

From Platonic Love to Mimic Love: The Psychic Implications of a Thousand-Year-Old Homophobia

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To cite this article:

Sylvain Tousseul. From Platonic Love to Mimic Love: The Psychic Implications of a Thousand-Year-Old Homophobia. *American Journal of Psychiatry and Neuroscience*. Vol. 10, No. 1, 2022, pp. 26-38. doi: 10.11648/j.ajpn.20221001.15

Received: February 1, 2022; **Accepted:** February 23, 2022; **Published:** February 28, 2022

Abstract: In Ancient Greece, Platonic love referred to a sexual, intellectual, and emotional relationship between two men, one young and one older. It was the most valued relationship by the Greeks, but it was censured by Christians. They redefined platonic love as a friendly relationship because they have made heterosexuality the exclusive basis of their society. Their intention was to produce as many humans as possible in order to colonize other populations. Later, secular democracies have resumed their purpose by repressing homosexuals ever more violently. Their extermination caused no judgment, no compensation, for no country. Still today, homosexuals represent internationally what men should not be and are usually the whipping boy. Although a great part of the culture was made by them, no society values them. On the contrary, all of them seem to censor the sexual inclinations of their great men. Homosexuality is rather presented as a marginality, a sin, a disease, or a defect that should be avoided. It can generate aggression in those who perceive it, and it causes fear, shame, or guilt in those who experience it. All these feelings that gays internalize, lead them to submit to the only social model that exists in the West: heteronormativity. Moreover, censorship let them think that there is no other social norm than reproduction. So instead of questioning it and creating homonormativities as it existed before the Christian era, they identify with heterosexuals and mimic their way of life. They also want to live together, to start a family, to marry, to be faithful, to have children by assisting reproduction/surrogacy, or by adopting if the heterosexuals of their country allowed them to do so. From the platonic love that valued homosexuality to the mimic love that denies it, gays of the West are therefore driven to imitate heterosexuals, without being aware of the psychic process that lead them to it. Some of them break free and invent their own way of life by doing psychotherapy with a professional who is himself aware of the situation, but outside of this case, most of gays remain locked in a heteronormative model that oppresses them. Would recognition of censorship and crimes they have been victims of for millennia allow them to emancipate from the identification with their aggressors and from the heteronormativity?

Keywords: Platonic Love, Mimic Love, Homosexuality, Homophobia, Heteronormativity, Heterosexuality, Identification with the Aggressor, Victim

1. Introduction

In Ancient Greece, love between men was the most valued of all, while the love that united men and women was the most depreciated. Later, with the arrival of Christianity, the trend was completely reversed: homosexuality became a sin to be combated or a disease to be eradicated, while heterosexuality became the only love allowed and celebrated by both monotheistic religions and secular states. In recent decades, a new trend has emerged in the West: homosexuals are demanding legal equality to live like heterosexuals. All these transformations raise the question: why was

homosexuality considered the ideal love in Plato's time, and conversely, why was heterosexuality perceived as lowly? How did homosexuals come to want to imitate heterosexuals, and why do they submit to heteronormativity instead of creating their own norms?

Our analysis will in no way propose to summarize two thousand years of homophobia or give an exhaustive overview of pre-Christian homophilia and pederasty, nor will it state that one period would be preferable to the other. It won't suggest other social models in replacement of the exclusively heterosexual one, nor will we make a detailed analysis of this exclusive heterosexuality. At best, we will

content ourselves with mentioning its political objective, that is, to produce as many humans as possible in order to maximize consumption and, above all, to spread them everywhere by imposing a set of morals and beliefs. Our reflection will also refrain from rejoicing or lamenting the "unnatural" situation to which this politico-religious program has led, i.e., it will not judge current populations on the almost systematic use they make of contraceptives when they wish to have sexual relations, nor on the environmental pollution that their massive use causes [1], nor even on the generalized pollution that overconsumption and overpopulation produce. We will not study the deleterious consequences generated by sexual censures to people's psychic health [2]. Finally, it is not a question here of establishing a list of the devastating excesses to which the exclusive and excluding heterosexuality has led to.

Although our historical, philosophical and psychopathological analysis will sometimes evoke these subjects, its stake is elsewhere. It will first try to briefly sketch the sexual practices of the pre-Christian era which idealized male homosexuality, in order to put them in parallel with those of the Judeo-Christian society which despised it. This will allow us to identify the reasons for these divergences and to highlight the censures which the Greek model was subject to. We will then specify the way in which current world monosexuality almost entirely evinced the polysexuality of the former world, to a point one could almost think the social model of Greek homosexuality never existed. Then, we will continue the comparison between the two societies in order to underline, in each of them, how individuals identify to the social norm. Among the Greeks, homosexual desires led to homonormative and socially valued achievements, while among the Westerners, they lead to desocialization – or to a heteronormative ersatz at best. Ultimately, we will show why the unconscious mind of today's homosexual man identifies with the despise that his desires arise in the heterosexual men, and how this identification with his aggressors leads him not only to copy their behaviors but also borrow their ideas.

2. From Platonic Love

2.1. Ideal Love Is Homosexual

Originally, the word "pederast" was a term used to name people who engaged in pederasty during Ancient Greece. The Ancient Greeks did not condemn pederasty, on the contrary, it was a moral and pedagogical institution that encouraged the relationship between a young boy and an adult, so that the older would educate the younger sexually and spiritually. The relationship began with a physical relationship, then intensified to become an intellectual relationship, before reaching the universal beautiful, as described by Plato in *The Symposium* [3]. Essentially pederasty was a journey similar to the journey towards knowledge – otherwise known as the allegory of the cave, which Plato describes in *The Republic* [4]–, in that it started

with the perceptible, before attaining the intelligible, and finally reaching the universal good. This ideal love described by Plato is the original so-called platonic love.

