is located in a multi-cultural context. Leviticus 20:26 and the concept of consecration or holiness is emphasised. The rejection of homosexuality based on the concept of holiness finds favour in the RSA-Xhosa culture in which the emphasis is placed on sound moral fibre. The theme of holiness relates Leviticus 10:10 to Leviticus 18 and 20. The concept of holiness refers to Israel's identity which characterises her distinctively. Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13 are framed within this understanding of holiness. Normal life is characterised as being in a state of purity.

The interpretation and understanding of homosexuality as unnatural, constituting an illegitimate relationship and being a corruptor of the moral fibre of society embraces the understanding of Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13 as forbidding homosexuality. The understanding that emerges from the exegesis of this text is in harmony with the African dimension and culture. Homosexual conduct is therefore considered immoral and shameful by RSA-Xhosas. The association of Leviticus 18:22 (Same-Sex intercourse) and Leviticus 18:23 (sexual intercourse with an animal) suggests a concern for the confusion and violation of what is believed to be natural and orderly and is parallel to the RSA-Xhosa understanding.

The RSA-Xhosa argument that homosexuality is culturally unacceptable while heterosexuality is historically and culturally valid and absolute affirms the reading of Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13 as rejecting homosexual behaviour.

Homosexuality was rejected by RSA-Xhosa on the basis that marriage and family were important. In this context of family, procreation was highly regarded as necessary for family enhancement. According to the honour and shame theory, homosexuality was condemned on the basis that the legislature guarded against shaming a penetrated man. Honour indicated a social standing and a rightful place in a society since values are culturally created. The regard for manhood is identical to the image of man in the honour and shame theory underlying the ancient texts. The rejection of the homosexual act based on the honour and regard for manhood in the RSA-Xhosa culture is embraced by the interpretation of Scripture as rejecting homosexuality. The historical background of Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13 is set within the context of the worship of many gods in the surrounding nations. The inclusion of the male penetrator in the prohibition in Leviticus 20:13 questions the validity of the honour and shame theory which stipulated that the penetrator was demonstrating his power, authority and honour. The author's objective is to urge his audience not to be culturally, social, ethically and religiously influenced by neighbouring communities. RSA-Xhosas have always been careful in adopting and / or compromising values and principles. The rationale of avoiding cultural, ethical and religious influence from neighbouring communities regarding the rejection of homosexuality in Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13, finds favour among African nations and in reading the Bible in Africa.

Taking the literary context of Leviticus 20:11-13, 18 and 20 into account, verse 13 would be interpreted as intention to enhance family values and relationships. The intention to embrace the value for nature is depicted in Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13. The pursuit of enhancing family values and relationships as being the basis on which to reject homosexuality receives acceptance in the African dimensions. Child bearing receives attention and regard in the RSA-Xhosa culture, in which procreation is the primary objective of the sexual intercourse. Reluctance to accept homosexuality rests on the regard for procreation and its perceived purpose in sexual intercourse, which finds harmony with the African dimension.

Although there are no explicit allusions made to the creation story in Genesis 1:1-2:4a, a priestly creation idea that is grounded on the statement 'be fruitful and multiply' cannot be divorced from the contribution of P in the development of

Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13. The redaction location of Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13 in the context of dietary laws is also worth noting. The H redactor affirms priestly creation theology and underpins Leviticus 18:22 by relating it to the dietary laws, such as in Leviticus 11:27. In terms of the law in Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13, the rejection of a man performing a receptive role which is proper to women indicates that the boundary between male and female is transgressed. The issue in Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13 is gender confusion wherein the male adopts the female role. In rejecting homosexuality, the argument of guarding against gender confusion parallels the African thinking, in which gender roles are significant. The notion of value is accorded to procreation in the said texts. This connection probably adds value to the reason to forbid male-male intercourse on the basis of its association with the alien gods; this might be the intention of the redactor. Violation of family order is detected in the laws against homosexuality and bestiality in Leviticus 18:22-23.

5.4 Synthesis -MCSA discussions and dimensions from Africanisation

The spirit and the essence of the MCSA policy and mission imperative embrace the acceptance of homosexuality. This acceptance is in harmony with the geographical dimensions, implications of diversity and the constitution of the Republic of South Africa. The socio-scientific dimensions of RSA at one level are in harmony with the acceptance of homosexuality by the MCSA. The position of RSA-Xhosas with regards to homosexuality is shaped by the culture, customs and beliefs that manifest themselves within this ethnic race. Xhosas live in community with other ethnic races in RSA enjoying freedom as regards independent social identity and cultural beliefs. The constitution of RSA that enforces racial and ethnic sensitivity and therefore diversity shapes RSA-Xhosa civilisation and the acceptance of homosexuality. The constitution of RSA directs that the RSA-Xhosa acceptance of homosexuality should not be characterised by discrimination and must be authentic. The provision that ‘everyone has the right to freedom of conscience, religion, thought, belief and opinion’ in the Bill of Rights protects the churches’ discernment and positions. It also guards the RSA-Xhosa position. The democratic dispensation implies the accommodation of all people in RSA irrespective of social identity and orientation. The socio-scientific dimension of RSA presents a directive, to accept homosexuality,

to the MCSA. On the other hand, the rejection of homosexuality based on religious beliefs is respected and affirmed by the constitution of RSA.

The MCSA believes that sexual intercourse is not only intended for procreation but also for intimacy and that on this ground homosexuality is to be accepted. The fact that the MCSA exists in the current context where there are alternatives and that support structures for child development in an environment with homosexuals are in place, supports the argument for the acceptance of homosexuality. From an RSA-Xhosa perspective, the emphasis on legitimate relationships between males and females allows for an environment for procreation, which, including the values of child development, differs from the MCSA statements.

The purpose of sex according to the theory of natural law is procreation; therefore sexual intentions, contrary to this purpose, are to be deemed unnatural and unacceptable. Scientific studies express the following dimensions and voices:

- The ways in which the complex reality of human sexuality is understood and described are constantly evolving.
- While the exact process whereby a person's sexual orientation is formed is unknown, the evidence suggests that a person's sexual orientation is in place relatively early in life.
- Sexual orientation is something over which people have little choice and that people do not choose to be heterosexual or homosexual.
- Attempting to change a person's sexual orientation is highly questionable.
- As with heterosexual practices, homosexual practice is not uniform and varieties of homosexual expression exist.

