

in the heady days before World War I, when the continental avant-garde was beginning to shake up Britain's relatively stodgy art scene. Together with Vanessa Bell, he headed the Omega Workshops, a modernist design studio (1913–19), where he created pottery, textiles, interior decoration, and stage flats. In 1916 Duncan Grant established a ménage à trois at the country house of Charleston in Sussex with David Garnett and Bell. Although Bell bore him a daughter, Angelica, in 1918, Grant's later sexual career seems to have been exclusively homosexual.

Despite much sophisticated proselytizing by the critic Roger Fry and others, the artistic achievements of Bloomsbury never attained the success of its literary productions. Grant tended to be dismissed as a tepid follower of Matisse, and his name scarcely figures in the standard histories of modern art. As in the case of such American artists as Charles Demuth and Marsden Hartley, his homosexuality may have hindered recognition. Despite neglect, Grant continued painting almost until the end of his life, accumulating an extensive oeuvre. Since his death, however, a more pluralistic approach to twentieth-century art has facilitated reevaluation of his work, and it can be seen that his best paintings are valid works in their own right.

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## GREECE, ANCIENT

Beginning with the Romans, every succeeding people in Western civilization has felt the attraction of ancient Greece. The adulation of Greece peaked in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Ironically, just at this time the industrial

revolution and the Enlightenment were working profound changes in the character of Western civilization; in the new context the values of Hellenic culture no longer seemed the eternal truths that the world had only to accept and revere. But in no aspect of its social order was the nineteenth century in Europe and the United States farther from the value system of the Greeks than in the matter of homosexuality. Accordingly, the study of same-sex behavior in ancient Greece is valuable not only for its own sake but for the contrast it points with our own society.

*Basic Features.* Although homosexual behavior was ubiquitous in ancient Greece, had an extensive literature, and was never seriously threatened either in practice or as an ideal (as it was to be in later times), it is not easy to appreciate just how the Greeks themselves conceptualized it. The specific function of homosexuality in their civilization was one which the modern world rejects, and which the homophile movement of the twentieth century has regarded as marginal at best to its own goals and aspirations. *Paidersasteia*, or the love of an adult male for an adolescent boy, was invested with a particular aura of idealism and integrated firmly into the social fabric. The *erastes* or lover was a free male citizen, often a member of the upper social strata, and the *eromenos* or beloved was a youth between 12 and 17, occasionally somewhat older. Pedophilia, in the sense of erotic interest in young children, was unknown to the Greeks and the practice never approved by them. An interesting question, however, is what was the average age of puberty for ancient Greek boys? For some men (the *philobupais* type), the boy remained attractive after the growth of the first beard, for most he was not—exactly as with the modern pederast. The insistence upon the adolescent *anthos* (bloom) and the negative symbolism of body hair that occur repeatedly in the classical texts leave no doubt that modern androphile (adult–adult) homosexuality was foreign to the Greek

mentality, both in aesthetic theory and in the practice of male courtship.

When it emerges into the light of history in the archaic period, **pederasty** is the specific Greek form of a relationship that may have been institutionalized among some **Indo-European** peoples in prehistoric times. It formed part of the process of initiation of the adolescent into the society of adult males, of his apprenticeship in the arts of the hunter and warrior. The attachment of the lover to his boy eroticized the process of learning, making it less arduous and more pleasurable, while reinforcing the bond between the mentor and his pupil.

The homoerotic ties between the older male and the youth were, it is true, grounded in a biological universal—the physical beauty and grace of the adolescent that invest him with an androgynous quality soon lost when he reaches adulthood. The Greek form of pederasty institutionalized that bond of affection in a form that varied from one city-state to another, because Greece never had a unitary, homogeneous civilization. Each polis (city-state) preserved and used its own local dialect; each had its own constitution and laws. If periodic festivals such as the Olympic games were pan-Hellenic, they bore witness only to the sense that all Hellenes shared certain values in common which set them apart from the other peoples of the eastern Mediterranean.

