

homosexual episodes with nonchalant impartiality, though Longus' *Daphnis and Chloe* is less favorable to male same-sex love. A proto-science-fiction story, the *True History of Lucian* of Samosata, tells of a man who voyaged to the moon, where he found an all-male society in which offspring emerged from plants. Finding favor with the king, the hero was invited to marry his son.

A major landmark is the Latin *Satyricon* of Petronius Arbiter (first century of our era), which recounts the picaresque adventures of Encolpius (the narrator) and his boyfriend Giton in southern Italy. The present fragments, running to some 160 pages in modern editions, are believed to amount to only a tenth of the original, which would have been a work of almost Proustian scope.

From the Middle Ages to the French Revolution. The medieval legend of *Amis and Amile* is a tale of intense male bonding of two devoted friends, the David and Jonathan of their age. To save his friend from leprosy, the other agreed to slay his own two children. However, after he made the sacrifice they were miraculously restored to life.

The Renaissance revival of ancient models paved the way for the bawdy novel of early modern times, diffused by the printing press, though often clandestinely. With its great pioneering figure of Aretino at the head, Venice early took the lead. Here the homosexual classic is the mid-seventeenth-century *L'Alcibiade fanciullo a scola* (Alcibiades the Schoolboy), attributed to Antonio Rocco. This little book is a plea for pederasty that takes the form of a conversation between the young Alcibiades and his lustful teacher. A work that belongs in a class of its own is *La Cazzaria* of the Siennese Antonio Vignali ("Arsiccio Intronato," 1501-59), which presents a series of playful fantasias on a variety of sexual subjects. In France Nicolas Chorier took the lead in his *De arcanis amoris et Veneris* (ca. 1658), which, though primarily heterosexual, has both lesbian

and male homosexual passages. In order to avoid repercussions, Chorier disguised his book as the product of a Spanish woman author as adapted by a Dutch Latinist. A disapproving, voyeuristic homosexual episode appears in John Cleland's *Memoirs of a Woman of Pleasure* ("Fanny Hill," 1748-49), and in *Roderick Random* (1748) Tobias Smollett includes two unmistakably homosexual characters, Lord Strutwell and Captain Whiffle, both presented negatively.

The French eighteenth century, combining the Enlightenment with libertine trends, saw a plentiful production of erotic literature, most of it heterosexual. Only in the last decade of the century were the pansexual works of the Marquis de Sade published, as well as Denis Diderot's *La Religieuse*, which concerns lesbianism inside a convent.

The Nineteenth Century. Through the nineteenth century a copious flow of clandestine erotic novels appeared for the well-heeled purchaser. Near the century's beginning is a lurid novel *Gami-ani* (1833), attributed to Alfred de Musset, that features lesbianism. At its end is the still mysterious English *Teleny* (1893), about a gay Hungarian pianist. A mainstream author, Honoré de Balzac, left an example of a noteworthy homosexual character, Vautrin, embedded in his vast tapestry, *La Comédie humaine*. The secret of the character is that he does not love women, but his homosexuality is woven skillfully into the fabric of the narrative, as Balzac had mastered the technique of suggesting in an unobtrusive manner the erotic motives and actions of the subject. Balzac was also aware of the political dimension of homosexuality, of the "freemasonry of love" that it represented.

The end of the century saw a greater flow of relevant works, though the authors still had to tread a careful path to avoid prosecution for pornography. Catulle Mendès' *Mephistophéla* offers a broad panorama of lesbian life, though inscribed

in a judgmental framework. The mystic Joséphin Péladan, leader of the Rose+Croix group, gave novelistic form to his obsession with androgyny in *L'androgynie* and *La gynandre* (both 1891). From a literary point of view, probably the finest work of the decade is *Escale-Vigor* (1899) by the Belgian writer Georges Eekhoud, which concerns the love of a Flemish nobleman for a middle-class youth.

The Modern French Achievement. In the early years of the twentieth century Marcel Proust took up the challenge of the great French novelists of the past: his vast *A la recherche du temps perdu* includes extensive male homosexual and lesbian materials refracted in a special concept of love. For his younger contemporary, André Gide, the pivotal novel is *The Counterfeiters* (1926), though his autobiographical works surpass his fiction in frankness. Although she wrote also about heterosexuality, the lesbian counterpart to these giants is Colette, who drew upon her experiences at school and on the Parisian stage. Her friend Jean Cocteau was multitalented, but could not concentrate his gifts in a single masterwork. Marcel Jouhandeau and Julien Green (the latter a gallicized American) have been much preoccupied with religion and homosexuality. A place apart belongs to the searing novels of Jean Genet, which reflect his experiences among the underclass—on the road and in prison. Marguerite Yourcenar, who spent many years in the United States, has preferred male-homosexual themes to lesbian ones.

