

Each boy *eromenos* had as a distinguished private tutor his *erastes* or lover.

Sparta was to the Greeks themselves and remains the eternal model of an aristocratic warrior society whose unwritten law combined male bonding with an especially virile, austere form of homosexuality. Neglecting the cultural endeavor that was the particular glory of Athens, Sparta nonetheless made its own contribution to the Greek miracle. Inspired by man-boy love, the heroism of Spartan warriors shielded nascent Hellenic civilization from the menace of Persian despotism.

*See also Greece, Ancient.*

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William A. Percy

### SPICER, JACK (JOHN LESTER; 1925-1965)

American poet. Stemming from a Minnesota family, Spicer spent most of his life in California. As a freshman at the University of Redlands (1944) Spicer became interested in Calvinism; later he took a Ph.D. in linguistics. Glimpses of his personal life are found in his letters, whose whimsical style attests his keen sense of language, and in recollections of friends.

The earliest published verses date from 1946, when poems appeared in *Occident*, the Berkeley student magazine. In later years Spicer repudiated his early verses, calling them "beautiful but dumb." They are tender and lyrical, qualities attributable to Spicer's study of Yeats.

For the poet Robin Blaser, his close friend and literary executor, Spicer's poetic career actually begins in 1957 with the appearance of *After Lorca*. This is the first of the books written after he changed

his approach to creativity and accepted the notion of "divine poetic infusion," a method he traced to the Greek writer Longinus. Blaser writes, "It is indicative of a new consciousness of the power and violence of language, and in Jack's work, it becomes an insistent argument for the performance of the real by way of poetry." With the publication of *After Lorca* in 1957, Spicer began a steady production of verse in his new style. During this creative phase Spicer exercised a charismatic sway over his San Francisco circle. Among the poets he influenced are Robin Blaser, Harold Dull, Robert Duncan, and Richard Tagett.

The dozen volumes he wrote are gathered in the posthumous *Collected Books* (Los Angeles: Black Sparrow, 1975). Uncollected items appear in *One Night Stand and Other Poems* (San Francisco: Grey Fox, 1980). His 1965 Vancouver lectures remain unpublished.

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George Klawitter

### SPORTS

*See Athletics.*

### STEIN, GERTRUDE (1874-1946)

American writer. Born in Allegheny, Pennsylvania, Stein spent much of her youth in Oakland, California, where her father had business interests. As an undergraduate at Harvard's Radcliffe College she was influenced by the psychology classes of William James. She then pursued medical studies in Baltimore, where she had an affair with a woman named May Bookstaver. This experience provided the basis for the novel *Q.E.D.*, the only work in which Stein wrote explicitly of a lesbian relationship; she did not allow the book to be published during her lifetime.

In 1903 Gertrude Stein left for Europe, in due course settling into a Paris apartment with her brother Leo. The two