

named directly was familiar to the early Christians. The Book of Wisdom (14:17) had spoken of "worshipping of idols not to be named." Latin pagan usage supplies *infandus*, "unspeakable, abominable" and *nefandus*, "impious, heinous," both sometimes used of sexual conduct (cf. the later *vitium nefandum*; in some Spanish texts sodomites are curtly termed *nefandarios*). Primitive societies, of course, observe taboos on certain words either because the objects they designate are too dangerous or too numinously sacred to be mentioned outright. In early Christian thought, Dionysius the Areopagite (ca. 500) evolved his "negative (or apophatic) theology," which held that God's attributes are too incomprehensible to limited human reason even to be mentioned. Thus by a curious irony, the Christian Trinity and the sodomites are linked in their ineffability/unspeakability.

In ordinary parlance today, this taboo on naming homosexuality sometimes takes the form of deleting any specific word for it, e.g., "Is he. . . ?" "Is she that way?" or "Could he be one?" (often accompanied by a raising of the eyebrows or the simulation of a limp wrist). One can find numerous instances of it in twentieth-century fiction, film, and lyrics, where oblique references are left as clues but the clear words are missing. With the widespread publicity accompanying the gay liberation movement in the 1970s, however, the taboo seems to have been finally vanquished, its obituary phrased in the apocryphal enhancement: "The love that dared not speak its name . . . now scarcely ever shuts up."

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NAPOLEON BONAPARTE (1769–1821)

General and Emperor of France. Homosexuality was ascribed to Napoleon by such writers as Sir Richard Burton and Auguste Cabanès, and more recently, though no more convincingly, by Major

General Frank M. Richardson in *Mars without Venus* (Edinburgh, 1981). In particular the Emperor was accused of an erotic liaison with General Duroc, the Grand Marshal of his palace. Duroc, born in 1772, became the adjutant of General Bonaparte in 1796 and was one of his close collaborators until fatally wounded by a grenade splinter at the battle of Wurtzen in 1813. During the height of Napoleon's power Duroc had been the one who attended to all his personal needs, both in France and on his travels, and the one who was privy to all the Emperor's love affairs. The death of such a faithful attendant naturally grieved Napoleon enormously, but there are no grounds for seeing their relationship as a homosexual one. Also, Napoleon never lacked women to gratify his sexual needs and desires, and all the evidence points to the heterosexual character of his passions. The only well-attested trait that would have given rise to the allegation of homosexuality is a somewhat feminine body build that became more pronounced as the Emperor grew older.

However, the personal attitude of Napoleon toward homosexuality needs to be mentioned, as it contrasts markedly with the homophobia of his contemporaries in England, where a virtual paranoia prevailed into the second decade of the nineteenth century. Napoleon selected the homosexual Cambacérès as his Arch-Chancellor, and because of his legal talents entrusted him with the redaction of the Code Napoléon (1810)—not a new document, but a collection of 28 separate codes that embodied all the legal reforms enacted since 1789, including the quiet disappearance of the provisions against sodomy that had been part of the penal law everywhere in Europe under the Old Regime. Hence Napoleon allowed to stand the decision of the Constituent Assembly in 1791 to omit sodomy from the list of sexual offenses—following the line of thought of Enlightenment criticism of the criminal legislation and practice of previ-

ous centuries. The prestige which Napoleon imparted to the new code by placing his name and seal on it was responsible for its widespread adoption, not only by the Catholic nations of Europe but by nearly the whole of Latin America as well. In this area of the law the First Empire completed and consolidated the work of the French Revolution, while in England the law reform of 1828 under Robert Peel not only left the law against **buggery** on the books but actually made it more punitive by narrowing the evidence required for conviction. So while there was no more psychological understanding of homosexuality in nineteenth-century France than in the eighteenth, the legal oppression of the homosexual as a capital offender whose crime was scarcely less heinous than murder ended forever, and the homophile movement in France was spared the need to fight decade-long battles for the irreducible minimum of toleration. The reign of Napoleon I is thus a landmark in the emancipation of the homosexual from medieval intolerance and outlawry.

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NARCISSUS

Greek mythological figure. A beautiful youth, he rejected the advances of the nymph Echo and was punished by Aphrodite with boundless self-love. One day, while drinking at a spring, he was smitten with his own image. With the object of his love unreachable, he fell more and more into lassitude and despair until he was changed into the flower that bears his name. His fate recalls that of other Greek youths who were changed into plants, such as Calamus and Ampelos, the companion of Dionysus.

His fame was revived in the Renaissance when Narcissus was often shown in paintings, where the depiction of the

image seen in reflection offers a pretext for bravura effects of illusionism. Havelock Ellis cited the name in his discussion of self-contemplation as a psychodynamic fixation in 1898, and the term *Narzissismus* was coined in German by Paul Näcke in his book *Die sexuellen Perversitäten* of the following year. The term was picked up by Freud in 1910. In his view it applied to homosexuals, "who take themselves as a sexual object; they begin with narcissism and seek out young men who resemble them whom they can love as their mother loved them." In the following year, in his discussion of the Schreber case, Freud suggested that narcissism was a stage in human psychic development: "the subject begins by taking himself, his own body as love object." In his revised perspective it was the original universal condition, out of which object love later developed, without necessarily effacing the narcissism altogether. Inevitably psychoanalysts linked narcissism to homosexual behavior and masturbation as immature forms of gratification. Later Jacques Lacan was to make the "mirror stage" a cornerstone of his own creative reinterpretation of Freud's thought.

In popular-culture criticism of the 1970s narcissism became an epithet that served to excoriate the self-absorption of the "me generation." Such journalistic usages illustrate the trickle-down of psychoanalysis into the general culture. In this polemical sense it is just a high-sounding term for selfishness.

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NATIONALISM

Born of the French Revolution, mass nationalism spread across Europe during the nineteenth century, and, in reaction to colonialism, beginning with Japan in 1867, to the rest of the world. It triumphed after World War II even in areas in Africa that had never been distinct or unified before they became colonies a century earlier.