The Greeks were at first barbarians invading a realm whose civilizations—Babylonian, Phoenician, Egyptian—were already old at the moment when the art of alphabetic writing reached the mainland (ca. 720 B.C.). The achievements of their own history necessarily rested upon the legacy of three thousand years of cultural evolution in the Semitic and Hamitic nations. In technology and material culture they—and their successor peoples—never went far beyond the accomplishments of the non-Indo-European civilizations of the East. It was in the realm of theory and philosophy that the Greeks

innovated—and created a new model of the state and society, a new conception of truth and justice that were the foundations of Western civilization. Sir Francis Galton calculated in the late nineteenth century that in the space of two hundred years the population of Athens—a mere 45,000 adult male citizens—had produced 14 of the hundred greatest men of all time. This legacy—the “Greek miracle”—owed no small part of its splendor to the pederastic ethos that underlay its educational system and its civic ideal.

Pederasty was in each of the city-states a channel of transmission of its specific traditions and values from the older generation to the younger. In many states, it was virtually inseparable from preparation for the rights and duties of citizenship. The emphasis on outdoor athletic training and practice in the nude, and the concomitant eroticization and glorification of the adolescent male body, strongly reinforced the pederastic spirit.

Homoerotic behavior in either the active or passive roles in no way disqualified one for heterosexual activity. Marriage and fatherhood were part of the life cycle of duties for which the initiation and training prepared the *eromenos*. Needless to say, family life did not hinder a male from pursuing boys or frequenting the geisha-like *hetairai*. Down to the fourth century B.C., however, the really intense and reciprocal passion that the modern world calls romantic love was reserved for relationships between males. Only in the Hellenistic period (after 323 B.C.) was the additional possibility of love between man and wife recognized.

*Misinterpretations.* Some authors—including Christian apologists and historians influenced by them—have tried to maintain that while pederastic liaisons were intense enough, they rarely descended to the level of physical union and sexual release. This nonsense stems from a misinterpretation of the “double standard” that prescribed a modest and coy demeanor for the boy, who was to yield his person only

to a worthy suitor and—above all—could never offer his body for money. Such mercenary conduct was unworthy of a free citizen and could incur the penalty of *atimia*, civic degradation. The misinterpretations have been reinforced by the strictures of the elderly **Plato** in the *Laws*, where an element of resentment toward the young and of embitterment at his own failures and disappointments as a teacher seems to have been at work. This text, however it may anticipate later Judeo-Christian attitudes and practices, was never typical of Greek thought on the subject. The evidence of the classical authors shows that as late as the early third century of our era the Greeks accepted pederasty nonchalantly as part of the sexual order, without condemnation or apprehension.

The greatest error of which modern commentators have been guilty has been to take the strictures of the Mosaic Code as if they were moral truths that had been decreed at the beginning of time, when in fact they are part of a text that was compiled by the Jewish priests living under Persian rule in the fifth century before our era. The Greeks knew nothing of the Book of *Leviticus*, cared nothing for the injunctions it contained, and scarcely even heard of the religious community for which it was meant down to the beginning of the Hellenistic era, when **Judea** was incorporated into the empire of **Alexander the Great**. On the other hand, there is evidence that in the **Zoroastrian** religion pederasty was ascribed to a demonic inventor and regarded as an inexpiable sin, as a vice of the Georgians, the Caucasian neighbors of the Persians—just as the Israelites identified homosexual practices with the religion of the heathen Canaanites whose land they coveted and invaded. However, the antagonism between the Greeks and the Persians precluded any adoption of the beliefs and customs of the “evil empire”—against which they won their legendary victories. The Greek spirit—of which pederasty was a vital component—stood guard over the cradle

of Western civilization against the encroachments of Persian despotism. Only on the eastern periphery of the Hellenic world—where Greeks lived as subject peoples under Persian rule—could the Zoroastrian beliefs gain a foothold.

*Sexual Mores.* The bulk of the available evidence—and the universal grounding of male physiology and psychology—support the view that Greek pederasty was carnal in expression, and not restricted to intercrural intercourse but often involved complete penetration. Oral-genital sexuality seems not to have been popular, but this was probably for hygienic reasons specific to the ancient world. But again, it is a profound error to project modern attitudes shaped by Christian theology and the definitions of sodomy or ages of consent upheld by Anglo-American courts onto the social or legal setting of ancient Greece. It is important to bear in mind, however, that (1) the active—passive dichotomy was crucial for the ancient mind, rather than the heterosexual—homosexual one, (2) norms of sexual behavior were not uniform, but varied for different social classes, and (3) that while men and women could have sexual relations for procreation within marriage, men alone were allowed to pursue sexual pleasure outside of marriage. That is to say, some forms of homosexual behavior were proscribed for certain individuals on the basis of sex and social status, but there was no general taboo such as Christianity later formulated for its whole community of believers.

