

he rather criticizes the debased form to which (in his view) it had sunk in his day. It is as satire of the lower and ignobler manifestations of boy-love that the humorous and sarcastic passages in his plays are to be interpreted, not as condemnation in the vein that Christianity was to adopt in later centuries.

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ARISTOTLE (384–322 B.C.)

Major ancient Greek philosopher.

Aristotle's thinking was formed at the Academy in Athens, where in 366–347 he studied under Plato. Aristotle tutored the bisexual Alexander the Great in Macedonia (343–336), and then returned to Athens, where he opened a school. His habit of lecturing in the covered walking place (*peripatos*) of the Lyceum gave his school the name of Peripatetic. As a thinker Aristotle is outstanding for the breadth of his interests, which encompassed the entire panorama of the ancient sciences, and for his efforts to make sense of the world through applying an organic and developmental approach. In this way he departed from the essentialist, deductive emphasis of Plato. Unfortunately, Aristotle's polished essays, which were noted for their style, are lost, and the massive corpus of surviving works derives largely from lecture notes. In these the wording of the Greek presents many uncertainties: hence the differences in the various translations, which in sexual matters are often marred by euphemistic evasion or anachronistic modernization. Dubious points can only be settled by wrestling with the Greek.

Although Aristotle is known to have had several male lovers, in his writings he tended to follow Plato's lead in favoring restraints on overt expression of homoerotic feelings. He differs, however, from Plato's ethical and idealizing approach

to male same-sex love by his stress on biological factors. In a brief, but important treatment in the *Nicomachean Ethics* (7:5) he was the first to distinguish clearly between innate and acquired homosexuality. This dichotomy corresponds to a standard Greek distinction between processes which are determined by nature (*physis*) and those which are conditioned by culture or custom (*nomos*). The approach set forth in this text was to be echoed a millennium and a half later in the Christian Scholastic treatments of Albertus Magnus and Thomas Aquinas (*Summa Theologiae*, Ia IIa, 31:7). In *The History of Animals* (9:8), Aristotle anticipates modern ethology by showing that homosexual behavior among birds is linked to patterns of domination and submission. In various passages he speaks of homosexual relations among noted Athenian men and boys as a matter of course. His treatment of friendship (*Nicomachean Ethics*, books 8 and 9) emphasizes its mutual character, based on the equality of the parties, which requires time for full consolidation. He takes it as given that true friendship can occur only between two free males of equal status, excluding slaves and women. Aristotle's ideas on friendship were to be echoed by Cicero, Erasmus, Michel de Montaigne, and Sir Francis Bacon.

The *Problems* (4:26), a work attributed to Aristotle but probably compiled by a follower, attributes desire for anal intercourse in men to the accumulation of semen in the fundament. This notion derives from the common Greek medical view that semen is produced in the region of the brain and then transferred by a series of conduits to the lower body.

In England and America a spurious compilation of sexual and generative knowledge, *Aristotle's Masterpiece*, enjoyed a long run of popularity. Compiled from a variety of sources, including the Hippocratic and Galenic medical traditions, the medieval writings of Albertus Magnus, and folklore of all kinds, this farrago was apparently first published in

English in 1684. A predecessor of later sex manuals, the book contains such lore as the determination of the size of the penis from that of the nose.

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ARMY

See *Military*.

ART, VISUAL

Homosexuality intersects with the visual arts of painting, sculpture, and photography in two ways: through subject matter (iconography) and through the personal homosexuality or bisexuality of artists.

Despite the fact that until recently most of the relevant images were inaccessible—relegated to museum basements or hidden in private collections—it is no secret that the world's heritage of the fine arts includes much homoerotic material. To be sure, the project of a comprehensive history of "gay art" seems problematic. In some areas where there is reason to believe that the material is abundant—as in China and the Islamic countries—the essential studies and publications needed to form the basis for a synthesis have not been produced. More fundamentally, it is hard to extract a common denominator from the varied material itself, which ranges from explicit scenes of copulation, through simple portraits of figures known to be homosexual, to homophobic depictions of the persecution of homosexuals. Large gaps exist. Lamentably, through many centuries of Christian domination in Europe, the ban on the making of such works was effective. Then there has been vandalism. In the New World much was destroyed by the Spanish conquistadores and the fanatical churchmen who accompanied them. As recently as the early twentieth century some Moche pieces from pre-Columbian

Peru showing same-sex acts were destroyed by their finders as "insults to national honor." The situation for lesbian art is even more difficult. Because until recent times works of art have generally been commissioned by men for their own purposes, sympathetic depictions of lesbian love are sparse. Before the sixteenth century, we find only representations of friendship between women; then in the Venetian school there begins an imagery of lesbian dalliance—but only for male entertainment. Only in recent decades has there been a substantial production of lesbian art by lesbians and for lesbians. This raises the final problem: how are we to consider the work of an artist known to be homosexual or bisexual, but whose subject matter—through lack of commissions or reticence—does not extend to his or her own sexuality?

Classical Antiquity. A comparison of Greek homoerotic literature and art is instructive. Since the time of their composition, Greek texts of male-male love have always been known to those who cared to seek them out, and they provided continuity through the whole subsequent literary development. Parallel works in the visual arts passed unrecognized, languished in museum storerooms, or remained hidden in the ground to be discovered only through recent excavations. Not being known to homosexual artists of later times, they could not form the signposts of a recognized perennial tradition. And the lack of a continuous tradition is the main reason why one cannot rightfully speak of a "history of gay art."

Still ancient Greece supplies a considerable amount of material. The explanation for this flowering lies in the fact, that unlike its predecessors in the ancient Near East, Greece was a secular society in which the priestly caste was relatively unimportant. Even in statues dedicated in temples and placed on tombs the wishes of the patron are paramount. In antiquity the Greeks were noted for their