

20. *Relaxed*

Die Sprache verkleidet den Gedanken.

RELAXED, you “heterosexual,” you!
 With sleeves ripped out, your shirt’s so hot! So we
 in thirst consume non-alcoholic brew.
 The tavern’s “gay.” And there’s a friend we see!
 So bold, you grin and greet him, boasting, “I
 am Vern’s boy toy this night.” It’s comedy,
 but still I’m flattered flat that you would try,
 switch, swap, shift, explore bespoke identity —
 which masks, but cannot modify, what’s real.
 All labels, roles are just *parlando* play,
 as from the holy Whole some parts we steal,
 all blessed thieves redeemed: straight-trans-bi-and-gay.
 And you and I both know what grasps us most:
 Incarnate Love who is our sacred Host.

The EPIGRAPH, “Language disguises thought,” is from Ludwig Wittgenstein, 1921 *Logisch-philosophische Abhandlung (Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus)*, 4.002. This sonnet suggests the “construction of sexuality.” Others favor a current view that sexual “orientation” is inborn. Some argue that sex is biological but sexuality is a cultural construct. Some constructionists identify at least four factors in sexual behavior: [1] possible genetic, epigenetic, and other biological predisposition, [2] ‘imprinting’ at a crucial age of developing sexual attraction, before one’s memory is set, when one profoundly notices someone of the same or opposite sex; this also explains why goslings at a phase-sensitive time will imprint on a person as if the human is their mother, [3] social sexual conditioning such as same-sex pairing in ancient Sparta, and [4] situations such as youthful experimentation and confinement in single-sex environments. Sexual-social expressions like the Samoan *fa’afafine* are sometimes called a third sex. Others simply say there are at least as many forms of sexuality as there are people on the planet. Instead of analogizing sexual interest to things that are relatively unchangeable, like one’s height or the pattern of blood vessels in one’s eye, a better comparison might be to the clothes one wears; different cultures and circumstances provide togas, kilts, trousers, jeans, speedos, cassocks, pajamas, and so forth, showing the extents of the statement, “clothes make the man.” A classic study on this subject is David F Greenberg, *The Construction of Homosexuality*, 1988. In popular culture, Gore Vidal (whose 1968 *Myra Breckinridge* raises such issues) considered sexual identities as false categories used to oppress people. See books by Judith Butler. Some studies suggest genetic differences account for roughly one-third of variation in same-sex behavior. A “gay” genetically identical twin is as likely to have a “heterosexual” twin than not. Androgynous and transgender persons may illustrate the complicated interplay between sex and sexuality → «Don’t Ask + Even Zeus + Sacred Play».
Labels: “The lover is a veil; all is Beloved” says Rumi in the *Masnavi* of the individual and God. **Parlando:** declamation sung as spoken. **Host,** from *hostia*, sacrificial victim, is a term for sacramental bread in the Eucharist to celebrate the Resurrected Christ.