So how did platonic love go from describing physical love between a young boy and an older man to describing love without sexual intercourse in common parlance? The question may seem anecdotal, but it is actually a perfect illustration of the thousand-year history of censorship and exclusion homosexuals have been victims of. Indeed, Plato never wrote that the relationship between men should not be sexual, as we shall see. Some also suggest that pederasty did not involve penetrative sex and that the older man simply rubbed his penis between the legs of the younger man, as Dover for instance has endeavoured to show [5]. But this is a fabrication, even though it is ingeniously based on actual archives. The speeches and representations of Ancient Greece that Dover uses are indeed illustrations of sexual intercourse between men that seem to show rubbing than penetration, but most of the documents collected were intended for a wide audience. The Greeks were rather modest and so did not openly display the details of sexual acts. It would never occur to anyone to say that our society merely simulates sexual acts because our public films do not show actual sexual activity. To claim this about the Ancient Greeks is therefore a subtle deception, and one hardly needs to be a historian to spot it. Foucault knew this perfectly well and three years after Dover he wrote that among the Greeks penetration was the "central and natural nucleus of all sexual acts" [6].

More specifically, the education of men was metaphorically viewed as knowledge that penetrates the body and fertilizes the mind. Not only did men practise sodomy, but they also practised internal ejaculation. The knowledge of the older man was to fill the mind of the younger man, that is, the sperm of the former had to fill the body of the latter, otherwise knowledge could not be transmitted. Brisson's uncensored version of *The Symposium* has made this clear and Dover [7] and other specialists have since confirmed it [8]. Socrates uses the very explicit metaphor of "water flowing [...] from the fullest to the emptiest cup" when he addresses Agathon, who is older than he is, and to whom he says: "I very much appreciate being seated on this bed beside you, for from you, I imagine, important and magnificent knowledge will flow to come and fill me". [9]. So why is there such a willingness on the part of Western societies for Platonic love to be devoid of sex? At the beginning of our era, Christianity was in its infancy and set itself the task of spreading as widely as possible by converting peoples and multiplying its followers [10]. This involved banning non-reproductive sexual practices, which in turn explains why the ideal love described by Plato was censured, as well as why relationships between men all ended up being banned and condemned in the name of Christian expansion. Yet it is noteworthy that relationships between men were common in Ancient Rome [11], among the Celts [12] and in Gaul [13]. So how did this censorship and these prohibitions and condemnations come about?

Insofar as Christianity largely takes Greek philosophy as the basis for its knowledge [14], it could hardly entirely erase Plato. Christians therefore made do with censoring Plato in various ways. It should be noted that the concept of homosexuality was invented in the 19th century [15], and the use of the word in this article is merely for ease of reading. The Ancient Greeks practiced all forms of sexuality, but not all of them in the same way, as they were supposed to depend on to the status, age and gender of each person [16]. Among them, pederastic love was considered the most ideal because it involved the three types of love that the Greeks had conceptualized: sexual desire, in this case that of the older for the beauty of the younger, and possibly the sexual desire of the younger for the virility of the older (Eros love); the desire to educate for the older man, and the desire to learn for the younger man (Philia love); and finally emotional desire, which is considered the most beautiful between two people of the same sex because it implies a complicity that two people of different sexes cannot have [17]. The association of the three types of love thus put pederastic love at the top of the hierarchy of the various forms of love among the Greeks [3]. *The Symposium* is a reflection that mainly concerns Eros, i.e. sexual love, so that the concepts of Philia and Agape are not explicitly mentioned in the text, but they can be found as a watermark, especially in Plato's description of ideal love, since it goes from the sensory, Eros, to the intelligible, Philia, to reach the universal beautiful, Agape; in other words, respectively what is felt, transmitted and cherished.

If our analysis is based on the *Symposium*, it is not because it embodied the Bible to which all Greeks of Antiquity were subjected, but rather because it illustrates the morals of the time. There may be important differences between morality and the way it is applied in reality. It is therefore likely that not all Greeks shared the values presented in it, and when they did, they certainly did not apply them all the time. It is for example very likely that not all *erastês* who sodomized *erômenos* did so in order to pass on knowledge [18]. Nevertheless, pederasty was justified by its initiatory function. In the same way as today, exclusive heterosexuality is justified by an intensive production of humans, although, in reality, the vast majority of sexual relations do not aim at procreation, most of the time consisting in avoiding it. Indeed, the Judeo-Christian morality in France inculcates the idea that sexual relationships must serve for procreation. Even atheists were taught this idea at school until 2019 in biology class [19]. The vast majority of French people are convinced that sexuality is for reproduction, and yet they almost all use contraceptives when they have sex [20]. Therefore, the gaps between morality and how it is applied in reality can sometimes be large and even antagonistic. This is why it is worth pointing out that not all sexual relationships engaged by the Greeks were motivated by the moral values presented by Plato in the text.

It's also worth noticing that knowledge was reserved for men. Accordingly, ideal love was of particular concern to men, while women were hardly considered relevant [21]. In

fact, Plato only briefly mentions lesbian love, because Hellenistic society was based on male domination which restricted the role of women to the private sphere. Knowledge and politics were reserved for men, with the result that love between women was for the most part invisible, much like in today's society [22]. But since it was by no means banned, and since love between men was very common, we can assume that love between women was also common. The fact that the Greeks spoke little about love between women, is a reflection of their disregard for women in general. Plato however did discuss love between women, namely speaking in glowing terms of Sappho, whom he referred to as "the tenth muse". Sappho ran a 'thiasos', which was a sort of pederastic institution but for women. The education provided there was limited to preparing women for marriage and for running their homes. Sappho was known for writing love poems, especially for those she was in love with. She often accompanied them with music, and her works were so well appreciated by everyone, including men, that she became the most famous person in Lesbos. Which explains why her name, and that of the island she lived on, came to refer to her sexual which is known today as sapphism or lesbianism. Many of her writings disappeared after her death and almost all of those that had been preserved were burnt by the Christians in the 11th century. Sadly, only a few fragments have survived, including an unpublished one that has recently been translated into French [23].