Dimensions derived from these scientific studies do not concur with those of RSA-Xhosa culture.

Readings from the Wesley Quadrilateral are variant. Engagement with Scripture depicts arguments that reject homosexuality and those that accept it. The tradition of the MCSA and the church universally indicates that the Church has moved from the point of rejecting the discriminated and the outcast to that of accepting and embracing them. The experiences of homosexuals who have experienced discrimination, offer

grounds for the acceptance of homosexuality. In the Wesley quadrilateral there is no substantive argument that supports the rejection of homosexuality, therefore the acceptance of homosexuality embraces the acceptance of homosexuality from the African point of view, more explicitly, in terms of the implications of geographical dimensions, diversity and the constitution of the RSA.

From the perspective of Africanisation, the conclusion that homosexuality is new, pagan and foreign in Africa (RSA) represents an unwillingness to accept the legitimacy of homosexuality. The distortion of RSA-Xhosa culture by missionaries in the advent of Christianity is problematic. It problematises the Western, shaded hermeneutical approach to Scripture and ethical issues. The Wesley quadrilateral was compiled by John Wesley, who is not an African. The outcome of the MCSA's approach based on the Wesley quadrilateral must be rejected based on the argument of the missionaries' distorted view of RSA-Xhosa culture. Therefore the acceptance of homosexuality based on the quadrilateral is not credible on African soil and objects to the dimension(s) of Africanisation and inculturation. In the survey conducted by Nyarenchi, the majority of Africans in East Africa maintain that homosexuality is immoral and shameful conduct. The rejection of homosexuality also emerges from the perception that homosexuality is Western and that the missionaries, when settling in Africa, intentionally attempted to change the lifestyle of people and in this way affected the cultural life adversely. The rejection of homosexuality based on the fact that Christianity and homosexuality came from the missionaries disturbs the MCSA. Since it stems from England and was entrenched by missionaries the very principle of the MCSA and her existence is called into question.

As an objective response to colonisation, which is deemed to be the vehicle to reject RSA-Xhosas' beliefs and practices. Feminist ideologies have not been embraced by the RSA-Xhosa culture. Feminism, regarded as being Western and colonist in nature, rejects homosexuality and also translates itself as rejecting RSA-Xhosas beliefs and practices in the name of feminist activism.

The consideration of homosexuality as being unnatural, an illegitimate relationship and a corruptor of the moral fibre of the African societies, embraces the rejection of homosexuality, which is not consonant with the acceptance of homosexuality in the

MCSA discussions. The position of the MCSA as reflected in the latest resolution on homosexuality ignores the fact that there are irresponsible interpretations and exegetical approaches to Scripture. Doors to a possible journey towards a compromise, consensus and common understanding that is produced by responsible interpretation of Scripture are closed. A concept of upholding sound morals and the themes of holiness and consecration are not alluded to. RSA-Xhosa culture does not subscribe to any ignorance regarding good morals. The MCSA's convictions with respect to holiness and Wesley's emphasis on striving for perfection embrace the pursuit to uphold sound morals in the community.

Reason, in the scientific age, embraces the realities that a homosexual orientation is not chosen and that it is normal. Such an understanding conflicts with the African view. A dialogue between faith and reason is therefore essential.

Based on the fact that it cannot be proven that homosexual persons do not have faith in God, homosexuality is not to be associated with sinfulness nor classified as such. The rejection of homosexuality and the ministry of homosexual persons contradict the principle of inviting 'all people' to personal faith in Christ and His gospel and to belong in the community of faith. The dependence of Christian ministry upon the calling of God invalidates the rejection of ministry by homosexuals. Such rejection is based on the appeal to maintain the tradition of the Church. Hence, the witness of the Church is static and realities of the scientific age on the issue of homosexuality are invalid. In this vein, the acceptance of homosexuality based on progressive rationalisation is to be rejected. The documentation of the policy on membership directs the MCSA to redress the rejection of homosexuality and the ministry of homosexual persons. All people are eligible to be members of the MCSA. Consideration of the concept of holiness and sinfulness links with the African concept of good morals. The conflict of interest lies in the fact that in the MCSA it is not proven that homosexuality is a sin and therefore there are no grounds to object to it.

The Same-Sex document prepared by DEWCOM which fosters the Wesley Quadrilateral is commendable, yet poses problems. Three approaches to Scripture are noted, which include reading the text literally; subjecting any biblical text to the wider witness of Scripture as a whole; and seeing the Bible as a living document which is

enlivened by the activity of the Holy Spirit, who interprets the text and leads the Church to all truth. This tradition focuses on the position of the Church over the ages and on the wider witness of the contemporary Church while the tradition of the Church that embraced the concept of natural law, as discussed earlier, upheld the emphasis on procreation is in agreement with the African tradition voice on natural, orderliness and regard for procreation.

Allusions to child bearing in the lobola ritual, the involvement of families in this, the Utsiki ritual, constitutes families in this, the Utsiki ritual, the female gender roles in an RSA-Xhosa household, the significance of introducing a woman (bride) to the man's (groom's) ancestors, marriage as one of the ways of proving and affirming the manhood of an individual, the creation of a family or household and procreation, ensuring the continued existence of the family and the family name through marriage, and the understood role of ancestors in the marriage make it impossible to accept homosexuality. Failure to produce children shames the couple and especially the woman.

Homosexuality is also rejected on the grounds of the ideology of manhood, which is constructed through and / or by the rite of passage of Umeluko (male initiation), and is central to the said argument. In religious circles, including the MCSA, the pursuit to eliminate patriarchy rejects the convictions regarding this notion of manhood. The Intonjana custom and the picture of the ideal woman contrasts with the image of a female homosexual. This image renders it inconceivable to accept homosexuality in the RSA-Xhosa culture.

The concept of ubuntu (humanity) which directs people to belong to each other embraces homosexuality at one level, while it is also embraced by the clergy of the MCSA.

