

gies of German material. Other collections gather Dutch, Italian, and Latin American writings. Another development of this period is the creation of anthologies on a particular sector of gay experience and writing, as black gays, Chicano lesbians, lesbian nuns, older people. Genres were also singled out: poetry, plays, science fiction and fantasy. Some of these new anthologies, especially those produced by lesbians, tend to emphasize personal experience rather than "fine writing" in the usual sense.

ANTHROPOLOGY

According to an old, but serviceable tradition, anthropology has two main branches, physical and cultural. Interfacing with biology, physical anthropology focuses on reconstructing the evolution and structure of the material embodiment of humanity. Cultural anthropology, the discipline of interest in the understanding of sexual behavior, studies the lifeways and belief systems of human groups. Cultural anthropology comprises both ethnography, the examination and recording of specific cultures, and ethnology, the comparative and historical analysis of culture. In the United Kingdom the field has usually been termed social anthropology in keeping with the traditional British emphasis on social structure in contrast to the American emphasis on the concept of culture. Although in principle cultural anthropology addresses all human societies, in fact it tends to be restricted to the preliterate or tribal peoples of the third world, leaving the study of industrial society and its past to sociology and history respectively. Since the 1960s, there has appeared a welcome crossing of this tacit boundary in urban anthropology, which studies groups within the modern city.

The accumulating body of research in cultural anthropology has gradually dissolved the deeply rooted belief that any single culture offers an ultimate or absolute standard of value, the view known

as ethnocentrism. To be sure, even today a few diehard absolutists maintain that homosexual behavior has been despised and condemned everywhere, but comparative studies have shown this notion to be utterly false: it tells us something of the wishes of those who propound it, but nothing about humanity. Cultural attitudes toward homosexuality run the gamut from outright condemnation to mandatory participation in same-sex rituals. The cultural relativism inherent in the anthropological enterprise has served not only to enhance our understanding of the range of human capabilities, but has fostered the growth of tolerance in our own society.

Historical Precedents. The Greek traveler and historian Herodotus (ca. 480—ca. 420 B.C.) is rightly regarded as the founder of a comparative approach to human societies. Avoiding overt ethnocentrism—the kind of parochial glorification of their own culture that was rife among the ancient Greeks—he examines the cultural patterns of a number of peoples in the Eastern Mediterranean and beyond. Yet recent studies have shown that he does not examine them with the objectivity cherished by modern anthropology, but rather viewed them in a "mirror" of Greece, emphasizing the very oddity (and therefore bizarreness) of traits that most differed from the Greek ones. Because he took same-sex behavior for granted, Herodotus rarely mentioned it—except among the Persians (his central subject) and the Scythians, where a still mysterious phenomenon, that of the asexual Enarees, prevailed. Other Greek and Roman writers actually professed to prefer the customs of primitive groups to their own as less corrupted by luxury. In his idealized picture of the ancient Germanic tribes, Tacitus notes, with his usual dry concision, the aspect of their military ethos that required the execution of cowards and effeminate. Later the Christian Salvian, a Patristic writer, was to transform this perception into a true homophobic pro-Germanism.

Medieval travel writers and protoethnologists believed that remote parts of the world were inhabited by races with strikingly different physical characteristics and correspondingly bizarre customs (the "monstrous races"). John Mandeville, for example, claimed that a region of Asia was actually inhabited by a race of **hermaphrodites** possessing the physical organs of both sexes, a myth that has reverberated in later times. When the Spanish conquistadors took possession of the New World they tended to assimilate the practices and beliefs of the indigenous peoples to archetypes inherited from their ancient and medieval past. Thus the weaknesses of pre-Columbian **Mexico** and the **Andean cultures**, according to some Spanish writers, was bound up with their toleration of sodomy. The **Amazon** takes its name from the belief that it was dominated by tribes of viraginous women, as in the classical legend.

The Rise of Cultural Relativism.