Plato's censorship and Sappho's autodafé show the stubbornness with which the Christians ensure that nothing could be carried down from Hellenistic customs. Notwithstanding, love between women *did* exist among the Greeks, even if its visibility was limited. Similarly, lesbianism today is mostly invisible because it often seems unthinkable that women could experience sexual pleasure without men [24].

2.2. *Heterosexual Love Is Trivial*

In fact, the most important difference in morals between Ancient Greece and the present day undoubtedly concerns heterosexuality. In Greece, it was often devalued and considered only as a utilitarian practice. The fact that heterosexuality could not find other justification than that of reproduction, made it trivial and relatively uninteresting [25]. Plato, however, attempted a defence of heterosexuality through the creation of a kind of myth in which all forms of love are equal. There is no previous trace of Plato's fable, nor did any of his contemporaries refer to it. This suggests that Plato did in fact invent it and that it was his attempt to place heterosexual love on the same level as homosexual love. Plato's myth, which he improvised because the occasion required it, states that in the past there were three genders: masculine, feminine and androgynous. These human beings had four arms, four legs and two heads. Some were entirely masculine, others entirely feminine, while the androgynous beings were both male and female. When these human beings tried to rebel against the Gods, they suffered their wrath and were split in two, which condemned them to constantly

search for their halves, whether male or female. Plato's myth thus puts all forms of love on the same level [26]: men who seek their male half, women who seek their female half, and the androgynous women who will give birth to what the 19th century will term heterosexuals in [27] because their male part seeks their female part, and vice versa. This fable shows that Plato was faced with a true predicament in finding a justification for heterosexuality that was other than reproduction.

Pederasty was indeed the most valued relationship in Ancient Greece, and even though relationships between men of the same age were frowned upon, they were nevertheless frequent, as the comedies of the time testify [28]. Homosexuality was the norm, while heterosexuality was hardly practised outside of reproductive purposes. In this Hellenistic context, heterosexuality was considered a trivial matter, not only in the etymological sense of trivium – three ways – since heterosexuality is the third possible way of the fable, but also in the current meaning of the word – low, worthless and thoughtless behaviour –, since it demeans man to the same level as that of the animal. Heterosexuality's purpose is merely reproductive, it does not allow him to rise above other mammals. Heterosexuality in Hellenistic society was also seen as trivial because it was a rite of passage that most men went through in their lives. It was indeed the moment when they became citizens, took part in the political life of the City, got married and ensured that their descendancy – this usually happened after the age of 30 [29]. It should however be noted that the majority of men continued to have homosexual relations with younger people, or even with people their own age, even after their heterosexual marriage. In many respects, Ancient Greek morals were therefore radically different from ours, namely because heterosexuality was considered to be a trivial matter, so much so that it was hardly worth examining. Plato established an unequivocal hierarchy between immortality by procreation and immortality by the creation of ideas. The first is heterosexuality, the least valuable, the second is male homosexuality, the most valuable, and between the two is female homosexuality [30, 31].

However, many critics of Plato are reluctant to accept it, probably because of their own heterosexuality, generating the most far-fetched hypotheses to explain this fable. Some believe that Plato was "a social heterosexual" [32], others think that he was "a misogynist, a paedophile and a feminist" [33], still others imagine that Plato had pregnancy fantasies because he used metaphors of pregnant women [34], and some shamelessly indulge in drawing a psychological portrait of Plato [35] even though we know precious little about his intimate life [36]. To understand Plato's fable, we may recall that Plato was a philosopher who almost systematically used dialectics in his work [37]. Dialectics is a method that advocates starting by presenting a thesis – often the most widespread opinion or 'doxa' –, then finding arguments to contradict one's initial thesis – the so-called antithesis –, and finally overcoming this duality – the so-called synthesis. Homosexuality as an inherently more valuable sexual practice

than heterosexuality, was a widespread thesis at the time. Accordingly, in the beginning of *The Symposium* [38] Plato argued this point. The characters then struggled to continue the dialogue and produce an antithesis. Plato seemed to have run out of arguments and, unable to defend heterosexuality's supremacy over homosexuality, he attempted to confer upon it a value at least equivalent to that of homosexuality. Hence Plato invented a fable [39] to illustrate his antithesis. It should be given no more meaning or weight than its creator intended for it to have. But Christians saw a golden opportunity to feed their religious propaganda and they seized on it, happily ignoring the fact that Plato's defence of heterosexuality was no more than dialectics.

Thus, when Plato's fable reached us it had been transformed by Christian censorship and infused with popular notions, such as love consisting in finding one's other half or soulmate, and the so-called complementarity between men and women [40]. On the other hand, the part of Plato's myth that spoke of two men or two women complementing each other had been banned. This censorship allowed Christianity to promote the idea that only heterosexuals were complementary, whereas in Plato's fable complementarity originally referred to a love that unites two people, not to a specific sexual practice, or a gender. In other words, Plato's fable was chopped and changed in an attempt to naturalize heterosexuality. We might nevertheless recall that, in reality – irrespective of their sexual preference – human beings are already complete and do not need completing, whether by a man or a woman. Christians also argued that heterosexuality was natural, while homosexuality was "unnatural" [41], based on the fact that animals practiced the former. In fact, the Greeks had precisely opposing values, since they considered it beneath them to have the same type of sexual intercourse as animals. The Ancient Greeks and the Christians both used the same example, but twisted it into opposing arguments! It is also amusing to note that both sides presupposed that animal sexuality was heterosexual, when in fact hundreds of species have been recorded as being homosexual as well [42].