After a hiatus in the wake of World War II, a new crop of French writers has confronted gay themes. By all odds the leader is Michel Tournier, the author of intricately wrought philosophical fables. Other significant French gay novelists of the late twentieth century are Renaud Camus, Tony Duvert, Dominique Fernandez, and Yves Navarre. Among lesbian novelists Monique Wittig stands out for her formal innovations reflecting French

and American feminism.

Germany and Austria. The distinguished Austrian writer Robert Musil produced a novel based on his military school experiences, *Young Törless* (1906), that shows the exploitation of a vulnerable, effeminate boy by two bullies. Using the pseudonym of Sagitta, the German anarchist theorist John Henry Mackay wrote what was probably the first completely sympathetic novel of boy-love, *Fenny Skaller* (1913). In 1926 "Sagitta" published *Der Puppenjunge* (The Hustler) which details the milieu of boy prostitutes in Berlin in the 1920s.

Thomas Mann, a Nobel prize winner, was much troubled by his homosexual side, to which he succeeded in giving powerful artistic form in his novella *Death in Venice* (1912), which depicts the downfall of an aging writer who falls in love with a beautiful Polish boy. His son Klaus Mann was entirely homosexual, and all his novels deal with the matter either directly or indirectly. Like the Manns, Hans Siemsen found it necessary to emigrate because of his anti-Nazi opinions. The journals *Der Eigene* and *Der Kreis* offered opportunities for lesser German-speaking gay writers to publish short fiction. Not well known outside of Germany, Bruno Vogel combined explicit, positive homosexuality with socialist-anarchist politics as seen in his antiwar novel *Alf* (1929). The lesbian novelist Anna Elisabeth Wehrauch produced a panorama of German lesbian life in her *Skorpion* (1919-21). Christa Winslow's *The Child Manuela* (1931) has been repeatedly filmed as *Mädchen in Uniform*. Hermann Broch, considered by some as one of Europe's great modern novelists, completed his *The Death of Vergil* (1946) while in exile in America.

Bridging the war years was the pacifist Hans Henny Jahnn, who was based in Hamburg. Now recognized as a major figure is another Hamburg writer, Hubert Fichte, who explored themes relating to

the counterculture and the Third World. Alexander Ziegler's message novel of gay emancipation, *Die Konsequenz* (1975) was made into a film. Other contemporary German writers of note include Guido Bachmann, Friedrich Kröhnke, and Martin Sperr.

Britain. As Henry Spencer Ashbee has remarked about erotic literature, "The English nation possesses an ultra-squeamishness and hyper-prudery peculiar to itself, sufficient alone to deter any author of position and talent from taking in hand so tabooed a subject." In the wake of the Oscar Wilde trials this caveat applied particularly to homosexual literature. E. M. Forster wrote his homosexual novel *Maurice* in 1913, but showed it only to a few friends; the book was not published until 1971. In 1928 Radclyffe Hall, an established writer since before World War I, created an enormous furor with her lesbian novel *The Well of Loneliness*. Although Virginia Woolf's novel of androgyny *Orlando* (also 1928) was about her lover Vita Sackville-West, the tale was so fantastic that no one seemed to mind. Similarly, Ronald Firbank's *Concerning the Eccentricities of Cardinal Pirelli* (1926) was done in such a coy and gossamer style of high camp that it could hardly give offense. Compton Mackenzie's *Vestal Fire* (1927) paints a delightful picture, based in part on the doings of Count Adelswärd Fersen, of the international set on the island of Capri. In the 1930s Christopher Isherwood included homosexual motifs in his Berlin stories, but carefully "balanced" with heterosexual material.

Only after World War II did this situation begin to change—though censorship kept out many foreign writings on homosexuality even into the 1980s. Mary Renault, who specialized in writing about male homosexual experience, began her career with a wartime novel, *The Charioteer*, in 1953; she soon switched to historical novels about ancient Greece which enjoyed a popular following among gay readers throughout the English-speaking

world. Perhaps the best-known of these are *The Last of the Wine* (1956), set in the Athens of the Peloponnesian War, and the second of her books on Alexander the Great, *The Persian Boy* (1972).