The career of **Sappho** suggests that lesbian relations in ancient Greece took the same pattern, that is to say, they were corophile—between adult women and adolescent girls who were receiving their own initiation into the arts of womanhood. But the paucity of evidence makes it difficult to assay the incidence of the phenomenon, especially as Greek sexual mores were entirely androcentric—everything was seen from the standpoint of the adult male and free citizen. The subordi-

nate status of women and children was taken for granted, and the effeminate man was the object of ridicule if not contempt, as can be seen in the plays of Aristophanes and his older contemporary Cratinus. Such individuals were a liability in a society in which each city-state had constantly to field armies that would fight for its independence and hegemony.

The central opposition in the Greek mind was between the active (*ho poion*) and the passive (*ho paschon*) partner in the sexual encounter. The Greeks were concerned not with the *act* as a violation of a religious taboo (as in the Christian Middle Ages) or with the *orientation* as psychological substratum (the legacy of forensic psychiatry), but with the *role* as becoming or unbecoming particular actors. A man behaves appropriately when he penetrates boys or women (or even other men whom he has vanquished and captured on the battlefield). From this perspective, the dichotomous classification of men as heterosexual or homosexual makes no sense, although the ancient sources sporadically mention as an idiosyncrasy of character that particular historical figures loved only women or only boys. Disapproval—which could be intense, though it never took the form of imprisonment or death—was reserved for males who took the passive-effeminate role and for women who played the active-aggressive part in relations with men.

These two phenomena, then—the idealization of pederasty and the primacy of the active-passive dichotomy—made Greek homosexuality radically different from what the homophile apologists and forensic psychiatrists of the late nineteenth century defined by that name, leaving aside the evaluation of sexual contacts between members of the same sex in Judeo-Christian moral theology. It is true that the more abstract thinking of the Greeks ultimately recognized the parallel between male and female homosexuality, beginning with a passage in Plato's *Laws* (636b-c) in which both are stigma-

tized as "against nature"—a concept which the Semitic mind, incidentally, lacked until it was adopted from the Greek authors translated in the Middle Ages.

In Hellenistic and Roman times a genre of **contest literature** emerged that debated the merits of boys versus those of women as sexual partners for men. The option falls to the adult male: adolescent boys or adult women, although there was usually an age disparity between husband and wife that was greater than customary in modern times. **Plutarch** was even willing to entertain the idea that an older woman might legitimately aspire to marry a teenaged boy. So in terms of age marked asymmetry is commonplace.

Greek attitudes toward homosexuality reflected the allocation of status and power in Greek society, and the goals which Greek education pursued. They were, furthermore, embedded firmly in the context of Greek religion and **mythology**, in which pederastic loves were ascribed to gods and heroes who in a sense furnished the sublime models which their admirers could follow and imitate. If the Greeks were less psychologically introspective than the heirs of their civilization have become, it was because they stood as an earlier stage of cultural development; they cannot be blamed for failing to anticipate what came only millennia later—often in a context of guilt and self-exculpation.

**Historical Evidence.** Modern archeology has determined that proto-Greek dialects were spoken in the southern area of the Balkan peninsula that later was called Hellas from about 2000 B.C., that is, during the whole of the Mycenaean period. While material evidence has given scholars more information about this period than the Greeks themselves possessed, scarcely anything can be said with certainty about the sexual life of this prehistoric age. There is no basis whatever for the currently popular assumption that this was a matriarchal period. Toward the end of the second millennium the Mycenaean

era closed with a series of disasters, both natural catastrophes and wars—of which the Trojan war sung by Homer was an episode. During this period the Dorians invaded Greece, blending with the older stocks. One landmark paper on Greek pederasty, Erich Bethe's article of 1907, ascribed pederasty to the military culture of the Dorian conquerors, an innovation ostensibly reflected in the greater prominence of the institution among the Dorian city-states of history. More recently, however, Sir Kenneth Dover has shown that the evidence for specific links with the Dorian areas of Greece is weak. What may be worth exploring is the notion, stressed by Bethe, that the essence of the lover passes into the soul of the beloved through sexual union—a survival of archaic beliefs on the function of sexuality in initiatory rites.

