

attempt to redress the balance by advancing a positive, apologetic view of homosexuality. Nonetheless, the increasing depth and breadth of research should enable homosexual and lesbian scholarship to ascend to a higher plane in which these failings are obsolete. Human history is one seamless fabric, and the credibility of the growing and impressive body of research on homosexuality vitally depends on its universality.

See also **Famous Homosexuals, Lists of; Gay Studies.**

Wayne R. Dynes

### AQUINAS, THOMAS, SAINT (1224–1274)

Italian theologian and philosopher, the most important exponent of the medieval system of thought known as Scholasticism. Born to a noble family in southern Italy and cousin of the Holy Roman Emperor Frederick II, he studied at St. Benedict's monastery of Monte Cassino and at the University of Naples, and as a young man entered the Dominican order. Trying to dissuade him from joining that new and radical order of friars, his brothers supposedly brought a prostitute to his room to tempt him, but he drove her out with a burning brand he took from the hearth. At twenty, having graduated from Naples he traveled to Paris and later to Cologne to study under Albertus Magnus, who set him on the path of fusing Aristotle with Christian thought, an innovatory combination which became his life's work. Aquinas was a copious writer whose works in their modern edition fill scores of folio volumes, and who sought to combine encyclopedic breadth with precision and systematic presentation. He called for the capital punishment of heretics, witches, and sodomites.

In his sexual views he adhered to the restrictivist approach laid down by the **Patristic** writers, interweaving, however, some elements taken from his extensive study of **Aristotle**. A sense of his approach

emerges from his classification of "unnatural vice." After first condemning masturbation, he distinguishes three types of improper sexual contact: with the wrong species (bestiality), with the wrong gender (homosexuality and lesbianism), and with the wrong organ (oral and anal sex) (*Summa Theologiae*, II-II 154, 11). This threefold schema became normative for Christian thought.

In another passage (I-II 31, 7), Aquinas asserts that some pleasures are unnatural to man but become connatural for physical or psychological reasons or because of habit, and among these is intercourse with males or with brute animals. This text, however, was adapted from Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* (1148b), in which the Master held that sexual intercourse with males could be pleasurable owing to the innate constitution (in the medieval Latin translation *natura*) of the individual. Aquinas reiterated this crucial point in his own commentary, the *Sententia Libri Ethicorum* (VII, 5), but suppressed it in the *Summa*. By this act of intellectual dishonesty, Aquinas made true, innate homosexuality an "insoluble problem" for Christian theologians who are obliged to maintain that erotic attraction to one's own sex is acquired and therefore abnormal and pathological.

Some modern scholars have deplored the views of Aquinas and his contemporaries as representing a turn toward a negative view of sexual nonconformity in contrast to the ostensibly more tolerant attitude that had preceded him—though they must grant that he was less hostile than **Peter Damian**. In this realm, however, Aquinas is a codifier, innovative only in his characteristically systematic approach, and not in any substantive enhancement of the negative content, which represented a fusion of the prohibitions of the Mosaic Law with an anti-homosexual tradition in the Hellenic world that went as far back as **Plato**. Even before Christianity, the synthesis of the two traditions had already been realized by **Philo Judaeus**,

continued by **Clement** of Alexandria and **John Chrysostom**, and reformulated for the Latin West by **St. Augustine** in the early fifth century. What Aquinas did was to give the condemnation a proper scholastic context, thus assuring its normative status for the moral theology and the **Canon Law** of the Roman Catholic Church to this day and making the "sodomy delusion" a hallmark of Western civilization. His theologically and philosophically reasoned stance precludes acceptance of the premises of the gay liberation movement.

The Council of Trent recognized Thomas as a "doctor of the Church." Regrouping after the assault of the French Revolution, the Catholic restoration put great emphasis on the work of Aquinas, which had been neglected since the seventeenth century. In 1879 Leo XIII went so far as to declare Neo-Thomism the official philosophy of the Roman Catholic church. In recent decades this hegemony has ebbed in Catholic universities and seminaries, which are now in touch with a broader range of currents of thought. Official Thomism still has its survivals here and there, as seen, for example, in elements of the thinking of the radical feminist (and ex-Catholic) **Mary Daly**. Thomism always had a strong element of social moralism, so that it is not surprising to find traces of its influence in the liberation theology of the Third World.

*Warren Johansson*

## ARCADIA

Arcadia is a predominantly rural area of ancient Greece that has become a byword for an idealized pastoral existence. In an important study, **Byrne R. S. Fone** has shown that a number of homosexual writers—from **Vergil** through **Richard Barnfield**, **Walt Whitman** and the English Uranians to **Thomas Mann** and **E. M. Forster**—drew upon the image of Arcadia to evoke "that secret Eden" that offers solace "because of its isolation from the troubled world and its safety from the arrogant

demands of those who would deny freedom, curtail human action, and destroy innocence and love." In the vision of these writers Arcadia is a sylvan retreat where it is safe to live in accord with one's feelings, while at the same time providing the author with a device to present a quasi-allegorical image of homosexual happiness during times in which such sentiments could not be openly avowed. It could serve as a vehicle for the implication that "homosexuality is superior to heterosexuality and is a divinely sanctioned means to an understanding of the good and the beautiful." In such an idyllic setting the quest for the Ideal Friend could find its term and consecration.

The Latin tag "Et in Arcadia ego" has often been translated (according to some wrongly) as "I too was in Arcadia," and thus held to encapsulate the yearning for a Golden Age. **Denis Diderot**, for example, rendered it "Je vivais aussi dans la délicieuse Arcadie" ["I too lived in delightful Arcady."]. In the broader perspective this tradition fits within the overall framework of the pastoral tradition stemming from **Theocritus**, the great poet of **Alexandria**.

The concept was also significant in the context of the French homosexual movement. With his classical training, the novelist **Roger Peyrefitte** suggested the name "Arcadie" for what was to become the major French homosexual organization after World War II. In fact the group began by putting out a magazine, itself called *Arcadie* (from January 1954), on the model of the Swiss *Der Kreis*. The membership society followed in 1957. **André Baudry**, the director dissolved the organization in 1982, when the monthly, which had been noted for the quality of its scholarly articles, also ceased.

The Arcadie group was a typical product of the "homophile" phase of the nascent gay movement as it rose from the ashes of war and the desolation of Nazi occupation. Members of Arcadie, and by extension sympathizers with its relatively