And so, what the Greeks regarded as the most vulgar form of love was erected as the noblest by the Christians who chose to impose their views on the Western world, to the exclusion of all others. But how did the Christians manage to substantiate their views by using a philosophy – that of the Ancient Greeks – which proclaimed exactly the opposite – i.e., its disdain for heterosexuality?

2.3. *Western Love Is Homophobic*

The censorship of this Platonic fable is not enough to explain the successful disappearance of pederasty, since it was an institutionalized practice for over three thousand years from the Minoan period in 2700 BC to about the 5th century [43]. In fact, the Christians also built their rhetoric around one of the rare Greek exceptions openly claiming his heterosexuality. This was the philosopher Aristotle. Although Aristotle was the disciple of Plato and had sexual intercourse with him for years, as well as with several of his own

disciples, namely Alexander the Great, Aristotle advocated imitating animals in order to have a so-called natural sexuality [44] and avoid squandering the reproductive function of sperm [45]. The Christians gleefully recycles these two arguments – though one has to question whether the second argument was truly by Aristotle, since the source of the text has not been thoroughly established (*Ibidem*, Introduction). It is indeed possible that religious people produced this text in Aristotle's name.

In order to spread their propaganda, the Christians also relied on the fact that the general population could neither read nor write and had to rely on what priests told them. It was only during the Italian Renaissance that Marsile Ficin made one of the first Latin translations of *The Symposium*. Following the example of the Fathers of the Church who religiously condemned sexual practices between men [46] while incensing male friendships [47], Ficin removed the sexual dimension of ideal love from translation of Plato's work. Which is how "platonic love" came to refer to a love devoid of a physical relationship, similar to the friendly relations that Christianity encouraged between men during the Middle Ages. Today, the term "platonic love" is sometimes even used to refer to the fact that two people of different sexes do not have sexual relations, whether they are friends or not. In other words, the expression is no longer a reflection of the work it originated from.

How could one single – heavily edited – translation be enough to censor Plato's work for centuries? And why did the advent of secular democracies not bring about a return to the original work? As it happens, the advent of secular democracies did in fact bring about new translations. Victor Cousin paved the way in 1831/1832, followed by Dacier, Grou, Saisset and Chambry in 1932/1934. But although for an entire century various translations of *The Symposium* were published, each was more orthodox than the last, never altering the concept of Platonic love as Ficin had conceived it. Platonic love therefore continued to refer to an ideal love which one should not give into by experiencing it physically. The transition to secular democracies did nothing to change this. The new political regimes merely picked up where Judeo-Christian morality left off, but instead of preaching its morals in the name of God, they did so in the name of science [48] so that in the 19th century it was no longer the priest who ruled on the morality of various forms of sexuality, but the psychiatrist who decided what was normal and what was pathological [49]. Yet no scientific field has the legitimacy to authorize or forbid one sexuality or another since this is exclusively a matter of morality [50]. It was therefore as pseudo-scientific moralizers that psychiatrists of the time named each and every non-reproductive sexual practice [51] and proceeded to classify them as diseases. This allowed psychiatrists to treat those who practised these so-called pathological forms of sexuality as mentally ill, as well as justifying the eradication of homosexuality through all kinds of medical abuse [52]. Even today, some people still believe they are sick when they feel a same-sex attraction and this explains why they submit to ill-treatment by the doctors

who agree to 'treat' them.

Ultimately, the shift from political regimes based on religion to those based on science did nothing to change the way *The Symposium* was censored. On the other hand, the advent of Western democracies considerably amplified the condemnation of homosexuals, who were henceforth subjected to medical ill-treatment since they were considered sick. They were also criminally sentenced in many countries – ranging from imprisonment, to the death penalty, via forced labour [53], and they suffered systematic extermination under the Nazi regime [54]. Over the course of a century, the democratic regimes of the West were the tormentors, persecutors, torturers, and executioners of homosexuals; eventually proving far more relentless and murderous than the Inquisition. Indeed over a thousand years, the Inquisition 'only' organised a few sodomite pyres [55]. In fact, it should be noted that not all the "sodomites" of the old regime were homosexuals [56]. The term was used to refer to people who were open to anal pleasure, whether they were men or women, heterosexual or not. Psychic torture and killings thus took place mainly within the context of modern democracies. There was a decrease in the violence in 1973 when the gay community succeeded in pressuring American psychiatrists to stop considering their sexual orientation as a mental illness [57]. It took some 20 years for European psychiatrists to follow in their footsteps [58]. Then, when homosexuality ceased to be considered an illness in the West, new translations of *The Symposium* appeared, becoming more and more explicit, as that of A. Nehamas & P. Woodruff in the United States [59], or that of L. Brisson in France [60]. But apart from a few scholars and philosophers who use the expression in its original sense, for most people the expression 'platonic love' still denotes love without sex.