As Greece emerged from the dark age of the heroic period into the light of history, one of the salient features is the relative insignificance of the priestly caste as compared with its predominance in the cultures of Egypt and Mesopotamia. This entailed the absence of sacral prostitution of members of both sexes as was found, for example, in the Ishtar worship of western Asia. The sexual lives of the Greeks were free of ritualistic taboos, but enacted in a context of comradeship in arms—the union exemplified in the devotion of Achilles and Patroclus, which foreshadowed the pederastic ideal of the Golden Age. The lyric poetry composed in the dawn of Greek literature was rich in allusions to male love, between gods and between mortals. In the art of this period the male nude—as seen especially in the monumental *kouros* figures of young men—was cultivated and perfected. The classic age (480–323 B.C.) produced the great dramatists and philosophers, and saw the rise of Greek science and medicine.

At the conclusion of this phase of tremendous creativity, the armies of Alexander the Great conquered the whole of the eastern Mediterranean littoral and the

western Asia hinterland. In a mere four centuries Greek civilization had matured into a force that intellectually and militarily dominated the world—and laid the foundations not just for Western culture, but for the entire global metasystem of today. What followed was the Hellenistic era, in which Greek thought confronted the traditions of the peoples of the east with whom the colonists in the new cities founded in Egypt and Syria mingled. The emergence of huge bureaucratic monarchies effectively crushed the independence of the city states, eroding the base of the pederastic institution with its emphasis on civic initiative. The outcome of this period, once Rome had begun its eastward expansion, was Roman civilization as a derivative culture that blended Greek and indigenous elements. Even under Roman rule the position of the Greek language was maintained, and the literary heritage of previous centuries was codified in the form in which, by and large, it has been transmitted to modern scholars and admirers.

*Authors and Problems: The Early Epic.* For nearly two hundred years scholars have argued the Homeric question: Did one, two, or many authors create the two great epic poems known as the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*? What were the sources and techniques of composition of the author (or authors)? The current consensus favors a single author utilizing a traditional stock of legends and myths; the final redaction may have taken place as late as 640 B.C. A second question arises in connection with these epic poems: Did they recognize homoerotic passion as a theme, or was this an accretion of later times?

The central issue is the relationship of Achilles and Patroclus in the *Iliad*, which forms the real subject of the poem. Later Greek opinion in general judged their friendship to have been an erotic one (Aeschylus, Plato, Lucian), a judgment reversed by many modern scholars who would like to imagine the heroic age as free of the "decadence" of later periods, and

point to the absence of explicit passages. Recently, however, opinion has veered about, identifying subtleties of the Homeric text that support the contention that Achilles and Patroclus were male lovers. This recognition makes still other verses in Homer even clearer: Telemachus' male bedmate in Pylos (*Odyssey*, 3, 397); Hermes' ephebic attractiveness to Odysseus (*Odyssey*, 10, 277); and the Ganymede story (*Iliad*, 5, 266; 20, 282: "godlike Ganymede that was born the fairest of mortal men"). Homer may not have judged the details of their intimacy suitable for epic recitation, but he was not oblivious to a form of affection common to all the warrior societies of the Eastern Mediterranean in antiquity. The peculiar resonance of the Achilles-Patroclus bond probably is rooted in far older Near Eastern epic traditions, such as the liaison between Gilgamesh and Enkidu in the Mesopotamian texts.

Hesiod, the other great epic poet of early Greece, left a much smaller body of work, but the *Shield of Heracles*, a work of his school, if not actually by him, depicts a pederastic relationship between the hero and his page Iolaus. Later poems in the epic genre devoted far more attention to mythological and legendary tales of homoeroticism.

*The Archaic Lyric. Painerasteia* may not yet have become self-conscious, but in the seventh century a new lyric genre arose that marked an advance over the epic in that it recorded vivid fragments of experience tinged with personal emotion. The subjectivity of Greek lyric poetry is saturated with the vicissitudes of homosexual passion. Though none of these early writers is preserved in entirety, they come from the whole far-flung Hellenic world.

Archilochus of Paros, writing perhaps about 650 B.C., is generally recognized as the earliest major figure of the group. His sense of personal ambivalence strikes an almost modern chord. In admitting contradictory, unheroic, and at times

irrational feelings he invites comparison with the Roman Catullus. In fragment 85 he concedes to a male that "desire that loosens our limbs overpowers me." The famous Athenian lawgiver Solon was also a poet, and in two surviving fragments (13 and 14) he speaks of pederasty as absolutely normal (see also Plutarch's *Life of Solon*).