Homosexuality is deemed by RSA-Xhosas to be immoral because it is culturally unacceptable. The MCSA might regard this sentiment and include Africanisation in what is deemed to be a normative tool in approaching societal issues. Readings regarding RSA-Xhosa culture in principle do not find favour within the MCSA. The MCSA views Scripture, not culture, as the supreme rule of faith and practice. The

experiences of people in a cultural context are not a major consideration; hence the rejection and / or acceptance of homosexuality from a RSA-Xhosa perspective are of no concern to the MCSA. However, the author avers that African values, the worldview and beliefs embedded in the RSA-Xhosa culture are essential to engaging with the subject of homosexuality. Consequently, it is argued, culture should constitute the normative basis for engaging with this issue. The identification of one's orientation is influenced by the cultural milieu which controls and limits worldview of the people and their acceptance of homosexuality.

The honour and shame ideology contributes to the reaction and response to homosexuality in the RSA context. Gender roles constructed by society are crucial in this ideology in which homosexuality is deemed to be wrong and therefore rejected on the basis that people assume responsibilities that are not designed for them such as the absence of an individual as the head of the household according to gender allocation of responsibility. Furthermore, the absence of procreation in Same-Sex relationships and the notion that a man is superior to a woman also supports this argument. . The honour and shame element in the RSA-Xhosa culture exhibits parallels with the honour and shame theory that underlies ancient texts.

5.5 Final Conclusion

The issue of the cultural distance between the worlds of Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13 production and the 21st century in the South African (MCSA and Xhosa) context calls into question both the MCSA discussions and the African dimensions. Acceptance and / or rejection of homosexuality based in the interpretation of Scripture is not well received in either of the mentioned groups. The relevancy of Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13 is called into question.

The rejection of homosexuality based on the understanding of procreation is manifested in MCSA discussions, the African dimension and the historical context of Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13 as depicted in the exegesis of these texts. This constitutes common ground. The motifs of holiness and sound morals as well as the issue and / or concern for family orderliness that underlie the rejection of homosexuality are evident

in the exegesis of Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13, MCSA discussions and dimension of Africanisation. Consensus is evident in this regard.

The honour and shame theory, as basis for the rejection of homosexuality, in the exegesis of the texts (Lev 18:22 and 20:13) is also manifested in the RSA-Xhosa culture. The enhancement of family life and relationships is shared in both the African dimension and the exegesis of the texts in discussion, while an emphasis is placed on gender roles and the maintenance of the distinction between them is also evident. However, while there is no explicit allusion to these sentiments in the MCSA discussions. The rejection of homosexuality is favoured by the shared sentiments as mentioned above.

On the other hand acceptance of homosexuality finds common ground in the exegesis of Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13, MCSA discussions and dimension of africanisation. An argument for acceptance of homosexuality is evident in the MCSA policy, doctrines and mission imperatives and in the pursuit of the celebration of diversity and unity. By the same token acceptance of homosexuality is supported in the investigation of the constitution, geography and diversity of South Africa. Elements of acceptance of homosexuality are both evident in the MCSA discussion and the African dimensions. Acceptance of homosexuality strongly objects to dimension (s) of africanisation and inculturation, with explicit focus on the study of RSA-Xhosa ethnic group.

The understanding that there is no reference to homosexuality in Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13 displays injustice in Scripture in arguing for or against homosexuality. A lack of reference to homosexuality as a sexual orientation in Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13 presents a major reluctance in accepting Scripture as normative in the discussion of homosexuality.

Insights emerging from the scientific investigation and its projections in discussing homosexuality are worth noting. Such insights present a need to revisit the tradition and trajectory that manifests itself in the rejection of homosexuality with the issue of transformation as a motif.

In this research a journey towards a common and compromise position and / or celebration of diversity is initiated and fostered. The dialogue is informative and the differing views are taken into account. A discussion on homosexuality is a journey of engaging ideological contestations. A responsible ethic in interpreting texts engages contestations. Common ground and conflict contestations are tabulated. Areas of consensus are shown in this research. Shared principles and ideologies are depicted. Factors that trigger reluctance to journeying towards a common and compromise position and / or celebration of diversity are tabulated.

Further intensive study on the binding agent of differing contestations should be conducted. The binding agents in the dialogue are the question of transforming RSA societies that discriminate homosexual persons. The issue of what is life affirming is to be on the table when discussing homosexuality. The matter of being context-oriented and relevant in discussing homosexuality is of importance. It is not a question of what is right or wrong, nor of what is normative, or what comprises the supreme rule of faith and practice, which places Scripture on the supreme level. Situating Scripture on this level constitutes ignorance of the perception of the Bible as consisting of ideological documents. The binding factor in the dialogue and consultative approach also questions the implications of a person's relation to God, which sheds light on the journey toward a responsible praxis and approach to Scripture and societal issues. The binding agency consists of noting differing contestations. Such an agency embraces differing voices and asks questions regarding relevancy and life affirming and transformative objectives in a particular context.

In this light of the above mentioned final conclusion the following hypothesis of the study is proven:

Acceptance and / or rejection of homosexuality as a love relationship cannot be based on Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13. There is an inability to provide sound rationale to reject homosexuality in the MCSA. Acceptance of homosexuality objects to dimension (s) of Africanisation and inculturation, with explicit focus on RSA-Xhosa ethnic group. A common and compromise position and / or celebration of diversity are possible when there is a dialogue between the findings stemming from the MCSA



discussions, the exegesis of Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13 and the dimensions of Africanisation and inculturation in discussing homosexuality.