Leading British middle-brow authors, such as Angus Wilson (*Hemlock and After*, 1952) and Iris Murdoch (*The Bell*, 1958; and *A Fairly Honourable Defeat*, 1970), presented sympathetic homosexual characters in a context of social comedy. The coming of gay liberation created a larger market, but the new gay writers were characteristically traditionalist: among the best are David Galloway, Adam Mars-Jones, David Rees, and David Watmough. Alan Hollinghurst's *The Swimming Pool Library* (1988) earned widespread admiration for its poignant contrast between the sexual-revolution era and pre-1969 oppression.

Other Countries. The fall of Mussolini opened Italian literature to foreign influences, especially American ones. The realistic novelists Alberto Moravia and his wife Elsa Morante have both treated homosexuality, though it is not their main theme. A small masterpiece is Giorgio Bassani's *The Gold-Rimmed Spectacles* (1958), which shows the dovetailing of homophobia and anti-Semitism at the end of the 1930s. The homosexual Pier Paolo Pasolini, later better known as a filmmaker, wrote frank treatments of Roman proletarian life, as well as pederastic sketches, which were published only after his death. The reception of French influences led to a new experimentalism in the Italian gay novel, as seen in the work of Mario Appignano, Francesco Merlini, Pier Vittorio Tondelli, and Dario Trento. Aldo Busi, author of *The Standard Life of a Temporary Pantyhose Salesman* (1985), ranks as a writer of European stature.

In the Russia of the Silver Age Mikhail Kuzmin produced *Wings* (1906), a delicately etched portrait of a young man's gradual self-understanding. The great Dutch novelist Louis Couperus, wrote two relevant historical novels, *De Berg van*

Licht (1905), on the Emperor Heliogabalus, and *De komedianten* (1917). His contemporary Jacob Israel de Haan wrote the realistic *Pijpelijntjes* (1904), commenting on the homosexual scene of the day. After World War II, Gerard Reve repeatedly scandalized the Dutch public with his frank novels, featuring sardonic wit and a mixture of gay liberation and Catholicism. The Dane Herman Bang's *Mikaël* (1904) is a sensitive portrait of artistic circles that a decade later was made into the first gay film. Pre-Meiji Japan had an extensive tradition of gay samurai stories, as exemplified by the prolific Saikaku Ihara. After World War II, the spectacular Mishima Yukio produced two sardonic portraits of Japanese gay life: *Confessions of a Mask* and *Forbidden Colors*.

An early standard bearer in Latin America was Brazilian Adolfo Caminha's *Bom Crioulo* (1895), concerning the tragic love of a black sailor for a white cabin boy. Since World War II the emergence of a vibrant gay scene in Brazil has nourished a number of fiction writers, including Gasparino Damata, Caio Fernando Abreu, Aguinaldo Silva, Edilberto Coutinho, and Darcy Penteado. Several little known Spanish-speaking writers treated same-sex themes, including Enrique Gómez-Carrillo and Rafael Arévalo Martínez (both Guatemala), Augusto D'Halmar (Chile), and Porfirio Barba-Jacob (Colombia). Since its publication in Havana in 1966, José Lezama Lima's *Paradiso* has been recognized as a Proustian masterpiece and translated into many languages. The Argentinian Manuel Puig's *Kiss of the Spider Woman*, about two men in a jail cell, has been turned into a notable film. In Spain the openly gay Juan Goytisolo has established himself as a major writer.

French-speaking Canada has produced a number of distinguished gay and lesbian writers (see Quebec). In 1986 Scott Symons, born in Toronto, published *Helmet of Flesh*, offering a vision of culture shock in Morocco that mingles reality and

fantasy. Australia's Patrick White, author of *The Twyburn Affair* (1980), received the Nobel Prize in literature in 1973.

Wayne R. Dynes

The Gay American Novel. Homosexuality as an explicit subject appears relatively late in American fiction, though much has been made of homoerotic themes which critics have found in works by Herman Melville (*Billy Budd* and *Moby-Dick*), James Fenimore Cooper, Mark Twain (*Huckleberry Finn*), and Henry James. Not until the 1899 publication of Alfred J. Cohen's *A Marriage Below Zero* was explicit homosexuality the central theme of an American novel. Cohen, concerned that a lack of information about homosexuality was leading young women into marriages with homosexuals, also established the tradition of ending the major homosexual character's life with suicide.

