

this belief by analogy to hustlers and male homosexuals.

With the rise of modern sexology more neutral and less judgmental versions of the hydraulic concept appeared. An influential notion of sexual energy occurs in the work of Havelock Ellis (1859–1939) who saw human existence as marked by an unceasing ebb and flow of tumescence and detumescence. Somewhat later the idea was adopted by the Freudo-Marxian Wilhelm Reich (1897–1957), who evidently found it in accord with his interpretation of materialism. In Freud's own thought the dammed-up energy is supposed to be capable of transformation into some creative endeavor (sublimation). Finally, the idea was adopted by Alfred Kinsey (1894–1956) in his behavioristic concept of "sexual outlets."

Despite its appeal, the metaphor is not unproblematic. The hydraulic idea rests upon materialist reductionism, identifying the accumulation of semen with the strengthening of sexual desire. Yet the two do not necessarily act in concert, as anyone knows who has visited some sexual resort such as a sauna and felt sexual desire far more frequently than the body is able to replenish its supply of semen. Conversely, one may go for long periods while the body is manufacturing semen without feeling sexual desire. The hydraulic concept of sexual desire seems one-sided: it does not take into account the key role of external stimuli in triggering desire—not to mention feelings and ideas not directly linked to simple organic processes.

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## HYPOCRISY

Hypocrisy is a combination of malice with an external appearance of goodness whereby a human being deceives himself or others. The Greek word *hypokrites* used in the Gospels signified in profane Greek an actor, one who played a role on the stage that was not his true

persona. The subject of hypocrisy merits particular attention in a work on homosexuality if only because many reference works (such as the three editions of the *Great Soviet Encyclopedia* and the new, multi-volume *Theologische Realenzyklopädie*) have no entry for it at all, and even some religious encyclopedias merely summarize Jesus' reproaches to the scribes and Pharisees, as if hypocrisy had indeed flourished among the Jews in New Testament times but vanished with the triumph of Christianity.

In general terms, the hypocrite feigns a morality and a virtue that are foreign to his inner self. In a religious context, he attempts to deceive God by outward compliance with his commandments that masks the inner unbelief of the soul. For Jesus the hypocrisy of Pharisaic circles lay in their minute observance of the ritual and ceremonial laws of Judaism, while neglecting and even violating the moral precepts of their religion.

*Historical Considerations.* In the high Middle Ages the Christian Church established itself as an absolute moral authority within a closed system. From the end of the thirteenth century onward, it imposed upon the homosexuals of Western Europe a regime of lifelong hypocrisy if they were to exist within a society that rigorously tabooed every form of homoerotic attraction and gratification. They were obliged to profess an exclusive interest in the opposite sex, to engage in courtship and other heterosexual rituals, and even to enter marriages which they had not the slightest inclination or wish to consummate. The art of masking his true interests and desires became part of the socialization of every homosexual, a crux of his "human condition," and a lifelong burden and torment.

Donald Webster Cory (pseudonym of Edward Sagarin) wrote in his landmark *The Homosexual in America* (1951): "Society has handed me a mask to wear, a ukase that it shall never be lifted except in the presence of those who hide

with me behind its protective shadows. Everywhere I go, at all times and before all sections of society, I pretend. As my being rebels against the hypocrisy that is forced upon me, I realize that its greatest repercussion has been the wave of self-doubt that I must harbor. . . . And, though adamant, on an intellectual level, in my negative response [to this self-doubt], I find it difficult to reconcile self-pride with cowardice, abnegation, the wearing of the mask and the espousal of hypocrisy—in short, with an outward acceptance of the mores of the hostile society.”

Canon Derrick Sherwin Bailey asserted in his *Homosexuality and the Western Christian Tradition* (1955): “It is not as if, throughout the last two millennia, reluctant legislatures had been forced by the spiritual authority to enact laws and to prescribe punishments which they secretly detested. . . . In the Middle Ages ecclesiastic and layman, Church and State, were in principle unanimous . . . about the recompense meet for indulgence in homosexual practices.” But later in the same volume he pleads on behalf of the Church: “None of these enactments, as far as the evidence goes, seems to have been implemented by any vigorous campaign to suppress sodomy or to exterminate the pederast. . . . There is no proof that large numbers of persons were put to death simply and solely because they had committed some homosexual offence. Indeed, it is doubtful whether such delinquents were ever handed over by the Church to the civil power after conviction in the ecclesiastical courts. . . . In practice homosexual offenders only became liable to the severity of the law if their behaviour was attributable to heretical ideas, or if immorality in conduct was accompanied by grave error in belief.”