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Appendix 1

Syntactical Analysis of Leviticus 18

Hebrew	English	Number	I/D/CD	Type
וַיְדַבֵּר יְהוָה אֶל־מֹשֶׁה לֵאמֹר:	1. Then Yahweh spoke to Moses saying	1	I	Statement
דַּבֵּר אֶל־בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְאָמַרְתָּ אֲלֵהֶם:	2. Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them:	2.1	CD	Command
אֲנִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם:	I am Yahweh your God.	2.2	CD	Purpose
כַּמַּעֲשֵׂה אֲרִיץ־מִצְרַיִם אֲשֶׁר יֹשְׁבֵתָם־כִּי לֹא תַעֲשׂוּ וְכַמַּעֲשֵׂה אֲרִיץ־כְּנָעַן	3. You shall not do according to the doings of the land of Egypt, where you dwelt; and according to the doings of the land of Canaan,	2.2.1	DCD	Statement/nominal
אֲשֶׁר אֲנִי מְבִיא אֲתֶכֶם שָׁמָּה לֹא תַעֲשׂוּ וְבַתְּקַתְּהֶם לֹא תִלְכוּ:	where I am bringing you, you shall not do; nor shall you walk in their ordinances.	2.2.3.a	DCCD	Relative clause
אֲתִמְשֹׁפֵטִי תַעֲשׂוּ וְאֲתַחְקֹתִי תִשְׁמְרוּ לְלֶכֶת בָּהֶם	4. You shall observe My judgments and keep My ordinances, to walk in them:	2.2.3.b	DCCD	Negative
אֲנִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם:	I am Yahweh your God.	2.2.3.c	DCCD	Negative
וְשִׁמְרֹתֶם אֲתַחְקֹתִי וְאֲתִמְשֹׁפֵטִי	5. You shall therefore keep My statutes and My judgments,	2.2.4	DCD	Command
אֲשֶׁר יַעֲשֶׂה אִתָּם	which if a man does,	2.2.5	DCD	Command
הָאֲדָם וְחֵי בָהֶם	he shall live by them:	2.2.6	DCD	Statement/nominal
אֲנִי יְהוָה:	I am Yahweh.	2.2.7	DCD	Command
		2.2.7.a	DCCD	Causal
		2.2.7.b	DCCD	Purpose
		2.2.8	DCD	Statement/nominal



אִישׁ אִישׁ אֶל-כָּל-שָׂאֵר בְּשֵׁרוֹ לֹא תִקְרְבוּ	6. None of you shall approach anyone who is near of kin to him,	2.2.9	DCD	Command
לְגִלוֹת עֵרְוָה	to uncover his nakedness:	2.2.9.a	DDCD	Purpose
אֲנִי יְהוָה:	I am Yahweh.	2.2.10	DCD	Statement/nominal
עֵרוֹת אָבִיךָ וְעֵרוֹת אִמְךָ לֹא תִגְלֶה	7. You shall not uncover the nakedness of your father or the nakedness of your mother	2.2.11	DCD	Negative Command
אִמְךָ הוּא	She is your mother;	2.2.11.a	DDCD	Nominal
לֹא תִגְלֶה עֵרוֹתֶיהָ:	you shall not uncover her nakedness.	2.2.11.b	DDCD	Negative command
עֵרוֹת אִשְׁת־אָבִיךָ לֹא תִגְלֶה	8. You shall not uncover the nakedness of your father's wife	2.2.12	DCD	Command
עֵרוֹת אָבִיךָ הוּא:	it is your father's nakedness.	2.2.12.a	DDCD	Nominal
עֵרוֹת אַחֻוֹתֶיךָ	9. The nakedness of your sister,	2.2.13	DCD	Object
בְּתֻאֲבִיבֶיךָ אוֹ בְּתֻאֲמִיךָ	the daughter of your father, or the daughter of your mother,	2.2.13.a	DDCD	Nominal/object
מוֹלֶדֶת בֵּית אוֹ מוֹלֶדֶת חוּץ	whether born at home or elsewhere,	2.2.13.b	DDCD	Nominal
לֹא תִגְלֶה עֵרוֹתֶיךָ:	their nakedness you shall not uncover.	2.2.13.c	DDCD	Negative
עֵרוֹת בְּתֻבְנֶיךָ אוֹ בְּתֻבְתֶיךָ	10. The nakedness of your son's daughter or your daughter's daughter,	2.2.14	DCD	Subject/object
לֹא תִגְלֶה עֵרוֹתֶיךָ	their nakedness you shall not uncover;	2.2.14.a	DDCD	Negative
כִּי עֵרוֹתֶיךָ הֵנָּה:	for theirs is your own nakedness.	2.2.14.b	DDCD	Nominal
עֵרוֹת בְּתֻאֲשַׁת אָבִיךָ	11. The nakedness of your father's wife's daughter,	2.2.15	DCD	Object
מוֹלֶדֶת אָבִיךָ	begotten by your father,	2.2.15.a	DDCD	Nominal
אַחֻוֹתֶיךָ הוּא	she is your sister,	2.2.15.b	DDCD	Nominal
לֹא תִגְלֶה עֵרוֹתֶיהָ:	you shall not uncover her nakedness.	2.2.15.c	DDCD	Negative command
עֵרוֹת אַחֻוֹת־אָבִיךָ לֹא תִגְלֶה	12. 'You shall not uncover the nakedness	2.2.16	DCD	Negative command