Eighteenth-century Pacific voyages engendered a European idealization of Polynesian societies as a kind of earthly paradise. Montesquieu used the device of a set of fictitious *Persian Letters* (1721) to criticize European customs. Toward the end of the century Johann Gottfried von Herder (1744–1803) gave an impetus to the emerging discipline of folklore, by emphasizing the need to listen to the "many voices of the peoples." The interest in differences between peoples ultimately paved the way for attention to differences *within* peoples—including difference of sexual orientation. These trends fostered ethical relativism and diversitarianism, the appreciation of variety for its own sake. While they helped to erode chauvinistic prejudices, they bore within them the seeds of a contrary exaggeration, the ethnoromanticism that sees only harmony and virtue in remote primitive societies.

These developments notwithstanding, even travelers tended to see non-European cultures in the mirror of classical civilization: the lure of **Hellenism**. In

time the comparison rebounded on the study of classical philology itself. A striking example is the career of the Swiss scholar Johann Jakob Bachofen (1815–1887), who formulated the hypothesis of primitive matriarchy, a prehistoric stage of society preceding the establishment of patriarchy. This fantasy—for little conclusive evidence has been offered for a universal horizon of matriarchy in humanity's past—has returned today among some anthropologists, who search for traces of a lost system of social organization which probably never existed.

Modern Anthropology. The extension of European domination throughout the globe helped to create a much larger pool of data about tribal cultures. Armchair scholars such as Adolf Bastian, Lewis Henry Morgan, and Edward Burnett Tylor then sought to synthesize this material, creating the foundations for modern cultural anthropology. This trend culminated in Sir James Frazer's massive *The Golden Bough* (1890–1936), a work that was more influential in literary quarters than among anthropologists. There also developed a popular genre of sensationalized reporting of "the strange customs and practices of savages," that sometimes included sexual data. Although it is commonly asserted that there is little information about same-sex behavior from nineteenth- and early twentieth-century travelers and anthropologists, the great survey of Ferdinand Karsch-Haack, *Das gleichgeschlechtliche Leben der Naturvölker* (Munich, 1911) shows that in fact much was observed and recorded. But since the recorders were often European government agents and missionaries, due allowance must be made for professional bias.

After some impressive nineteenth-century amateur efforts—especially with regard to the American Indians—American anthropology was put on a firm footing by the practical work and teaching of Franz Boas (1858–1942), a German immigrant. Although Boas professed meth-

odological agnosticism, most of his followers rallied to some form of Hegelian holism. Seeing cultures as homogeneous units dominated by a single "modal" personality type, they were inattentive to subgroups who might engage in homosexual behavior. However, the reception of European psychoanalytic ideas, embodied in the "culture and personality" trend, produced some manifestations of interest in same-sex behavior, as by Ruth Benedict and Abraham Kardiner. Yet on the whole American anthropologists continued to neglect the subject until the 1950s, perhaps tacitly holding that indigenous peoples—at least those unpolluted by acculturation—were exempt from this typically Western vice.

Flushed with confidence in a newly emerging discipline, a few anthropologists became pundits and sages, commenting on the problems of American life. In the case of Margaret Mead (1901–1978), the "lesson" she drew from her less-than-perfect research in Pacific island cultures—namely, that gender roles are essentially malleable rather than fixed—may have been on balance salutary. Yet the sense that scientific findings were being bent to serve sociopolitical ends caused unease. Not surprisingly, Mead was eventually dislodged from her popular standing as the virtual personification of the anthropological discipline. Gradually, however, the relativistic message sank in. Even if most lay people did not accept the idea that Kalahari bushmen are on the same level as, say, modern Danes, the idea that cultures were valuable for their own sake promoted tolerance. Whether intentionally or not, by "destabilizing" the conventional ethnocentric wisdom of American culture, anthropology prepared the way for the social experiments of the 1960s.

At midcentury a major scholarly instrument emerged in the Human Relations Area Files at Yale University. This vast compilation of world culture traits, though it has rightly been faulted for crudity and errors in coding, did yield infor-

mation of a substantial number of societies in which homosexual behavior was tolerated as a matter of course, thus eroding one aspect of the "homosexuality is unnatural" argument.