In 1908 Edward I. Prime-Stevenson ("Xavier Mayne") published the first positive picture of homosexuality, *Imre: a Memorandum*. Also a distinguished scholar of the field, Prime-Stevenson believed homosexuality congenital but found justification in achievements by many homosexuals in history. After much hiding and self-doubt, his lovers find true and lasting bliss, but probably only a few people read this privately printed book. Before 1920, Henry Blake Fuller's *Bertram Cope's Year* (published in 1919) is the only other example of an American novel with explicit homosexuality as a theme.

The 1920s showed little further development, but in 1931 Blair Niles wrote *Strange Brother*; attempting to be comprehensive and sympathetic, she achieved a result that is mainly of use in understanding contemporary ideas and for a glimpse of the homosexual subculture in New York. Two other novels of the thirties, *Butterfly Man* and *Twilight Men*, offer a less clinical picture of gay lifestyles, but in both suicide is still the fate of the protagonists. The

anonymous "underground" novel *Scarlet Pansy* satirized many of the prevalent negative views of homosexuality, but also ends with the death of the hero.

Two exceptions to the generally bleak picture of homosexuality in this decade are the sentimental *Better Angel* by "Richard Meeker" (Forman Brown) and the campy bohemian novel *The Young and Evil* by Charles Henri Ford and Parker Tyler. While around a dozen novels treated homosexuality as a major theme between the wars, none of them was written by a major novelist.

In the years immediately following World War II (1946–50), the dam of silence was clearly collapsing, with numerous works, some by renowned writers, making an impact on the American market. First-hand information about the sexual habits of males in an all-male environment seems to have influenced many of the authors, and about half the novels deal with war or military experiences. James Jones, often acclaimed as the leading American war novelist, described homosexuality in the peacetime army in *From Here to Eternity* (1951); eleven years later Jones gave a sympathetic account of "situational homosexuality" in the combat zone in *The Thin Red Line*.

The most famous novel of this period (and probably the first novel with homosexuality as a major theme to reach general circulation) was Gore Vidal's 1948 *The City and the Pillar*. The author's later outspoken positive ideas on homosexuality are barely visible in this early work; none of the gay characters is able to find lasting love or emotional fulfillment, but at least suicide is avoided. Other major writers employing homosexual characters or themes include Norman Mailer, Truman Capote, John Horn Burns, and Vance Bourjaily. The first novels to discuss homosexual problems as a result of intolerance appear at this time and include Richard Brooks' *The Brick Foxhole* and Ward Thomas' remarkable *Stranger in the Land* (1949), in which homophobia is com-

pared to racism and anti-Semitism. Pseudo-Freudian views can be seen in Isabel Bolton's *The Christmas Tree* and Michael DeForrest's *The Gay Year*. James Barr's 1950 *Quatrefoil* has remained popular in the gay subculture as an idealized picture of a gay relationship, though its depiction of homosexuality is less positive than appears at first glance. None of these works seems very enlightened by the standards of two or three decades later, but they represented a great advance in tolerance at the time.

In the fifties, with its political conservatism (Senator Joseph McCarthy was linking homosexuality with Communism) and high regard for Freudian concepts, fiction about homosexuality is less salient and less positive. The subject is exploited as titillation in Meyer Levin's *Compulsion* and Allen Drury's *Advise and Consent*. Only James Baldwin in *Giovanni's Room* and Christopher Isherwood (a British expatriate) made homosexuality a main theme.

The dominant psychiatric view of homosexuality as an illness led to a prevalence of novels ending in suicide or death such as Fritz Peter's *Finistère*, Oakley Hall's *The Corpus of Joe Bailey*, and the Baldwin work. The best example of this tendency can be found in Jean Evans' *Three Men*, which was used in psychology classes in some universities. So dominant were these views that only Isherwood, Vidal, and counterculture writers such as Paul Goodman and William Burroughs were able to avoid them. Burroughs, a member of the beat writers group, wrote a series of phantasmagoric novels which included nearly pornographic descriptions of male homosexuality. His best-known work, *Naked Lunch* (1959), was the subject of obscenity trials in the early 1960s.

The social changes which swept through the American landscape in the sixties brought about a major liberalization and extension of treatments of homosexuality in fiction. Early in the decade, Isherwood wrote *Down There on a Visit*

and *A Single Man*, both treating homosexuality as an ordinary alternative lifestyle. Baldwin's *Another Country* (1962) was more positive than his work from the fifties. John Rechy's *City of Night* (1963) carried much of the old negative baggage, but it presented an honest and insightful look into the seamier side of gay life, with its theme of male prostitution. By 1968, Vidal's *Myra Breckinridge* showed a radical view of acceptance, while many minor novels served to convey the varied sociology of gay life.

