



## IBYCUS (SIXTH CENTURY B.C.)

Greek lyric poet. Ibycus sprang from a noble family of Rhegium in Magna Grecia. His lyrical narrative poems liberally endowed myths with pederasty. Refusing to become a tyrant at home, he went to the court of the pederastic tyrant Polycrates. Wealthy from commerce and piracy, Polycrates raised Samos to the forefront of Hellenic art and literature. In fear of conspiracies, he burned the palestrae (gymnasia), forcing Pythagoras into exile, where he became one of the first homosexual exiles and émigrés. Soon thereafter the Persians crucified him in 522 and sent Ibycus and Simonides into exile, where Ibycus sang of love in his old age—especially of love for the tyrant's son.

The Alexandrian scholars collected his poems in seven books: choral poems and encomia, and a great many love poems, hardly any of which have survived because of the ravages of time and Christian disapprobation. Cicero deemed him more amorous than Sappho's compatriot Alcaeus—perhaps the first pederastic poet, or even Anacreon—and the *Greek Anthology* described him as one who "culled the sweet bloom of Persuasion and of the love of lads." Because Horace, Catullus, and some poets of the *Greek Anthology* imitated him, one can derive a fair picture of his carefree, insouciant, promiscuous loves. To one of his eromenoi he wrote: "Euryalus, offshoot of charming graces, object of the fair-haired maidens' care, Cypris and mild-eyed Persuasion have reared you in the midst of rosy flowers" (fr. 6).

William A. Percy

## IDENTITY

Individual identity may be defined as a sense of the unity and persistence of personality or core consciousness, an awareness of a stable framework of self, related to but separate from the surrounding environment. One of the pitfalls of the term is that the existence of a *sense* of identity as so described may be considered tantamount to proof that such a unitary, persistent, stable self is an actual fact. This last assumption has sometimes been rejected (e.g., by Buddhists). Psychologically, identity seems to be much more fluid objectively than subjectively. While the word is in common circulation, it remains an ambiguous term, and even to some psychologists a dangerously misleading one.

*Basic Features.* In 1690 the English philosopher John Locke wrote of identity in the psychological sense as "that sameness of rational being." By 1820 Washington Irving had posited the idea of loss of identity in the case of a character who was not sure whether he was himself or another person. In the 1960s the psychoanalyst Erik Erikson popularized the notion of an "identity crisis" as an "interval between youth and adulthood" when one seeks to achieve an inner and outer coherence following a break away from the parent-derived identity and the beginnings of a new adult sense of self.

In addition to the concept of an individual identity, there is the notion of a group-derived but individually self-applied social identity which may be lifelong (e.g., being a female or an Italian) or may change over time (e.g., being a football player or a stockbroker). Group-derived identities are seldom unitary in any sense, as each indi-