		of your father's sister; she is near of kin to your father.	2.2.16.a	DDCD	Nominal
שָׂאֵר אָבִיךָ הוּא: עֲרוֹת אֲחוֹת־אִמְךָ לֹא תִגְלֶה		13. You shall not uncover the nakedness of your mother's sister, for she is near of kin to your mother.	2.2.17	DCD	Negative Command
כִּי־שָׂאֵר אִמְךָ הוּא: עֲרוֹת אֲחֵי־אָבִיךָ לֹא תִגְלֶה		14. You shall not uncover the nakedness of your father's brother.	2.2.17.a	DDCD	Nominal
אֶל־אִשְׁתּוֹ לֹא תִקְרַב הִדְרָתְךָ הוּא:		You shall not approach his wife; she is your aunt.	2.2.18.a	DDCD	Command
עֲרוֹת פְּלִתְךָ לֹא תִגְלֶה		15. You shall not uncover the nakedness of your daughter-in-law she is your son's wife	2.2.18.b	DDCD	Nominal
אִשְׁתּוֹ בְּנֶךְ הוּא לֹא תִגְלֶה עֲרוֹתָהּ:		you shall not uncover her nakedness.	2.2.19	DCD	Negative Command
עֲרוֹת אִשְׁת־אָחִיךָ לֹא תִגְלֶה		16. You shall not uncover the nakedness of your brother's wife; it is your brother's nakedness.	2.2.19.a	DDCD	nominal
עֲרוֹת אָחִיךָ הוּא: עֲרוֹת אִשְׁה וּבִתָּהּ לֹא תִגְלֶה		17. You shall not uncover the nakedness of a woman and her daughter, nor shall you take her son's daughter or her daughter's daughter, to uncover her nakedness.	2.2.19.b	DDCD	Negative command
אֲחֵי־בְתֻלָּתָהּ וְאֲחֵי־בְתֻלָּתָהּ לֹא תִקַּח לְנָלוֹת עֲרוֹתָהּ		They are near of kin to her.	2.2.20	DCD	Negative command
שְׂאֵרָה הִנֵּה זְמוּה הוּא:		It is wickedness.	2.2.20.a	DDCD	nominal
וְאִשְׁה אֶל־אֲחֻתָּהּ לֹא תִקַּח לְצַרֵּר לְנָלוֹת עֲרוֹתָהּ		18. Nor shall you take a woman as a rival to her sister, to uncover her nakedness while the other is alive.	2.2.21	DCD	Negative command
עֲלִיָּהּ בַחַיִּיהָ: עֲלִיָּהּ בַחַיִּיהָ:			2.2.21.a	DDCD	Negative command
			2.2.21.b	DDCD	Purpose
			2.2.21.c	DDCD	nominal
			2.2.21.d	DDCD	nominal
			2.2.22	DCD	Negative command
			2.2.22.a	DDCD	Purpose
			2.2.22.b	DDCD	nominal



וְאֵל־אִשָּׁה בְּנִדַּחַת טְמֵאָתָהּ	19. Also as long as a woman is in her customary impurity.	2.2.23	DCD	nominal
לֹא תִקְרַב לְגִלּוֹת עֲרוּוֹתָהּ:	you shall not approach a woman to uncover her nakedness	2.2.23.a	DDCD	Negative command
וְאֵל־אִשָּׁת עֲמִיתְךָ לֹא־תַחַתֵּן שְׂכָבְךָ	20. Moreover you shall not lie carnally with your neighbor's wife, to defile yourself with her.	2.2.24	DCD	Negative command
לְזָרַע לְטִמְאָהָ בָּהּ:		2.2.24.a	DDCD	Purpose
וּמִזְרֵעְךָ לֹא־תַחַתֵּן לְהַעֲבִיר לַמֶּלֶךְ	21. And you shall not let any of your descendants pass through the fire to Molech,	2.2.25	DCD	Negative command
וְלֹא תַחַלֵּל אֶת־שֵׁם אֱלֹהֶיךָ	nor shall you profane the name of your God:	2.2.26	DCD	Negative command
אֲנִי יְהוָה:	I am Yahweh.	2.2.27	DCD	Statement/nominal
וְאֶת־זָכְרִי לֹא תִשְׁכַּח מִשְׁכַּבִּי אִשָּׁה	22. You shall not lie with a male as with a woman.	2.2.28	DCD	Negative command
תֹּעֲבָה הִיא:	It is an abomination.	2.2.28.a	DDCD	nominal
וּבְכֹל־בְּהֵמָה לֹא־תַחַתֵּן שְׂכָבְךָ	23. Nor shall you mate with any animal, to defile yourself with it.	2.2.29	DCD	Negative command
לְטִמְאָהָ בָּהּ		2.2.29.a	DDCD	Purpose
וְאִשָּׁה לֹא־תַעֲמֹד לְפָנַי בְּהֵמָה	Nor shall any woman stand before an animal,	2.2.30	DCD	Negative command
לְרַבְעָה	to mate with it.	2.2.30.a	DDCD	Purpose
תִּבֶּל הוּא:	It is perversion.	2.2.30b	DDCD	nominal
אֶל־תִּטְמְאוּ בְּכֹל־אֵלֶּה	24. Do not defile yourselves with any of these things;	2.2.31	DCD	Negative command
כִּי בְכֹל־אֵלֶּה נִטְמְאוּ הַגּוֹיִם	for by all these the nations are defiled,	2.2.31.a	DDCD	Consequential
אֲשֶׁר־אֲנִי מוֹשֵׁלִיךְ מִפְּנֵיכֶם:	which I am casting out before you.	2.2.31.b	DDCD	Relative
וּתִטְמְאוּ הָאָרֶץ	25. For the land is defiled;	2.2.31.c	DDCD	Consequential
וְאֶפְקֹד עֲוֹנָה עֲלֶיהָ	therefore I visit the punishment of its	2.2.31.d	DDCD	Causal