The isle of Lesbos, off the coast of Asia Minor, was the home of a school that brought Greek lyric poetry to its peak. Alcaeus is in fact the first poet whose surviving corpus takes pederasty as its major theme. Despite the mutilated and fragmentary state in which Sappho's poetry has been transmitted, she was hailed in antiquity as the "tenth Muse," and her poetry remains one of the high points of lyric intensity in world literature. In the nineteenth century philologists tried to reconcile her with the Judeo-Christian tradition by dismissing the lesbian interpretation of her poems as libelous, and misinterpreting or misusing bits of biographical data to make her nothing but the strait-laced mistress of a girls' finishing school. The homoerotic intensity and candor of her poems has been vindicated by modern critics, who locate her entire career in the setting of the *eros paidagogikos*, the affection between teacher and pupil that was integral to Greek education. Again, not surprisingly the last book of her collected poems contained the ~~epithalamia~~ she had written for the weddings of the alumnae of her school. The corophile lesbianism of Sappho was part of the training that prepared a girl for her duties as mistress of a household, just as the boy's education prepared him for service to the polis. Over the centuries, her name has become a byword for the love of woman for woman, hence the earlier term "sapphist" and the modern "lesbian."

Anacreon of Teos, who flourished in the mid-sixth century, owes his fame to his drinking songs, texts composed for performance at the symposia, which inspired an entire genre of poetry: anacreon-

tic. Though bisexual like most of the poets, he clearly preferred boys. *Theognis* of Megara is more serious and moralizing, and the second book ascribed to him (with less certainty than the first) presents pederasty in its ideal form, as it flourished for only some two centuries, from 600 to 400 B.C. *Ibycus* of Rhegium composed poems at the court of the tyrant Polycrates, where among other subjects he explored love in old age.

*Pindar* of Thebes (518–438) composed magnificent odes fusing the intensity of the new lyric trend with the monumental style of the earlier epic tradition, so joining the personal with the public. His poems celebrate youths of the aristocracy, above all the victors in the athletic contests that played a major role in Hellenic life. Changes in cultural expectations and assumptions have made his poetry more remote than that of other classical authors, but he still represents one of the giants of world literature, and he deals with themes integral to pederasty in its noblest form.

*Athenian Politics and Art.* Archaic Greece had many political and cultural centers, but among those of the mainland Athens emerged in the late sixth century as the dominant force in its culture—"the school of Hellas." A political power as well, Athens witnessed a shift from tyranny to democracy, a revolution in which homoerotic bonding played a catalytic role. In 514 B.C. Harmodius and Aristogiton, angered by the sexual harassment of one of the Peisistratid tyrants, slew him and opened the way for the family's downfall. Although they perished in the attempt, the heroes were thenceforth honored as major benefactors of the polis, honored by annual sacrifices and the performance of odes. Two statuary groups were successively commissioned to preserve their likenesses, the second of which (477 B.C.) is one of the first landmarks of the emerging classic style in art. Other civic leaders were renowned for their

homoerotic attachments: Solon, Themistocles, Xenophon, and Alcibiades.

Toward the end of the sixth century Athens took the lead in the style of vase painting with red figures, replacing the older black-figure style. Many of these ceramic works were inscribed with the names of the male beauties who enjoyed the favor of the Athenian (male) public and the word *kalos*: *Alcibiades kalos* meant "Alcibiades [is] handsome." These pederastic "calendar boys" were thus celebrated throughout the Hellenic world. Although some girls' names appear with the inscription *kale*, it is revealing that they are outnumbered by boys' names almost 20 to 1. In the field of sculpture the strapping *kouros* type of youth yielded to the more supple and graceful ideal of the classic type, beginning with the so-called Critian Youth (Athens, Acropolis Museum).

*Drama and History.* The fifth century saw Athenian drama reach its apogee in the work of the three great tragedians who all composed plays that dealt with one homoerotic aspect or another of Greek mythology: *Aeschylus* wrote *The Myrmidons* and *Laius*; *Sophocles* *The Lovers of Achilles*; and *Euripides* *Chrysipus*, all unfortunately lost save for a few surviving quotations. In comedy as well, lost plays of *Cratinus*, *Eupolis*, *Timocles*, and *Menander*, and the surviving masterpieces of *Aristophanes* dealt with the subject, often in subtle double entendre and other satiric word plays that the modern philologist must struggle to retrieve from the text.

