

Secure in his own gay identity, confident that he was correct and puritanical society wrong, Cernuda's primarily autobiographical poetry explores his own isolation and suffering. He sought to recapture his lost youth in that of young sexual partners, and his *Forbidden Pleasures* and *Where Oblivion Dwells* are openly pederastic; he was the first to publish on such topics in Spain. In addition to his verse, which was well received in literary circles, Cernuda was a frequent contributor of critical essays to literary magazines. He published a lengthy essay on André Gide, from whose writings he learned that others felt as he did and that suffering could be expressed and alleviated through literary creation.

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CERVANTES, MIGUEL DE (1547-1616)

Spanish novelist. Cervantes, probably of Jewish ancestry, is the last major representative of the Spanish humanism that was extinguished by the Counterreformation. That Cervantes might have had homosexual desires and experiences was first suggested in print in 1982 and restated more explicitly in 1987 (Rossi). There is much to support this suggestion: his teacher Juan López de Hoyos, to whom he remained close until his death in 1583, called him "my dear "beloved disciple"; Cervantes subsequently spent a year in Italy, of which he always kept fond memories and wished to return. For five years he was a captive in Algiers, where he was on surprisingly good

terms with a homosexual convert to Islam; he refers several times in his writings to the pederasty that flourished in the Ottoman empire; on his return from Algiers he was accused of unspecified filthy acts. His marriage was unhappy, and women in his works are treated distantly. Like Manuel Azaña, he put a very high value on freedom.

While Cervantes presented the male-female relationship as the theoretical ideal and goal for most people, the use of pairs of male friends is characteristic of his fiction, and questions of gender are often close to the surface. In his masterpiece *Don Quixote* (1605-15), which includes cross-dressing by both sexes, the middle-aged protagonist has never had, and has no interest in, sexual intercourse with a woman. A boy servant who appears fleetingly at the outset is replaced by the unhappily-married companion Sancho Panza. The two men come to love each other, although the love is not sexual.

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CHASTITY

See Asceticism; Celibacy.

CHICAGO

At the beginning of the twentieth century, America's chief Midwestern city achieved a remarkable economic and cultural eminence. At that time a homosexual subculture with its own language, dress, mores, and institutions began to take shape