In other words, medieval legislators unanimously held that the crime of Sodom—because it threatened the community with divine retribution—merited the penalty of death, but after enacting the appropriate laws enforced them only in

rare and exceptional cases where the accused was guilty as well of heresy. A fuller confession of the hypocrisy of church and state in regard to homosexuality could hardly be imagined. And in fact, prosecutions were sporadic, often limited to brief periods during which the populace was excited by religious fanatics, and never succeeded in apprehending a majority of those engaging in such “unnatural” practices. But as a result of the policy of the Church, homosexuals were driven to the margin of Christian society to eke out a clandestine existence fraught with illegality and insecurity, the prey of police informers and blackmailers, and always exposed to extortion, robbery, and violence.

*Contemporary Forms.* On the subject of homosexuality cowardice and hypocrisy have long been second nature. The compulsion to play the hypocrite was a straitjacket that tore into the flesh of every homosexual in the Western world, yet was also the *Tarnhelm*, the cap that made him invisible to an uncomprehending and vindictive society. That this form of medieval intolerance should have survived into the last quarter of the twentieth century bears witness to the tenacity with which the church clings to its medieval beliefs, even in the midst of an otherwise enlightened political order.

The newest guise of hypocrisy has been the assertion of not a few theologians and church bodies that “the homosexual condition” is morally neutral, but that every expression of it is unnatural and immoral, that church and society should accept the homosexual but only on the condition that he refrain from his perverted behavior. But what practical value can such toleration have for the exclusively homosexual individual? It would accord him no more right to sexual expression than he had in the late Middle Ages; the difference is one of terminology, not of substance. Another argument is that “society should keep the laws against sodomy on the books but not enforce them”

in order to express its disapproval of homosexual conduct. Such a policy violates elementary principles of jurisprudence, namely that the subject of the law should know his rights and obligations and that the law should be enforced uniformly, not sporadically or capriciously. Having seldom enforced statutes on the books invites random violence against victims who know that the law affords them no protection, while sanctioning arbitrary acts of police power and encouraging police harassment and corruption that in turn strengthen the grip of the underworld on the public life of the gay community.

*Critique.* Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn, in his *Letter to the Soviet Leaders* (1974), writes of the official ideology of Marxism-Leninism: "In our country today *nothing constructive rests upon it*; it is a sham, cardboard, theatrical prop—take it away and nothing will collapse, nothing will even wobble. . . . The ideology does nothing now but sap our strength and bind us. It clogs up the whole life of society—minds, tongues, radio and press—with lies, lies, lies. For how else can something dead pretend that it is living except by erecting a scaffolding of lies?" All this is true, *mutatis mutandis*, of the situation of the

homosexual in Western society: nothing constructive rests upon the official ideology of obligatory heterosexuality; take it away and nothing will collapse or even wobble. The fiction of an ascetic morality does nothing but sap the strength of homosexuals and bind them; it clogs up their entire lives with lies, lies, lies. Acceptance of the principle that the individual should be forthright about his sexual interests and orientation—even while respecting the citizen's right to the privacy of his sexual acts—is the precondition for dealing honestly with the problems of sexual life and for promoting the legitimate goals of the state as they pertain to sexual activity and its consequences. The demand of the gay liberation movement for the right to "come out," to live one's sexual life truthfully and unashamedly, to end the regime of obligatory heterosexuality, parallels Solzhenitsyn's appeal to the Soviet leadership to end the anachronistic rule of unanimity and conformity in political life. This goal—the end of hypocrisy in sexual life—will serve a higher morality than the one which condemns every expression of the erotic impulse as "sinful" and strives for asexuality as a glorious ideal.

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