The censorship of *The Symposium* – probably one of the longest book censorships in Western history – ensured that there was no positive reference to a social model that valued a form of male homosexuality and – to a lesser extent – a form of female homosexuality. It was essential that love between men be presented to the population as a practice that was universally condemned. A man convinced that his attraction was not natural would accept that his country forbade homosexual activity; similarly, if a doctor claimed that this man's same-sex attraction was a disease, he would avoid practicing homosexuality; while if a priest told him that he risked going to hell, he would fear the consequences of homosexuality. No man would willingly self-censor his own desires if morals did not. Western men have thus denied themselves homosexual love or desires through fear of the risk entailed. This fear has led men to reject their own sexual desires for people of the same sex as them, as well as rejecting any men perceived as having sexual desire for them. These are the two main forms of homophobia [61]. In other words, the way that Western men love is essentially homophobic. Furthermore, male homosexuality went from being a social model before the Christian era, to becoming an anti-model [62]. Accordingly, male heterosexuality was not only built on desire for women, but on disgust for men [63]. This is why the

way of loving in the West is fundamentally homophobic.

However, from the second half of the 20th century onwards, as repression against homosexuals intensified, they began to resist persecution and asserting their presence. They eventually formed associations in order to assert their sexuality [64], and went on to claim equal rights, the right to live like heterosexuals, in hopes that one day their differences would disappear completely [65]. But why have homosexuals come to imitate heterosexuals [66] instead of creating their own way of life, as Foucault famously called on them to do? [67].

3. To Mimic Love

3.1. *Why Is Heterosexuality a Model*

Homosexual parents, for example, are keen to show that they are just as good parents as heterosexual parents [68], as if heterosexuals had taken the trouble to prove themselves to be good parents. Studies often simply prove that same-sex parenting is almost a carbon copy of heterosexual parenting. But there has been no reflections on the type of parenting would be appropriate. Indeed, it is clear that we do not have the tools to determine objective criteria for the assessment of good parenting [69]. Bowlby's attachment theory is one of the few important theories in the field of child development [70, 71]. Granted, not everyone is a historian, philosopher, anthropologist, psychologist, or scholar, in other words not everyone has the tools to analyse what parenting means, nevertheless it hard to understand how sexual orientation can ever have been considered a determining factor in the ability to raise children?

Why not declare that brown-eyed parents make better parents than blue-eyed ones? Simply put, people have not been systematically victims of physical and psychological discrimination for millennia because of the colour of their eyes, so one has thought to wonder whether eye colour is a factor in parenting abilities. There is no system of dominance based on eye colour, consequently no-one has to prove their value on that criteria. Conversely, homosexuals have accepted the idea that they must submit to heterosexuals, not only for fear of possible retaliation, but above all because they have interiorised guilt and shame from a very young age whenever they have felt a same-sex attraction. And it is because homosexuals feel indebted to those who allow them to exist that they submit to the various tests heterosexual normativity puts them through. If heterosexual society requires homosexuals to provide evidence that they are good parents, they conduct studies to prove it. This submission, born from fear, guilt and shame, follows the psychological process that Ferenczi calls "identification with the aggressor" [72]. In this process involves the victim takes the perpetrator as his role model (so-called identification) and accepts the perpetrator's rules as if they were his own. The victim submits out of fear, guilt, shame, or all three at once.

Surveys conducted with same-sex parents [73] show that respondents' primary concern is to establish that their family

is no different than a heterosexual family. Each time a difference appears, they hasten to erase it as best they can, because they have fully integrated the idea that they should resemble heterosexuals as much as possible. Many other details illustrate how homosexuals have taken heterosexuals as role models. For example, some identify with women, others with men, and so divide up household tasks according to the gender they have identified with. These identifications can even be found in the discourse of gay and lesbian activists discussing same-sex parenting [74]. Some homosexuals demand exclusivity from their partner, which is quite absurd when one stops to think about it, since the reason sexual fidelity was required of women under the Old Regime was to guarantee their children were legitimate. But two people of the same sex cannot have biological children together, so why make this rule their own, if not to imitate the model they have identified with?

In fact, it is very common among homosexuals to aspire towards sexual exclusivity [75], whether or not they choose to actually uphold this principle. This is often the result of an unconscious identification with the Judeo-Christian model which is far more pernicious than may appear. Indeed, homosexuals do not go as far as believing that they want to live by religious texts, but the texts nevertheless have a hold on them, and they feel that being homosexual does not give them the licence to behave 'badly' by "cheating" on their spouse. The use of the term "cheating" underscores the guilt that some homosexuals feel when they are not sexually exclusive, even when the spouse agrees, as if it were 'wrong' to desire and embrace another person [76]. The comments some homosexual men make during psychotherapy/psychoanalysis, indicate that they have taken on board the idea that being homosexual is somehow wrong, or at the very least not be completely normal. Thus, they feel that they cannot, on top of this, behave "badly" by not respecting their society's religious and State precepts. Moreover, it is not uncommon for homosexuals to always try to do better than others to compensate for their sexual orientation. This is why many gay men strive to be as exemplary as possible by seeking a "serious" and "stable" relationship. They imagine that sexual exclusivity is normal, even natural, when in reality it is exactly the opposite, since it is a social construct that goes against the very nature of sexual desires, the essence of which is to be fickle. As Freud says, the object "is what varies the most in the drive" [77]. For decades, psychiatrists have judged, shamed and labelled homosexuals, calling them 'unstable by nature', 'incapable of loving', 'fickle in their desires' [78]. As a result, many gay men fight their own impulses in order to maintain sexual exclusivity – a posture which makes no sense at all between people of the same sex and is obsolete between people of different sexes.

