

Harold. Because of the intense homophobia of English society these poems were ostensibly addressed to a woman, as the name "Thyrza" and Byron's use of feminine pronouns implied.

During his first journey to Greece (1809–11) Byron was involved in several liaisons with Greek boys. One of them, Nicolò Giraud, he made his heir when he returned to England. Details of these affairs appear in letters to his friend John Cam Hobhouse, sometimes in a Latin code. Rumors about Byron's homosexual adventures, circulated in London by Byron's ex-mistress Lady Caroline Lamb after Byron's wife left him, were a principal reason for Byron's being forced to go into exile; publicity about his love affair with his half-sister, Augusta Leigh, compounded the scandal. We know nothing more of the homosexual side of Byron's life until his final return to Greece. There he fell in love with the fifteen-year-old Loukas Chalandritsanos, a young soldier in the Greece resistance movement, whose family he had befriended. Byron's last three poems, "On This Day I Complete My Thirty-Sixth Year," "Last Words on Greece," and "Love and Death," poignantly describe his love for Loukas, which was not reciprocated.

Byron died at Missolonghi attempting to provide financial and military aid for the Greeks while under the spell of this "maddening fascination," as he called it.

Byron's bisexuality remained a secret from the general public until 1935, when Peter Quennel broached the subject in *Byron: The Years of Fame*. A surreptitiously published erotic poem, *Don Leon*, purporting to be Byron's lost autobiography, probably written in 1833, had set forth many of the facts about Byron's homosexuality but was dismissed as an unwarranted libel. An edition appeared in 1866 but it remained unknown to all but a few specialists. When the Fortune Press reprinted it in 1934, the publication was confiscated by the British police.

BIBLIOGRAPHY. Louis Crompton, *Byron and Greek Love: Homophobia in 19th-Century England*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985; Leslie A. Marchand, *Byron: A Biography*, 3 vols., New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1957; Doris Langley Moore, *Lord Byron: Accounts Rendered*, London: John Murray, 1974 (Appendix 2: Byron's Sexual Ambivalence).

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BYZANTINE EMPIRE

Like China and Egypt this Greek Empire was known for its stability and conservatism. Held together by fidelity to Orthodox Christianity and Roman law, the Byzantine Empire evolved over eleven centuries. This development falls into three distinct formations: 330–711, 711–1071, 1071–1453, each about half the size of the previous. Beginning in 641 the empire lost Asian and African provinces to Islam; in 1071 half of Anatolia fell to the Turks. Byzantium defended Europe from invaders in spite of bitter religious squabbles involving monks and heretics.

Basic Features. The beginning of the Byzantine empire, also known as the Eastern or East Roman Empire, is usually placed at A.D. 330, when Constantine the Great founded his new capital, Constantinople, on the ancient site of Byzantium (now Istanbul). From the first the new city was Christian, but many of its institutions, including the Senate and the law code, continued the traditions of ancient Rome. Latin was the official language until the reign of Justinian, but Greek was from the start the language of commerce and intellectual life. The imperial administration, which never wavered in its policy of antihomosexual repression, managed largely to drive same-sex love underground. Yet some of the dearth of current knowledge of Byzantine homosexuality is probably owing simply to inadequate attention by modern scholars.

Byzantine monks and scholars did copy and transmit many ancient Greek pederastic texts, including the twelfth book