When the fiction of the seventies caught up with the gay liberation movement, major works for a general reading public such as Patricia Nell Warren's 1974 book, *The Front Runner*, and Laura Z. Hobson's *Consenting Adult* began to reflect a view that equated homosexual with heterosexual behavior and depicted problems as owing to social intolerance. By the end of the decade, homosexual themes appeared in such genres as **mystery**, **humor**, and **science fiction**, while styles varied from the elegant symbolism of Edmund White to explicit realism and literary quality ranged from the highly literate to gross pornography. By 1978, two novels which expressed negative views, Larry Kramer's *Faggots* and Andrew Holleran's *Dancer from the Dance*, were coming under fire from many gay leaders for ideological deficiencies.

With the 1980s, bookstores catering to a gay market proliferated and with them novels with major homosexual themes. Following the lead of Joseph Hansen with his David Brandsetter mystery series, several authors began series of novels with gay detectives. Felice Picano, Paul Monette and others produced novels set in the gay community or with major gay characters. Charles Nelson made homosexuality a major theme in his Vietnam novel *The Boy Who Picked the Bullets Up*. Christopher Bram, Robert Ferro, and David Levitt were among the authors who attracted attention for the literary quality of their work.

Most of the newer authors depict a homosexual orientation as unproblematic in itself. In general, however, the "gay" fiction of the eighties has become as diverse as the subculture and behavior it describes, making it impossible to generalize in the manner in which works of earlier decades were treated. In many ways it is melting into the general body of American fiction.

James B. Levin

The American Lesbian Novel. In the first few decades of the twentieth century the archetypal figure was the expatriate Gertrude Stein, who lived in Paris with her lover Alice B. Toklas. Stein's prose was too experimental and formalistic for most to make out much lesbian content, but she remained a formidable symbolic figure. Her contemporary Parisian-by-adoption, Natalie Barney, wrote in French. More directly related to the "lost generation" was Djuna Barnes who, however, returned to live in New York City; her major works were *Ladies' Almanac* (1928) and the darkly claustrophobic *Nightwood* (1936). The latter work knits together the story of five troubled characters, told from the perspective of a transvestite doctor.

The Great Depression caused a reaction against twenties preoccupations, which were seen as frivolous and decadent. Nonetheless, Gale Wilhelm published two novels in this period that address the dilemma of lesbian women: *Torchlight to Valhalla* (1935) and *We Too Are Drifting* (1938). In the first the heroine resigns herself to separation from her beloved, but in the second two women are united—an unusual ending for a novel of the period.

After World War II the spread of mass-market paperbacks led to a considerable production of lesbian pulps—some of them "lesbian trash," that is potboilers aimed at the prurient interests of straight

male readers. This period nonetheless saw the start of the building of a lesbian audience which sought out the somewhat melodramatic novels of Ann Bannon and Paula Christian. A little later new standards of quality were set by May Sarton (*Mrs. Stevens Hears the Mermaids Singing*, 1965; *A Reckoning*, 1978) and Jane Rule (*Desert of the Heart*, 1964; *Contract with the World*, 1980). Sarton linked lesbianism with creativity and artistic inspiration, though her Mrs. Stevens seems to have found more fulfillment with men. With rare veracity, Rule's work portrays lesbian and gay male characters interacting with heterosexual friends. A widely read historical novel, set in early nineteenth-century America, is Isabel Miller's *Patience and Sarah* (1972; originally published in 1969 as *A Place for Us*).

Resolute lesbian feminism made a splash in Rita Mae Brown's *Rubyfruit Jungle* (1973). This book's preachy earnestness is relieved by its occasional humor, tenderness, and heartfelt anger, and it has rightly become a landmark in the field. Brown subsequently became a "cross-over" writer, gaining mainstream attention and commissions for Hollywood film scripts, but at the cost of some loss of verve. Ann Shockley pioneered in writing about the black lesbian experience, and others wrote from chicana, American Indian, and Asian points of view. Alice Walker's mainstream *The Color Purple* (1982) contrasts love between two poor southern black women with the brutality of relations with men, while Maureen Brady's less well known *Folly* of the same year deals with both black and white working-class women in a Carolina mill town. In several fast-paced novels that break new ground, Sarah Schulman has explored aspects of violence and emotion in lesbian life in the inner city.