Even the most erudite homosexuals – those who know that psychiatry and psychoanalysis have erected homophobia as a social norm – have hardly been spared by this unconscious identification with the model of the Judeo-Christian couple. For example, D. Fernandez strives to show that homosexuals

can be stable and constant in their relationship, namely by summoning famous couples from Antiquity as evidence [79]. Yet, before Christianity, sexual exclusivity did not exist. At the time, in any given pre-Christian society [80] having only one sexual orientation was quite rare and tended to be regarded as somewhat original, meaning that having only one sexual partner was the exception, if not non-existent. Being in a stable relationship and sexual exclusivity are totally separate things, and stability would perhaps even be facilitated by extramarital sexual activity. Indeed, this could be a means of shielding the couple – from frustration when one partner does not feel like having sex, as well as preventing the need for one partner to ‘make an effort’ to please the other. Extramarital sexual activity can also help avoid frustration when one or both partners want other people, younger or older, or multiple partners – be it same-sex or of the opposite sex. Sex outside of the main relationship also helps avoid frustration when one partner wants to have sexual practices that the other does not want to have, or when the desired practices are incompatible with the image he or she has of the other. [81]. These are some of the reasons why extra-marital relationships undoubtedly contributed to the stability of couples before the Christian era.

In any case, it is often because homosexuals perceive their sexual orientation as a defect that they also try to be as blameless as possible, and to adhere as closely as possible to the hetero-normative morality of their society. This is how they sometimes come to want to be ‘more heterosexual than heterosexuals’, so to speak. Some even go as far as telling potential sexual partners that they are ‘straight’, as if that gave them more value, even though both parties are homosexual. The grotesque nature of these situations does not seem to block their identification to the aggressor, nor even help them increase their heterosexist awareness [82]. Finally, some homosexuals will either reproduce the forms of aggression of which they have been victims – by raping other homosexuals for instance –, or will discriminate against other homosexuals as they themselves have been discriminated against – for example by campaigning against equal rights for homosexuals while simultaneously asserting their own identity as homosexuals [83]. In other words, they do to others what was done to them, which is not uncommon when a person has identified with their aggressor, as Anna Freud [84] – herself both homosexual and homophobic – points out [85]. This psychological process can thus take two forms: either the victim submits and aspires to getting as close as possible to the model of his or her tormentor, or the victim repeats what he or she has suffered by doing it to others because the tormentor embodies a model [86].

This is why homosexuals want to be as good parents as heterosexuals, without ever wondering whether the model they were copying ever had to prove anything about being a good parent. In fact, they not only imitate the way that to be parent, but also their way of loving, their way of being in a relationship, their way of talking about themselves, their way of dividing up household chores, or their way of being a man

or a woman. Heterosexuality is undeniably their model. But how is it possible that homosexuals have identified to such an extent with their aggressors, when the birth of the LGBT movements in the 1960s was supposed to mark the beginning of their emancipation? Or put another way, why hasn't the awareness of homophobia put an end to these identification processes?

3.2. Do Homosexuals Cause Fear and Apprehension

The concept of homophobia was created by G. Weinberg in 1965 [87], then resumed by K. T. Smith in 1971 [88]. It is built on the Latin and Greek words, 'homo' and 'phobia' and refers to the fear of homosexuals. This neologism is thus formed like many others from the stem 'phobia', such as 'agoraphobia', meaning fear of crowds, 'arachnophobia', meaning fear of spiders, etc. [89]. But what does it mean to be afraid of homosexuals?

First of all, for this fear to exist, homosexuals must be easily identifiable. Let us suppose that they are easily identifiable because they are either effeminate men or masculine women – as per one of the most widespread stereotypes about homosexuals [90]. In this case, homophobic people are afraid of people who do not fit in with the behaviours or appearances that their society usually attributes to their gender, but are not afraid of these people's sexuality per se. Consequently, the term 'homophobia' is not fitting in these circumstances. Another term should be preferred, or one should be invented if it does not exist. Furthermore, not all men and women resemble what society expects of their gender, without being homosexual. The term homophobia is equally ill-suited to describe such a situation since it can also happen with heterosexual people. Conversely, many homosexuals do not show any distinctive signs of their sexuality, so it is impossible for homophobic persons to identify and fear them. In fact, people rarely fully conform to what one would expect of them. There is inevitably a play between the norm they aspire to and the reality with which they present themselves, both in terms of gender and sexuality, as J. P. Butler explains [91]. Therefore, the use of the term 'homophobic' is never fully satisfactory in any situation. So why is it used so much? And what is the real meaning of the term?

In fact, most people are not afraid of homosexuals as such, but they have an awareness that should they one day feel same-sex attraction, they will be at risk of falling prey to the many abuses of the State, the Church, doctors, his family, friends or the general population. Indeed, public, religious and medical authorities have long persecuted homosexuals, and some still do. Many people dislike homosexuals, reject them, insult them, mistreat them, assault them, rape them, harass them, humiliate them, denounce them, sermon them, drive them to suicide, torture them, kill them, imprison them, condemn them to forced labour or the death penalty, or even exterminate them. Until last century, medical abuse continued to exist, particularly that practised by psychiatrists, such as chemical castration, lobotomy, internment, straitjackets, intimidation, guilt, electroshock 'therapy',

psychotropic drugs, or conversion therapies, which some therapists still carry out despite their inefficiency and, worse, the damage they can cause [92]. The mere mention of all this repressive, punitive and bloodthirsty arsenal is enough to cause fear. It is therefore not homosexuals who scare people, but people who scare homosexuals in a bid to dissuade them from having the desires they have. In other words, the term homophobia means exactly the opposite of what it should mean. Instead of referring to those who are scary, it refers to those who are afraid. Why confuse the perpetrators with the victims?