	iniquity upon it, and the land vomits out its inhabitants.					Consequential
וְתִקַּח הָאָרֶץ אֶת-יְשֻׁבֵיהֶּ: וְשִׁמְרֹתֶם אֹתָם אֶת-חֻקֹּתַי וְאֶת-מִשְׁפָּטַי	26. You shall therefore keep My statutes and My judgments,	2.2.31.e	DDCD	2.2.31.e	DDCD	Consequential
וְלֹא תַעֲשׂוּ מִכֹּל הַתּוֹעֵבוֹת הָאֵלֶּה	and shall not commit any of these abominations,	2.2.32	DCD	2.2.32	DCD	Command
הָאוֹרֵחַ וְהַגֵּר בְּתוֹכְכֶם: כִּי אֶת-כָּל-הַתּוֹעֵבוֹת הָאֵל עָשׂוּ אֲנִשֵּׁי-הָאָרֶץ	either any of your own nation or any stranger who dwells among you	2.2.33	DCD	2.2.33	DCD	Negative command
אֲשֶׁר לִפְנֵיכֶם וְהַטְּבִיחַ הָאָרֶץ: וְלֹא-תִקֵּי אֶת-הָאָרֶץ אֲתֶכֶם בְּטַפְּאֹתֶיךָ אֲתֶה	27. For all these abominations the men of the land have done, who were before you, and thus the land is defiled),	2.2.33.a	DDCD	2.2.33.a	DDCD	Object
כִּי אֲשֶׁר לִפְנֵיכֶם: כָּל-אֲשֶׁר יַעֲשֶׂה מִכֹּל הַתּוֹעֵבוֹת הָאֵלֶּה כִּי	28. lest the land vomit you out also when you defile it, as it vomited out the nations, which were before you.	2.2.34	DCD	2.2.34	DCD	Subject/object
וְנִכְרַתוּ הַנְּפֹשׁוֹת הַעֲשֵׂת מִקְּרֵב עִמָּם: וְשִׁמְרֹתֶם אֶת-מִשְׁמְרֹתַי	29. For whoever commits any of these abominations, the persons who commit them shall be cut off from among their people.	2.2.34.a	DDCD	2.2.34.a	DDCD	Relative
לְבַלְתִּי עֲשׂוֹת מִחֻקֹּת הַתּוֹעֵבוֹת אֲשֶׁר נַעֲשׂוּ לִפְנֵיכֶם וְלֹא תִשְׁמְאוּ בָהֶם	30. Therefore you shall keep My ordinance, so that you do not commit any of these abominable customs which were committed before you,	2.2.34.b	DDCD	2.2.34.b	DDCD	Purpose (final)
אֲנִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם: אֲנִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם:	and that you do not defile yourselves by them: I am Yahweh your God.	2.2.34.c	DDCD	2.2.34.c	DDCD	Purpose (final)
		2.2.34.d	DDCD	2.2.34.d	DDCD	Relative
		2.2.34.e	DDCD	2.2.34.e	DDCD	Relative
		2.2.35	DCD	2.2.35	DCD	Condition
		2.2.35.a	DDCD	2.2.35.a	DDCD	Consequential
		2.2.36	DCD	2.2.36	DCD	Command
		2.2.36.a	DDCD	2.2.36.a	DDCD	Purpose (final)
		2.2.36.a.i	DDDCD	2.2.36.a.i	DDDCD	Relative
		2.2.36.b	DDCD	2.2.36.b	DDCD	Purpose (final)
		2.2.37	DCD	2.2.37	DCD	Statement/nominal



Syntactical Analysis of Leviticus 20

Hebrew	English	Number	I/D/CD	Type
וַיְדַבֵּר יְהוָה אֶל־מֹשֶׁה לֵאמֹר:	1. Then Yahweh spoke to Moses, saying,	1	I	Statement
וְאֶל־בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל תֹּאמַר	2. Again, you shall say to the children of Israel:	2	I	Adverbial sentence of manner
אִישׁ אִישׁ מִבְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וּמִן־הַגֵּר הַגֵּר בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל אֲשֶׁר יִתֵּן מִזְרְעוֹ לַמִּלֶּכֶת	Whoever of the children of Israel, or of the strangers who dwell in Israel, who gives any of his descendants to Molech,	2.1	CD	Command
מוֹת יוֹמַת עִם	he shall surely be put to death.	2.1.a	DCD	Object
הָאָרֶץ יִרְגְּמֶהוּ בָאֲבָן:	The people of the land shall stone him with stones.	2.1.b	DCD	Object
וְאֲנִי אֶתֵּן אֶת־פָּנַי בְּאִישׁ הַהוּא וְהִכַּרְתִּי אֹתוֹ מִקֶּרֶב עַמּוֹ כִּי מִזְרְעוֹ נָתַן לַמִּלֶּכֶת	3. 'I will set My face against that man, and will cut him off from his people, because he has given some of his descendants to Molech,	2.1.1	DCD	Purpose (final)
לִמְעַן שַׁמָּא אֶת־מִקְדָּשִׁי וְלִחְלָל אֶת־שֵׁם קָדְשִׁי:	to defile My sanctuary and profane My holy name.	2.1.1.a	DDDCD	Causal
וְאִם הֶעֱלִים יְעֹלְמוֹ עִם הָאָרֶץ אֶת־עֵינֵיהֶם מִן־הָאִישׁ	4. And if the people of the land should in any way hide their eyes from the man,	2.1.1.a.ii	DDDCD	Purpose (final)
הַהוּא בָּחַתוּ מִזְרְעוֹ לַמִּלֶּכֶת	when he gives some of his descendants to Molech,	2.1.1.a.iii	DDDCD	Purpose (final)
		2.1.2	DCD	Conditional
		2.1.2.a	DDDCD	Temporal clause



לְבַלְתִּי הַמִּית אֹתוֹ:	and they do not kill him,	2.1.2.b	DDCD	Purpose (final)
וּשְׂמַתִּי אֲנִי אֶת־פְּנֵי בָּאִישׁ הֵהוּא וּבְמִשְׁפַּחְתּוֹ	5. then I will set My face against that man and against his family;	2.1.2.b.i	DDDCD	Consequential
וְהִכְרַתִּי אֹתוֹ	and I will cut him off	2.1.2.b.ii	DDDCD	Consequential
וְאֵת כָּל־הַזֵּנִים אֲחֵרָיו	and all who prostitute themselves with him	2.1.2.b.iii	DDDCD	Consequential
לְזוֹת אֲחֵרֵי הַמִּלֶּךְ	to commit harlotry with Molech.	2.1.2.b.iv	DDDCD	Verbial
מִקְרֵב עַמּוֹ:	from his people	2.1.2.b.v	DDDCD	
וְהִנֵּפֵשׁ אֲשֶׁר תִּפְנֶה אֶל־הָאֵבֶת וְאֶל־הַיִּדְעָנִים	6. And the person who turns to mediums and familiar spirits,	2.1.3	DCD	Object
לְזוֹת אֲחֵרֵיהֶם	to prostitute himself with them,	2.1.3.a	DDCD	Purpose
וְנִחַתִּי אֶת־פְּנֵי בִנְפֹשׁ הוּא	I will set My face against that person	2.1.3.b	DDCD	Verbial
וְהִכְרַתִּי אֹתוֹ מִקְרֵב עַמּוֹ:	and cut him off from his people.	2.1.3.c	DDCD	Verbial
וְהִתְקַדְּשֶׁתֶם וְהִיִּיתֶם קְדוֹשִׁים	7. Consecrate yourselves therefore, and be holy,	2.1.4	DCD	Command
כִּי אֲנִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם:	for I am Yahweh your God.	2.1.4.a	DDCD	Causal
וּשְׁמַרְתֶּם אֶת־חֻקֹּתַי וַעֲשִׂיתֶם אֹתָם	8. And you shall keep My statutes, and perform them:	2.1.5	DCD	Command
אֲנִי יְהוָה מְקַדְּשְׁכֶם:	I am Yahweh who sanctifies you.	2.1.6	DCD	Causal
כִּי־אִישׁ אִישׁ אֲשֶׁר יִקְלַל אֶת־אָבִיו וְאֶת־אִמּוֹ	9. For everyone who curses his father or his mother	2.1.7	DCD	Object
מוֹת יוּמָת	shall surely be put to death.	2.1.7.a	DDCD	Consequential
אָבִיו וְאִמּוֹ קָלַל הָמִין בּוֹ:	His blood shall be upon him.	2.1.7.b	DDCD	Consequential
וְאִישׁ אֲשֶׁר יִנְאֹף אֶת־אִשְׁתּוֹ אִישׁ אֲחֵרָה	10. The man who commits adultery with another man's wife,	2.1.8	DCD	Object