In a different genre, *Herodotus*, the "Father of History," used the data that he gathered on his extensive travels to point up the relativism of moral norms. Among the phenomena that he reported was the Scythian institution of the Enarees, a shift in gender that puzzled the Greeks, who called it the *nousos theleia* or "feminine disease," but can now be identified as akin to the shaman and the berdache of the

sub-Arctic and New World cultures. Profiting from the insights of the pre-Socratic thinkers, Herodotus anticipated the findings of modern anthropology in regard to the role of culture in shaping social norms. The consequence of his relativistic standpoint was to discredit absolutist concepts of "revealed" or "natural" morality and to allow for a pluralist approach to sexual ethics.

*Law.* The legal institutions of the Greeks were highly diverse owing to the particularism of the regions and city-states, and comparatively few of the laws and analyses of the political structure of the polis have survived. Thanks to a surviving oration of Aeschines, the *Contra Timarchum* of 346 B.C., we know of the restrictions that Athenian law placed on the homosexual activity of male citizens: the male who put his body in the power of another by prostituting himself incurred *atimia* or infamy, the gymnasia and those who had authority over youth were subject to legal control, and a slave could not be the lover of a free youth. There is no evidence for parallel statutes elsewhere, and certainly no indication that homosexual behavior per se was ever the object of legal prohibition, or more stringently regulated than heterosexual, which had its own juridical norms.

*Philosophy.* Socrates (469–399 B.C.) wrote nothing, but left disciples who have transmitted his teaching to later ages. He was undeniably a pivotal figure in the evolution of Greek philosophy, the one who reoriented it from the preoccupation of the Ionians with the physical cosmos to questions of ultimate human concern, such as the nature of knowledge and the critical scrutiny of ethical norms. In the writings of Plato and Xenophon, Socrates basks in a strongly homophile ambience, as his auditors are exclusively male, even if he was no stranger to heterosexuality and had a wife named Xanthippe who has come down in history as the type of the shrewish wife.

His chief disciple, Plato (ca. 429–347 B.C.), whose thought cannot eas-

ily be disentangled from that of his teacher, never married, and left a record of ambivalence toward sexuality and homosexuality in particular that is one of the problematic sides of his thinking. His influence on Western civilization has been incalculable. One of the ironies of history is that the atypical hostility to pederasty in the elderly Plato, probably reflecting both personal resentment and envy and the decline of the institution in the fourth century (while anticipating later "puritan" attitudes), was often received with enthusiasm in later centuries, becoming a Hellenic source of Christian homophobia.

In one of Plato's most brilliant dialogues, the *Symposium*, the speaker Aristophanes explains the origin of differences in sexual orientation by means of a myth of Babylonian provenance: human beings as but the severed halves of three primitive entities: male-male, female-female, and male-female. Homosexuality is thus the yearning for reparation and wholeness of the first two types, heterosexuality the longing for physical union of the third. In this dialogue Plato also adumbrated the concept of sublimation, suggesting that the contemplation of male beauty should only be a stage in an upward path toward a spiritual ideal that is implicitly one of continence. Thus he inculcated the notion of sexual activity as ignoble and demeaning, which was integrated with the absolute prohibitions of biblical Judaism to form the ascetic ideal of complete asexuality which was to have fateful consequences for homosexuals in later centuries.

A completely negative approach to pederasty emerges in one of his last works, the *Laws*, the product of the pessimism of old age disappointed by Athenian democracy and the failure of his ambitions at statecraft in Sicily. In the first book (636) Plato calls homosexual acts "against nature" (*para physin*) because they do not lead to procreation, and in the eighth book (836b–839a) he proposes that homosexual activity can be repressed by law and by



constant and unrelenting defamation, likening this procedure to the incest taboo. The designation of homosexual acts as "contrary to nature" found its way into the New Testament in a text that intertwined Judaic myth with Hellenic reasoning, Romans 1:18–32. This passage argues that "the wrath of God is revealed from heaven" in the form of the rain of water that drowned the Watchers and their human paramours and the rain of fire that obliterated the homosexual denizens of Sodom and Gomorrah. Later Christian thinkers were to insist that the morality of sexual acts was coterminous with procreation, and that any non-procreative gratification was "contrary to nature," but this view never held sway in pagan antiquity, so that Plato himself cannot be charged with the tragic aftermath of this belief and the attempt to impose it upon the entire population by penal sanctions and by ostracism. The attempt of modern Christian historians to prove that Plato's idiosyncratic later attitude corresponded to the mores of Athenian society, or of Greece as a whole, is unfounded.