Evelyn Gettone

The Gay/Lesbian Novel as History. Attempts to trace out a history of homosexual behavior are seriously handi-

capped both by a lack of empirically valid research from earlier periods and by the taboos on the subject which have led to enormous gaps in documentation. Given such uneven, often threadbare materials to work with, historians can only rejoice in the glimpses which fiction gives us of the texture and ideational context of homosexuality in days long gone by. The efforts of novelists have bequeathed us pictures of homosexualities which no amount of culling of archival records, law cases, and polemical works can equal. They open a window to local variations and to the various mores of homosexuality in such diverse and otherwise undocumented worlds as ancient Rome and medieval Japan, Renaissance Venice and Fascist Italy, 1930s Berlin and turn-of-the-century Amsterdam. They portray the homosexuality of soldiers and junkies, street hustlers and pederasts, black women and prisoners, wooden-ship sailors and military-academy schoolboys. They shed light on the subjective as well as objective realities faced by homosexuals of many times and cultures in ways that no social scientist can hope to match.

Conclusion. The great variety of novels and short fiction that treat male homosexuality and lesbianism gives the impression of almost limitless horizons. Yet reflection suggests that the achievement of this body of work depends upon a complex network of publishers, editors, critics, and bookstores. In the past this network often operated to shift narratives into a negative key as authors scrambled to "play the game" by satisfying the changing demands of the gatekeepers of the book world. Today such publishers as Alyson, Gay Sunshine Press, and Naiad Press in the United States, Gay Men's Press (GMP) in England, Persona in France, and Rosa Winkel Verlag in Germany assure an alternative to mainstream publishing houses. The many gay and lesbian periodicals provide reviews, and specialized bookstores make the fiction available. Although such specialization has often been decried, this

infrastructure assures that gay and lesbian creativity will not be constricted by hostile or indifferent outsiders.

Stephen Donaldson

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NUDE IN ART, THE

As an art form the monumental nude was perfected by the Greeks in the fifth century B.C. It was, and remains, one of the major vehicles for the realization of the concept of beauty in art. Commonly the nude is automatically equated with the female nude, despite the relatively recent origin of this predominance.

Classical Antiquity and the Middle Ages. The beginning of the sixth century B.C. saw the realization of the Dorian concept of the nude youth in the *kouros* type. Only later, toward the middle of the century, did the female counterpart, the *kore*, appear. Developing in the Ionic sphere, the *kore* is finer, lighter, and—clothed. The male statues, conveniently termed Apollos, are the primordial expression of the young male body, forming an essential component of the art of ancient Greece from the Archaic period until the end. Stemming from a society in which young men regularly exercised naked, in the *gymnasium* and at athletic competitions, they incarnate the most cherished ideals of the Greeks. The flowering of the male nude in Greek art (sixth–fifth century B.C.) was situated during the period in which the pederastic institution was at its

height. Moreover, the depiction of homosexual relations in Greek vases occurred mainly between 570 and 470 B.C., constituting, together with statuary, the fullest repertoire of nudes surviving from classical antiquity.

A radical break took place in the Hellenistic period, in which large monarchies replaced the earlier city-states. Formed in association with the city-state tradition of citizen participation, the classic ethos of earlier times became increasingly less satisfying and less relevant for the average Greek. Women demanded more personal freedom, while at the same time seeking to bind men to their family duties. New phenomena, including the growing Stoic flight from the world, a contrasting Epicurean quest for creature comforts, sophisticated cosmopolitanism, and the rising mystery cults, made their appearance. In this atmosphere, it is not surprising that pederasty lost its sociocultural centrality, becoming more and more a matter of personal preference. In the fourth century B.C. themes of female beauty and heterosexual love made their way into poetry. The appearance and increasing popularity of the nude Aphrodite symbolized the considerable social and psychological changes. Sculptors sought to endow their figures with human passions: joy, sorrow, anger, despair. The development of the male nude shows a tendency to polarization, so that the figures are either too virile or too effeminate.

In the Middle Ages the male nude underwent a kind of etherealization. The Crucified Christ is a symbol of suffering, passion, abnegation, and death. The contrast with classical antiquity could scarcely be greater.

The Renaissance Tradition. The Renaissance rediscovery of the ideas and values of antiquity created an inexhaustible source for artistic creation. The male nude body claimed a central place and, especially in fifteenth-century Florence, reclaimed its status as an aesthetic object; in this climate outstanding figures were