This semantic confusion is obviously not insignificant, since instead of saying that homosexuals are victims of violence, the term homophobe says on the contrary that they are guilty of provoking it, which frees all moral authorities and those who embody them, from all responsibility and judgment, whether past or future. Indeed, neither States nor churches were ever prosecuted for the crimes they committed against homosexuals, though the latter continue to condemn homosexuality; similarly hospitals, though they inflicted a shocking range of tortures on homosexuals, have never been brought to justice. At best, the State "apologised" decades later. A. Turing's story is an illustration of homosexuals being unjustly subjected to mental and physical torture with complete impunity and in a general climate of near total indifference. Even after the success of the film that was made about his life and his role in the war (Morten Tyldum's *Imitation Game*), no country or public or private institution, was held accountable for its policies and mistreatment. Homosexual victims of abuse are legion, but many of them were unfortunately anonymous, while A. Turing invented the computer [93]. His invention helped the Allies in the Second World War to decipher a large number of enemy messages, which contributed greatly to their victory.

By way of thanks for his invention – which is used today by billions of people around the world, and which facilitated the Allies' liberation –, A. Turing was committed to psychiatry for being homosexual. He was then forced to undergo chemical castration by doctors, which eventually led him to commit suicide (by biting into an apple he had injected cyanide into beforehand). In 2013, some 60 years later, the United Kingdom introduced a royal act of pardon for him. In fact, no country, no church, no clergyman, no politician, no doctor, no hospital has ever been tried, simply because no trials can be held against people or institutions that respected the laws of the past, however vile those laws may have been. Nevertheless, it is conceivable that exceptional trials could take place, just as there have been international tribunals or high courts of justice held in the aftermath of a war. After two thousand years of torture, murder and extermination, this would be of means of reparation for the homosexual population, as has been the case for some other communities, notably the Jews, for whom the UN even created a State on 29 November 1947 (Resolution 181). But nothing was ever done for homosexuals. Worse still, the Allies refused to consider homosexuals as victims and continued to treat them as

outcasts. In fact, they were the only population that the United States expressly refused to accept, while all other war victims could seek asylum [94]. Yet more than half a million homosexuals were exterminated under the Nazi regime (*idem*).

The fact that countries and institutions have never been condemned probably explains why the homosexual community has been such a whipping boy, targeted far beyond Blacks and Jews. For example, in France, the site "nohomophobes.fr" lists in real time some of the insults that are used daily on Twitter, and since 2016 the insult "pédé" ("faggot") has been used about two hundred times more than the so-called "N word" and a thousand times more than "dirty Jew". In France, homophobia is therefore about two hundred times more common than racism, and a thousand times more common than antisemitism, in other words, the rejection of homosexuals is a banality that is part of the sexual norm. Even though homosexuals are not alone in being excluded, they are far more excluded than others, because they are considered to be by far the worst thing a man can be in today's society. It is, moreover, conceivable that a Black man or a Jewish man could today be elected president of a Western nation, but that is certainly not the case for a loud-and-proud homosexual, even though a large part of Western culture has been made by men who have had this sexual proclivity [95].

Who would vote for a candidate who is the international embodiment of a whipping boy? And what are homosexuals if not scapegoats? If they were anything else, could States around the world have wordlessly but unanimously agreed that the systematic extermination of homosexuals did not warrant any reparation? That is why countries, religions, institutions and their representatives, i.e. priests, scientists, doctors and politicians, but also all those who have committed crimes against homosexuals, should be tried and sentenced, even posthumously. It should also be possible for victims to be obtain recognition, reparation for the hurt they have suffered, and a land of asylum – something that would undoubtedly save many homosexuals, as their oppression in the world is still so great. Even in the West, people and institutions still mistreat homosexuals by performing so-called conversion therapies on them [96], or by prescribing electroshock therapy to treat their sexuality, or by refusing to take complaints of assault or rape when they are gay. All these persecutions constitute impunity for torture and violation of rights that continue to lock homosexuals in a state of guilt, even in the West, and prevent them from emancipating themselves from their aggressors and the institutions that oppress them.

Neither individuals nor authorities were ever found responsible for anything. They may be referred to as homophobic, but never criminal. Officially, therefore, there are no perpetrators or victims. However, the psychological process of identifying with the aggressor can only be stopped if the people and authorities who are responsible for this undue pressure are found guilty. But how can they be if the very term, homophobic, that is used to describe them, only serves to make

the victims feel a little more guilty? As long as the abuse perpetrated against gays is not recognised, they will continue to identify with the dominant reproductive model, and they will be all the more inclined to do so because heterosexuals are beginning to tolerate them – so long as homosexuals are willing to demonstrate that their ability to raise children is at least as good as heterosexuals. Moreover, the vast majority of gays do not know what pre-Christian morals were really like because these have been censored for the last two thousand years. It therefore does not occur to homosexuals that any other model than heterosexuality can exist – thus they feel further obligated to submit to the heterosexual model. Most homosexuals are also unaware that hundreds of writers, scientists, sportsmen and women, artists, actors or musicians, have experienced same-sex attractions [97], simply because these people self-censored, or because institutions hid all signs of this, as was the case with the ecclesiastical and democratic censorship of Plato's work.

3.3. Is Reproduction the Only Salvation for Western Societies

In reality, homosexuals are faced with the following alternative: either they are rejected from hetero-normative institutions or they are required to show compliance by copying them. Yet they already suffer a great deal from the rejection they experience throughout their lives. From schoolyards to retirement homes, their exclusion has many negative consequences on their psyche [98]. This is why many of them try to submit to these institutions as best they can. The awareness that their sexuality can frighten others, however, brings them no closer to realizing that they are victims of unchallenged heteronormativity as the very fabric of social organization. Worse, the concept of homophobia makes them feel even more guilty about their sexuality, since it is who they are that purportedly causes fear. In other words, the misunderstanding of what homophobia is and what it really stems from only serves to further strengthen homosexuals' submission to their oppressors. The semantic confusion of the term homophobic thus contributes to maintaining the identification process between the oppressors and the oppressed. The LGBT movements that emerged in the 1960s did not, therefore, liberate homosexuals from the hetero-normative yoke under which they live.