אֲשֶׁר יִנְאֵף אֶת־אִשְׁתּוֹ רֵעֵהוּ	he who commits adultery with his neighbour's wife,	2.1.8.a	DDCD	Relative
מוֹת־יוֹמָת הַנְּאֻף וְהַנְּאֻפָּה:	the adulterer and the adulteress, shall surely be put to death.	2.1.8.b	DDCD	Consequential
וְאִישׁ אֲשֶׁר יִשְׁכַּב אֶת־אִשְׁתּוֹ אֲבִיו עֶרְוַת אָבִיו גָּלָה	11. The man who lies with his father's wife has uncovered his father's nakedness;	2.1.9	DCD	Conditional
מוֹת־יוֹמָתוֹ שְׁנֵיהֶם	both of them shall surely be put to death.	2.1.9.a	DDCD	Consequential
הַמִּיָּדָה בָּם:	Their blood shall be upon them.	2.1.9.b	DDCD	Consequential
וְאִישׁ אֲשֶׁר יִשְׁכַּב אֶת־כַּלְתּוֹ	12. If a man lies with his daughter-in-law,	2.1.10	DCD	Conditional
מוֹת יוֹמָתוֹ שְׁנֵיהֶם	both of them shall surely be put to death.	2.1.10.a	DDCD	Conditional
הַכֹּל עָשׂוּ	They have committed perversion.	2.1.10.b	DDCD	Nominal
הַמִּיָּדָה בָּם:	Their blood shall be upon them.	2.1.10.c	DDCD	Nominal
וְאִישׁ אֲשֶׁר יִשְׁכַּב אֶת־זָכָר מִשְׁכַּב־יְאֻשָּׁה	13. If a man lies with a male as he lies with a woman,	2.1.11	DCD	Conditional
הוֹעִיבָה עָשׂוּ שְׁנֵיהֶם	both of them have committed an abomination.	2.1.11.a	DDCD	Conditional
מוֹת יוֹמָתוֹ	They shall surely be put to death.	2.1.11.b	DDCD	Nominal
הַמִּיָּדָה בָּם:	Their blood shall be upon them.	2.1.11.c	DDCD	Nominal
וְאִישׁ אֲשֶׁר יִקַּח אֶת־אִשְׁתּוֹ וְאֶת־אִמָּהּ	14. If a man marries a woman and her mother,	2.1.12	DCD	Conditional
זָמָה הוּא	it is wickedness.	2.1.12.a	DDCD	Nominal
כָּאִשׁ יִשְׂרָפוּ אֹתוֹ וְאֶתְהֵן	They shall be burned with fire, both he and they,	2.1.12.b	DDCD	Command
וְלֹא־תִהְיֶה זָמָה בְּתוֹכְכֶם:	that there may be no wickedness among you.	2.1.12.c	DDCD	Subject



וַאִישׁ אֲשֶׁר יִתֵּן שֶׁכֶּבֶתוֹ בְּבֵהֵמָה	15. If a man mates with an animal, he shall surely be put to death, and you shall kill the animal.	2.1.13	DCD	Conditional
מוֹת יִנָּמֹת		2.1.13.a	DDCD	Consequential
וְאִתְּ-בֵהֵמָה תִּהְרֹגוּ:		2.1.13.b	DDCD	Command
וְאִשָּׁה אֲשֶׁר תִּקְרַב אֶל-כָּל-בְּהֵמָה לְרִבְעָה	16. If a woman approaches any animal and mates with it,	2.1.14	DCD	Conditional
אִתָּהּ וְהִרְגַת אֶת-הָאִשָּׁה וְאִתְּ-בֵהֵמָה	you shall kill the woman and the animal.	2.1.14.a	DDCD	Command
מוֹת יִנָּמֹתוּ	They shall surely be put to death.	2.1.14.b	DDCD	Command
דְּמֵיהֶם בָּם:	Their blood is upon them.	2.1.14.c	DDCD	Nominal
וְאִישׁ אֲשֶׁר-יִקַּח אֶת-אִחֹתוֹ בַּת-אָבִיו אוֹ בַת-אִמּוֹ	17. If a man takes his sister, his father's daughter or his mother's daughter,	2.1.15	DCD	Conditional
וְרָאָה אֶת-עֲרוּתָהּ וְהִיא תִרְאֶה אֶת-עֲרוּתוֹ	and sees her nakedness and she sees his nakedness,	2.1.15.a	DDCD	Conditional
חֶסֶד הוּא	it is a wicked thing.	2.1.15.b	DDCD	Nominal
וּנְכַרְתּוּ לְעֵינֵי בְנֵי עַמָּם	And they shall be cut off in the sight of their people.	2.1.15.c	DDCD	Consequential
עֲרוֹת אִחֹתוֹ גִּלָּה	He has uncovered his sister's nakedness.	2.1.15.d	DDCD	Causal
עוֹנֵי יִשָּׂא:	He shall bear his guilt.	2.1.15.e	DDCD	Consequential
וְאִישׁ אֲשֶׁר-יִשְׁכַּב אֶת-אִשָּׁה הֵוָה וְגִלָּה אֶת-עֲרוּתָהּ	18. If a man lies with a woman during her sickness and uncovers her nakedness,	2.1.16	DCD	Conditional
אֶת-מִקְרָהּ הֵעִרָה וְהִיא גִּלָּתָה	he has exposed her flow, and she has uncovered the flow of her blood.	2.1.16.a	DDCD	Causal
אֶת-מִקּוֹר דְּמֵיהָ				
וּנְכַרְתּוּ שְׁנֵיהֶם מִקְרַב עַמָּם:	Both of them shall be cut off from their people.	2.1.16.b	DDCD	Consequential
וְעֲרוֹת אִחֹת אִמּוֹ נֶאֱחֹזֹת אָבִיךָ לֹא תִגִּלָּה	19. You shall not uncover the nakedness of your mother's sister nor of your father's sister,	2.1.17	DCD	Negative