Plato was succeeded by the almost equally influential Aristotle (384–322 B.C.), who sought to correct some of the imbalances in his teacher's work and bring it more in line with experience. Aristotle was more concerned with the empirical sciences and the match between theory and objective, multifaceted reality. Though known to have had male lovers, he also expressed some reservations about homosexual relations, but his work evaluating the Cretan form of pederasty has not survived. In the *Nicomachean Ethics* (1148b) he undertook to differentiate two types of homosexual inclination, one innate or constitutionally determined ("by nature") and one acquired from having been sexually abused ("by habit"). He stated categorically that no fault attached to behavior that flowed from the nature of the subject (thereby contradicting Plato's assertion that homosexuality per se was unnatural), while in the second type some moral fault

could be imputed. In the thirteenth century Thomas Aquinas utilized this passage in arguing that sodomy was unnatural in general, but connatural in some human beings; yet in quoting Aristotle he suppressed the mention of homosexual urges as determined "by nature," so that Christian theology has never been able to accept the claims of gay activists that their behavior had innate causes. At all events, Aristotle can be cited in favor of the belief that in some forms, at least, homosexuality is inborn and unmodifiable.

The successors of Plato and Aristotle, the Stoics, are sometimes regarded as condemnatory of pederasty, but a closer examination of their texts shows that they approved of boy-love and engaged in it, but counseled their followers to practice it in moderation and with ethical concern for the interests of the younger partner. However, they lived in an age when the pederastic ideal was more and more fading into the past, as the aristocratic way of life of the ruling class in the Greek city-states gave way to a more sensual, more oriental type of pederasty in the Hellenistic world ruled by the successors of Alexander the Great.

**Medicine.** Greek medicine stands at the beginning of the Western tradition of the art of healing, both in theory and practice. **Medical theory** accomplished far less than other branches of Greek thought because of the limitations of technique and the restriction that Greek religion imposed on such practices as dissection. However, the Hippocratic corpus knew the term *physis* (nature) in the sense of "constitution, inborn trait," and recognized that there were innate differences in sexual orientation correlated with the secondary sexual characters. The ethical corollary of this distinction is that the individual is obliged only to act in accord with his own nature, not with any hypothetical unitary "human nature."

Also, the Greek physicians evolved a number of fanciful notions in regard to human physiology which, though

now discarded by science, influenced later civilization. For example, the pseudo-Aristotelian *Problemata* (IV, 26) claims that the propensity to take the passive role in anal intercourse is caused by an accumulation of semen in the rectum that stimulates activity to relieve the tension. Another notion was *pangensis*—the belief that the semen incorporated major parts of the body in microscopic form; yet another the belief that the male seed alone determines the formation of the embryo (only in the nineteenth century was the actual process of fertilization of the ovum observed and analyzed). Another major belief system was the theory of the four humors, which became the basis of four temperaments associated with the characterological ideas embraced by Simonides, Theophrastus, and the comic playwrights.

The Hippocratic treatise *On Airs, Waters, and Places* touched upon the effeminacy of the Scythians, the so-called *nosos theleia*, which it ascribed to climate—a view that was to recur in later centuries. The Greek adaptation of late Babylonian astrology created the individual horoscope—which included the factors determining sexual characterology. Such authors as Teucer of Babylon and Claudius Ptolemy of Alexandria named the planets whose conjunctions foretold that an individual would prefer his or her own sex or would be effeminate or viraginous. Because Greek religion and law did not condemn homosexual behavior, it fell into the category of an idiosyncrasy of temperament which the heavenly bodies had ordained, not of a pathological condition that entitled the bearer to reprieve from the severity of the law. Ptolemy taught, for example, that if the influence of Venus is joined to that of Mercury, the individuals affected “become restrained in their relations with women but more passionate for boys” (*Tetrabiblos*, III, 13). The astrological texts make it abundantly clear that the ancients were familiar with the whole range of sexual preferences—a

knowledge that psychiatry was to recoup only in modern times.