A new positive element appeared in the 1950s, as professional anthropologists took up again the *berdache* phenomenon among the American Indians (*see* W. L. Williams, for details). A further step was taken in the 1970s with the formation of the Anthropological Research Group on Homosexuality. The *Newsletter* of this group (now termed the Society of Lesbian and Gay Anthropologists) serves as an instrument of communication among serious researchers.

Problems and Prognostics. Twentieth-century cultural anthropology has not been able to shake free of its earlier dilemma. In principle value-free, individual researchers find it hard in practice to steer a completely even course between the Scylla of overattachment to their own cultural norms and the Charybdis of ethnoromanticism. Until recently many cultures were known essentially from one ethnography produced by a single investigator, who may have leaned to one or the other side in the "our values/their values" contrast. More disturbingly, when second and third opinions became available, the portraits drawn of the cultures were often very different. Although this so-called "Rashomon effect" can often be explained by the fact that different field workers have been looking at different aspects of the society under study, discrepancies point up the need for fuller confirmation of many assertions. Then too, questions have been raised about the limits of ethical neutrality: is it appropriate to observe, say, slavery or clitoridectomy ("female circumcision"), and to conclude that such practices are simply a valid part of a culture different from ours? It is hard not to grant that in a universal horizon of human rights, some behavioral patterns are simply unacceptable.

Many cultures are being contaminated by acculturation or simply disappearing, and anthropologists must scramble. In many cases, however, tribal informants have learned to tailor their responses to what they believe the investigator expects—or else to make a fool of him for their own amusement. Such informant self-editing may include denial of homosexual practices, which in any event are often associated with tribal rituals closed to outsiders. Institutions thought to be dead, such as the North American berdache, are sometimes surviving marginally—but for how long? At the same time urban anthropology has extended its methods to more developed environments, especially in the third world. Acknowledging criticisms of subjectivism and lack of cross-checking, a few anthropologists have proposed simply to “write novels,” a trend that is unlikely to become dominant, as it would seriously erode the scientific credentials of the discipline.

Despite these continuing problems, enough data have accumulated to essay a tentative world map of male homosexual behavior in tribal societies. There appear to be two main types. In the first, common in Sub-Saharan Africa and Melanesia in the Pacific, age asymmetry predominates, with an older man pairing with a boy or adolescent youth. In the second type, one of gender-role variation, some men depart from gender norms to become berdaches. This type predominates among the North American Indians, in Polynesia, and on Madagascar. In addition to this typology, anthropologists are beginning to discern regularities within a culture area, as the initiatory homosexuality of Melanesia.

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ANTINOUS

Adolescent favorite of the Roman Emperor Hadrian (ca. 111–130), who won his lover's affection by his beauty and grace. During a trip up the Nile in which he accompanied Hadrian, he was drowned. Contemporary gossip enveloped his death in romantic legend; some even alleged that he had given his life for his master. Hadrian's grief was such that he ordered the boy deified as god and hero and even promoted the belief that Antinous had entered the firmament as a new star; at the end of the sixteenth century Tycho Brahe assigned the name to a particular star on his stellar map.

In Egypt Hadrian founded a new city named Antinoopolis in his honor, and elsewhere he was commemorated by cult, festivals, and statues. Numerous inscriptions in his honor survive, and poems on him were written by Pancrates and Mesomedes. The Early Christians reacted to the cult as one inspired by an “impure” passion, contrasting it with their own reverence for the saints.

The Antinous type appears on scores of coins and statues. The extant statues found today in museums in Italy and elsewhere display the neo-Greek manner that flourished under Hadrian, and have been much admired in modern times by students of the classic style. The influential homosexual archaeologist J. J. Winckelmann (1717–1768) went into raptures over two of these works as “the glory and crown of art in this age as well as in all others.” In these depictions his somewhat full features correspond to the late-adolescent type of the ephebe rather than those of the *pais* or boy. The mystery surrounding his career and death has inspired a number of literary works in modern times, some with an explicitly homosexual theme, such as Marguerite Yourcenar's much admired