כִּי אֶת־שָׂאֲרוּ הָעֵרָה	for that would uncover his near of kin.	2.1.17.a	DDCD	Causal
עֲלֹנָם יִשְׂאוּ:	They shall bear their guilt.	2.1.17.b	DDCD	Consequential
וְאִישׁ אֲשֶׁר יִשְׁכַּב אֶת־דֹּדְתּוֹ	20. 'If a man lies with his uncle's wife,	2.1.18	DCD	Conditional
עֵרֹת דָּדוֹ גָּלָה	he has uncovered his uncle's nakedness.	2.1.18.a	DDCD	Causal
חַטָּאִם יִשְׂאוּ	They shall bear their sin;	2.1.18.b	DDCD	Consequential
עֵרִירִים נִמְחוּ:	they shall die childless.	2.1.18.c	DDCD	Consequential
וְאִישׁ אֲשֶׁר יִקַּח אֶת־אִשְׁתׁ אָחִיו	21. 'If a man takes his brother's wife,	2.1.19	DCD	Conditional
נָדָה הוּא	it is an unclean thing.	2.1.19.a	DDCD	Nominal
עֵרֹת אָחִיו גָּלָה	He has uncovered his brother's nakedness.	2.1.19.b	DDCD	Object
עֵרִירִים יִהְיוּ:	They shall be childless.	2.1.19.c	DDCD	Consequential
וְשִׁמְרַתֶּם אֶת־כָּל־חֻקֹּתַי וְאֶת־כָּל־מִשְׁפָּטַי	22. You shall therefore keep all My statutes and all My judgments,	2.1.20	DCD	Command
וְעִשִּׂיתֶם אֹתָם	and perform them,	2.1.20.a	DDCD	Command
וְלֹא־תִקְנִיא אֶתְכֶם הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר אֲנִי	that the land where I am bringing you to dwell may not vomit you out.	2.1.20.a.i	DDDCD	Purpose (final)
מְבִיא אֶתְכֶם שָׂמָּה לְשִׁבְתָּ בָהּ:				
וְלֹא תִלְכּוּ בְחֻקֹּת הַגּוֹי	23. And you shall not walk in the statutes of the nation	2.1.21	DCD	Command
אֲשֶׁר־אֲנִי מְשַׁלַּח מִפְּנֵיכֶם	which I am casting out before you;	2.1.21.a	DDCD	Relative
כִּי אֶת־כָּל־אֵלֶּה עֲשׂוּ	for they commit all these things,	2.1.21.a.i	DDDCD	Consequential
וְאֶקְנִי בָם:	and therefore I abhor them.	2.1.21.a.ii	DDDCD	Causal
וְאָמַר לְכֶם	24. But I have said to you,	2.1.22	DCD	Verbial
אֲתֶם תִּירֶשׁוּ אֶת־אֲדָמָתֶם	“You shall inherit their land,	2.1.22.a	DDCD	Command
וְאֲנִי אֲחַנְנֶה לְכֶם לָרֶשֶׁת	and I will give it to you to possess,	2.1.22.a.i	DDDCD	Causal
אֲתֶה אֲרִיץ זִבַת חֶלֶב וְדִבְשׁ	a land flowing with milk and honey.”	2.1.22.b	DDCD	Nominal



אני יהוה אלהיכם	I am Yahweh your God,	2.1.23	DCD	Statement
אשר הבדלתי אתכם מן העמים:	who has separated you from the peoples.	2.1.23.a	DDCD	Object
והבדלתי בין הבהמה הטהרה לטמאה	25. You shall therefore distinguish between clean animals and unclean,	2.1.24	DCD	Command
ובין העוף הטהור לטור	between unclean birds and clean,	2.1.25	DCD	Object
ולאחשקנו אתנפשתיכם בבהמה ובעוף וכל אשר תרמש האדמה	and you shall not make yourselves abominable by beast or by bird, or by any kind of living thing that creeps on the ground,	2.1.26	DCD	Negative
אשר הבדלתי לכם לטמא:	which I have separated from you as unclean.	2.1.26.a	DDCD	Relative
והייתם לי קדשים	26. And you shall be holy to Me,	2.1.27	DCD	Command
כי קדוש אני יהוה	for I Yahweh am holy,	2.1.27.a	DDCD	Causal
ואבדל אתכם מן העמים להיות לי:	and have separated you from the peoples, to be Mine.	2.1.27.b	DDCD	Verbial/ Causal
ואיש או אשה כיהיה קהם אוב או ידעני	27. A man or a woman who is a medium, or who has familiar spirits,	2.1.28	DCD	Causal
מות יומתו	shall surely be put to death;	2.1.28.a	DDCD	Consequential
באבן ירגמו	they shall stone them with stones.	2.1.28.b	DDCD	Consequential
אתם המייתם בם:	Their blood shall be upon them.' "	2.1.28.c	DDCD	Consequential