They did, however, free them from a number of discriminations and gave them partial access to the same rights as heterosexuals. On the other hand, homosexuals did not acquire any rights that are specific to them. Yet equality is not always achieved by doing the same as others. Sometimes, on the contrary, the differences are precisely what needs to be taken into account in order for people to become equal. Taxation, for example, is different according to each person's income in order for the financial burden to be as evenly distributed as possible. So why don't homosexuals demand rights that are specifically catered to them, rights that take into account their difference? Since homosexuals cannot procreate together, they could ask to be prioritised for all forms of adoption, assisted reproduction and surrogacy.

Moreover, if they do not procreate, they could also ask for their heirs be given the same inheritance rights as heirs who inherit from their parents. And since homosexuals are frequently rejected from their parents' home [99], they could also be given priority for social housing, etc. Homosexuals are discriminated because they don't reproduce, which is unjust. The fact that heterosexual hegemony leads to the problems of pollution, overconsumption and overpopulation makes this discrimination even more unfair, since homosexuals suffer from them, although they are not the ones who reproduce.

These few hodgepodge examples give us a glimpse of what things could be like if social organisation were not based exclusively on the production and breeding of humans, which has been the model of our Western societies since the birth of Christianity. It is worth questioning the reproductive principle which is at the very foundation of capitalist societies [100], and through which Western societies strive to maintain a continuous growth in consumption [101], to colonise other civilisations and to convert them to their ways. This is why some countries are trying to organise decolonisation [102]. Social organization needs to be questioned and thoroughly shaken. Heterosexuals have privileges [103], but why should they be the only ones? And would those who have forced themselves to be heterosexual continue to do so if homosexuals also have privileges? Would their efforts have been in vain? Why force oneself to live with people of the other sex if one is more complicit with one's own sex? Is offspring the only goal for life? Are people so thoroughly incapable of giving meaning to their own existence that they are constantly forced to find meaning through their offspring's existence? And are those children, in turn, equally incapable of giving meaning to their own existence – thus perpetuating Judeo-Christian propaganda from generation to generation without any alternative ever being considered? [104].

Rather than forcing populations into exclusive heterosexuality and mass contraception [105], why not encourage homosexuality and bisexuality? Same-sex unions could be subsidized, for example, or multi-sex unions could be created so that people who are united can choose their sexual partner according to their desire for children or not. And why not charge people who reproduce too much? Is producing human beings and consuming ever more our only salvation? Are not the works, inventions and ideas we leave behind as important as the offspring we raise? In fact, the obsession with producing more and more humans has been so fundamental to the development of capitalism that societies have gone out of their way to frighten away all those who do not reproduce, mainly homosexuals. And although the capitalist functioning shows more and more limits, still today societies impose the reproductive ideology by exclusively proposing social norms dedicated to it. All non-reproductive behaviors are thus put "on the bench" of the society, generating many worries and anxieties. This is why the simple fact of not feeling attraction to the opposite sex requires an explanation, or a "coming out".

This announcement often consists of two topics. The first is to explain that a homosexual is attracted to people of the same sex, and the second is to reassure the people around, specifying in particular that homosexuality is not a disease and that homosexuals can now integrate the social norms and rights heterosexuals have conceded them. Perhaps they will even be able to start a family, get married, be faithful, adopt, do surrogacy, raise a child, and continue the lineage by giving offspring. They promise to be almost "normal" because they and those around them assume that it would be "abnormal" to dedicate one's life to something else other than procreation and child-rearing. The main consequence of this exclusive heteronormativity is therefore to cause fear, shame and guilt in homosexuals, which then pushes them to want to compensate for their "sinful sexuality" by trying to do "as well as" heterosexuals. This is why they copy the heteronormative model as much as possible, even though in the vast majority of cases they are not conscious that they are doing so, nor that they have taken this model as an ideal to be achieved and imitated. They aren't conscious that other models are possible and that Judeo-Christianity imposed two thousand years of censorship.

4. Conclusion

As we have seen, Platonic love should not refer to love without sexual intercourse, but rather to a form of love that is both physical and intellectual, endowed with a complicity that only two people of the same sex can experience. This is why Platonic love is necessarily homosexual, and why it embodies an ideal towards which all other forms of love should tend. This was Plato's way of conceiving the love relationship, and it was also, more generally, the way people conceived it before the Christian era. In order to promote the new monotheistic religion and to govern Western populations, Christianity then promptly censored the cultures that came before it and condemned all sexual practices other than penis/vagina penetration. Thus, two thousand years ago, a new society emerged: it was based on the production and breeding of humans, its aim was to colonise the planet, and its norm was the exclusive heterosexuality of its populations. The recent and progressive acceptance of same-sex love could be an opportunity to question Western society, but insofar as heterosexual institutions are not considered responsible for the abuse, discrimination and crimes they inflict on homosexuals, the latter continue to submit to them, taking them as a model. Homosexuals want to produce and raise human beings – just like heterosexuals. In other words, they identify with their abusers and wish to imitate their lifestyle, so that heterosexuality embodies an ideal to be achieved for most of them. This is why, instead of playing a role in changing social norms, homosexuals participate in strengthening them.

For things to be any different, authorities would have to accept responsibility for the homophobic history they have built, and homosexuals would have to disclose all the discrimination they continue to suffer today. Condemnation for the former and

reparation for the latter would likely bring an end to this identificatory model, and to the exclusivity of the heterosexual model, thus contributing to making sexual orientations more equal, notably by granting specific rights to each of them.

Declaration of Interest Statement

The authors declare that they have no competing interests.

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