*The Hellenistic Age.* Beginning with the death of Alexander the Great in 323 B.C., the Hellenistic period saw many profound changes in Greek institutions such as had to attend the formation of a far more cosmopolitan culture shared by subject peoples of different races for whom the Greek language was a binding force. The instrument for its cultivation was the system known as *paideia*, or humanistic training grounded in the mastery of the classics. This new emphasis on teaching worked to promote a fusion between the person of the *paidagogos*, the instructor, and the ideals of *paiderasteia* bequeathed by the earlier part of the Golden Age of Hellenic civilization. Alexandria in Egypt, the capital of the kingdom of the Ptolemies, emerged as the intellectual center of the Hellenistic age. Two poets, both associated with the great library in that city, composed works that dealt with aspects of boy-love. Callistratus exhibits the Hellenistic penchant for recondite allusions to and quotations from older literature; a number of his surviving epigrams are pederastic in theme. Theocritus created the poetic convention later known as Arcadian pastoral that served as a model for much of later Western poetry. His idylls are tinged with homoerotic sentiment in a rustic setting.

However, the greatest single collection of the pederastic poetry of the Hellenistic period is the twelfth book of the Greek Anthology, the core of which was assembled by Meleager of Gadara about 80 B.C. The collection was several times enlarged, notably by Strato of Sardis in the middle of the second century. His anthology bore the name *Musa paidike* or Boyish Muse; its sparkling epigrams sound the whole diapason of emotions felt by the Greek lover of male youth: the fleeting radiance of his *anthos* doomed to perish as adulthood encroaches upon his charms; unresponsive or avaricious boys; the dis-

appointment that awaits the boy himself when age overtakes him; and fear of the loss of the boy's affection, expressed in the mythological guise of Zeus' abduction of Ganymede.

Another literary innovation of the Hellenistic period was the romance of adventure or Milesian tale. Though most of the extant examples tell of the vicissitudes of heterosexual lovers, homoerotic episodes and characters often figure as secondary motifs. A good instance is *The Adventures of Leucippe and Clitophon* by Achilles Tatius (probably of the Roman period that followed the Hellenistic one). The chief homosexual component is a debate on the respective merits of love for women and love for boys—a subject that was to reappear in later centuries. Essays on pederasty were also written, the most notable being those ascribed to **Lucian** and to **Plutarch**. The latter composed the *Parallel Lives* in which the homosexual proclivities of Greco-Roman statesmen are frankly discussed, but also a humorous piece entitled *Gryllus* in which a talking pig argues that pederasty is unnatural because it is unknown among animals—an assertion that contradicted the observation of ancient naturalists. (See **Animal Homosexuality**.)

Perhaps the last major work in the Hellenistic tradition that deals extensively with pederasty is *Deipnosophistae* or *Banquet of the Learned* by **Athenaeus**, composed about A.D. 200. It treats the subject of love for boys with utter nonchalance, and preserves quotations from earlier works that have not survived in their entirety. The pagan culture of the Greco-Roman world accepted homosexual interests and relationships as a matter of everyday life, with no scorn or condescension. It was the growing influence of Christianity, and its adoption as the state religion of the Roman Empire, that sounded the death knell of this major era in the annals of homosexuality.

**Conclusion.** If we include its prolongation into the Roman period, the

world of ancient Greece offers almost a millennium of evidence for homosexual behavior from poems, prose, inscriptions, and works of art. Many of these are not only documents of the occurrence of homosexual relations, but vivid capsules of personal feeling. The historian must, of course, be wary of anachronism—of the temptation to project back our own same-sex customs and judgments onto a very different era. Every allowance made, however, there remain notable similarities; the differences themselves set in relief the spectrum of homosexual expression of which human beings are capable.

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## GREECE, MODERN

A republic of ten million occupying the southern extremity of the Balkan peninsula and the adjacent islands, Greece today has a strong sense of national identity. Each year it is the goal of millions of tourists, some of them in quest of sexual experience.

**History.** The modern Greeks derived their sexual mores, like their music, cuisine, and dress, from their overlords the Turks rather than from ancient Greece. During the long Ottoman domination from the fall of Byzantium in 1453 to 1821 and in Macedonia and Crete until 1911, and in Anatolia and Cyprus even today, the descendants of the Byzantines who did not convert to Islam preserved their language and religion. Orthodox bishops were given