

man homophile movement. In a two-volume work of 1917–19, *Die Rolle der Erotik in der männlichen Gesellschaft* [The Role of the Erotic in Male Society], he divided homosexuals into three types: the “heroic male,” the effeminate invert, and the suppressed homosexual. Society was in his view organized around two institutions, the family and the state. The first was by its very nature heterosexual, the second had its basis in male bonding—with homoerotic overtones. He was also an anti-Semitic thinker who played a part in the right-wing politics of homosexual paramilitary cliques under the Weimar Republic. In later years, increasingly departing from his earlier concerns, Blüher evolved a somewhat murky metaphysics of Christianity and nature. He was twice married and had two children. Despite his fame as the author of two major books on homosexuality the Nazis left him alone. At the close of his life he composed his memoirs under the title *Works and Days*.

### BODY LANGUAGE

See *Gesture and Body Language*.

### BOHEMIANISM

The expression *La Bohème* first emerged in Paris in the 1840s, where it denoted a segment of urban life characterized by a mixture of semiunderground figures—mountebanks, fixers, petty criminals, and prostitutes along with struggling, impoverished writers and artists—and the free use of alcohol and other stimulants. The term derives not from the Bohemia (Bohême) that is now a part of Czechoslovakia, but from the gypsies, to whom that geographic origin was erroneously ascribed. The fame of the Parisian Bohème led to the detection of others (which had probably been in existence for some time) in the major cities of Europe and North America. A typical feature of bohemia was emancipation from the family with its values and constraints. Contrary to outsiders’ impres-

sion of its being disorganized, bohemia had its fixed meeting places—the café being of central importance—and its press.

This urban phenomenon is obviously older than the name itself. A text by Richard of Devizes pertaining to London in the twelfth century shows homosexuals living in the company of other denizens of the urban demimonde. At the end of the Middle Ages a Cologne text of 1484 points to the existence of a homosexual subculture with regular meeting places, known habitues, and the like. A group of difficult jargon poems of François Villon (b. 1431) has been given an interpretation which would reveal their author as a homosexual situated in just such a milieu in mid-fifteenth-century Paris. Most Italian cities, including Venice and Florence, had such groups.

The gay side of Paris under the early Third Republic is illuminated by the classic relationship of the poets Rimbaud and Verlaine. Francis Carco’s novel *Jésus-la-Caille* (1910) paints a convincing picture of the life of a bisexual hustler in the French capital during the Belle Époque. In the United States the archetypal bohemias were in New York City: the Greenwich Village and Harlem of the 1920s. The Greenwich Village poet Maxwell Bodenheim (1893–1954) openly admitted his bisexuality in his autobiography, and popular journalism affords occasional glimpses of cafes and bars frequented by homosexuals in the interwar period. Outside New York City, the most fertile ground for imitation of the “bohemian” lifestyle was the elite college campus, where students (and ex-students) emancipated from the surveillance of their families could revel in the freedom of late adolescence without adult responsibilities. Bohemian cafés, though their patrons may have been “mixed,” were clearly the ancestors of today’s gay and lesbian establishments. The nationwide Prohibition of alcohol as a result of the passage of the Eighteenth Amendment in 1919 caused speakeasies to spring up in every city, but with a

particular concentration in the bohemian quarters. While attracting a more varied and upscale clientele, these mob-protected bars created a new interface between bohemia and crime. Then, when Prohibition was repealed in 1933 much of the acquired aura of clandestinity—and the need for payoffs—lingered in gay bars in the bohemian quarters, where the effects of sleazy, specious glamor and the aura of the forbidden were not to disappear until the 1960s.

The **beatniks and hippies** of this period sanctioned sexual experimentation along with the use of consciousness-expanding drugs and similar avenues of secession from the constraints of American middle-class life. To a considerable extent, the post-1969 phase of the gay movement was launched from the social base of an "alternative" culture in the metropolitan bohemias whose residents were not threatened by the ostracism and economic boycott that would have befallen known activists in Middle America.

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### **BOISROBERT, FRANÇOIS LE METEL DE (1592-1662)**

Courtier of Cardinal Richelieu and founder of the French Academy. Born in Caen, he practiced law briefly in Rouen, but after some legal troubles in that city he left for Paris with letters of recommendation to highly placed personalities. In the French capital he soon gave proof of his lifelong talent for insinuating himself in to circles of pretty and educated women whom he flattered and entertained. In time a sexual interest in the handsome pages who adorned the court of Louis XIII awakened in him, and he exhibited a feminine delight in appearing publicly in elegant

and luxurious clothing. But at the same time he evinced a wit and humor, a gift for storytelling, that made him a favorite of Cardinal Richelieu. He knew how to wound and stigmatize some, to flatter and cajole others. Though not high-born or brilliant, he gained access to the highest circles thanks to the Cardinal's protection, and in spite of his undisguised sexual proclivities. "He could have given the Greeks lessons in how to make love," said a contemporary, and he even earned the sobriquet of "the mayor of Sodom." His position at court he also used to intercede on behalf of less talented and needy men of letters. As a token of his favor Richelieu conferred the title of canon at Rouen on Boisrobert, but this in no way changed his lifestyle.

At this time a group of writers assembled weekly in a remote corner of Paris to discuss matters of language and literature, and out of this Boisrobert created an association with formal membership and statutes—the French Academy, admission to which became a coveted symbol of recognition as a *littérateur* of the first rank; and at the outset it was Boisrobert's personal recommendation that mattered, and he presided over the Academy with elegance and refinement. An incident at the theatre cost him the favor of the monarch, and he was exiled to Rouen, but returned as Cardinal Richelieu was dying (1642). In favor again, he encountered hostility from the grammarian and lexicographer Gilles Ménage, who railed at him as "Cet admirable Pathelin/Aimant le genre masculin" [That admirable pathetic/Loving the masculine gender]. After a further mishap that led to a second exile in Rouen, the courtier returned to bask in the favor of the ladies of the court, with whom he had a feminine identification that made them overlook or forgive his own erotic proclivity for pages and manservants. With a physique reminiscent of a fragile statuette he combined a charm that enabled him to empathize with the female sex and to play the role of courtier with skill and