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Gay Histories and Cultures: An Encyclopedia

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Abû Nuwâs (c.747–762 to c.813–815)
An emblem of homoerotic Arabic poetry, Abû Nuwâs is one of the most celebrated poets of the early Abbasid age. Al-Hasan (b. Hâni' al–Hakamî) was born in al-Ahwâz (Iran) between A.D. 747 and 762, and died in Baghdâd between 813 and 815. His father might have been a soldier in the army of the last Umayyad caliph Marwân II, and his grandfather was a *mawlâ* (emancipated servant) of al-Garrâh (b. 'Abdallah al-Hakamî), a governor of Khurasân of southern Arabian descent, which accounts for Abû Nuwâs's avowals of disdain toward Arabs of northern origin (thus indirectly, if not openly, aiming at the family of the Prophet and caliphs, all of the northern tribe of Quraysh, a most provocative stance). His mother is said to have been the owner of a tavern in Basra and her morals the object of much jest. Two anecdotes quoted by Ibn Manzûr allude to Abû Nuwâs's being a *mu'âjir* in his youth, a term that could be understood as an escort for rich and refined literati. The same author presents three versions of Abû Nuwâs's encounter with the poet Wâliba (b. al-Hubâb), a lover of wine and beardless youths. All versions agree that the latter was charmed by Abû Nuwâs's wit and beauty and decided to take him to al-Kûfa to effect his formation as a poet. Wâliba was generous enough to send him to the desert to master the subtleties of the language. After Wâliba's death, the young poet, besides studying Koranic sciences, *hadîth* (sayings attributed to the Prophet Muhammed), and grammar, became a disciple of the famous transmitter of poetry Khalaf al-Ahmar. Ibn Manzûr mentions that when Abû Nuwâs asked his master for authorization to compose verses, Khalaf ordered him first to learn a thousand poems. Having learned them, recited them before Khalaf for many nights, and asked again for the right to compose, Khalaf enjoined him to forget those verses before he would be able to compose. This Abû Nuwâs dutifully did while drinking wine in a monastery. This parable on poetic creation also underlines Abû Nuwâs's formidable intelligence, acknowledged by all the learned men of his time. He joined the caliphal court in Baghdâd as a protégé of the Iranian clan of Al Nawbakht, and became acquainted with the caliph Harûn al-Rashid's son, al-Amîn, who shared his taste for wine, young and available male servants, and hunting. Although Abû Nuwâs had to flee to Egypt as a result of composing a eulogy to the Al Barmak, a family of vizirs to Hârûn al-Rashid who were put to death after losing the caliph's favor, he lived the most brilliant period of his life upon returning to Baghdâd during his friend al-Amîn's reign (809–813). The circumstances of his death are unknown.

Abû Nuwâs's poetic production is particularly renowned for three themes: hunting, drinking wine, and *mujûn* (libertinism), the last two often connected. His devotion to homoerotic themes and his often scandalous life made him an emblem to the classical figure of the *mâjin* (ribald) and *lûti* (active dominant sodomist). Many anecdotes and verses in this field were subseqently attributed to a character who had become mythical, although such attribution should be treated with skepticism. As a former handsome young boy and object of desire for older men, in his poetry he portrays himself as a man in turn attracted by adolescent youths, to whom he can give only the passive role in a sexual encounter. Abû Nuwâs does not praise the male body as much as an androgynous beauty, as evidenced in the *ghulâmiyyât* (servant girls dressed up as boys to please lovers of both sexes. In

many pieces), the poet falls for a stereotypically described boy, one of those "eternally young ones before whom Time is in debt, and reaches them no more than as much as they wish," who plays at being unattainable, and with whom he will or will not suceed. Those boys are usually court servants, objects of gifts, and sometimes Christians of Arab or Byzantine descent. Fashionable *mujûn* includes witty and ironical allusions to the Muslim (or Christain) faith, in a way often close to blasphemy, as when the poet assimilates his penetration of a Christian boy as an act of *jihâd* against the infidel. Short pieces offer light and humorous longings of a lover of slender waists:

> In the hammam appears what pants hide
> So rise in your naked glory, cast a glance and care for nothing
> You shall see the arse ending the back of a slender nice looking one
> They all murmur to each other their admiration [at this sight]
> Isn't the hammam a place of utter beatitude?
> Even if some of its charm is spoilt by those who won't leave their towels. . . .

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See also Arabic Literature; Mujûn; Mukhannath; Nuzhat al-Albaab; Persian Literature

Ackerley, J. R. (1896–1967)

J. R. Ackerley is best known for *My Father and Myself* (1968), a memoir in which Ackerley interweaves the separate stories of his gay life, his father's extramarital heterosexual life, and his father's bisexuality. Because the protagonists of the book failed to tell their stories to each other, Ackerley's interweaving seeks to repair the lamentable fact that "two intelligent people, . . . parent and son," whose lives represent a century of English cultural conventions, "should have gone along together . . . without ever reaching the closeness of an intimate conversation." The memoir shows how heterosexual and homosexual persons have a mutual stake in freeing eros and intimacy from constraint.

Freedom and success in love depend upon intimacy, whose prospects in turn depend, Ackerley suggests, upon widespread, indeed global, sociohistorical and political conditions. Ackerley's *Hindoo Holiday: An Indian Journal* (1932) records Ackerley's employment, in 1923, as a secretary to an elderly gay maharajah of an Indian native state. The native ruler and the English secretary achieve an interracial, anti-imperialist intimacy based on their common dedication to illicit eros. But their friendship cannot withstand the imperialism-intensified homophobia of the ruler's countrymen and of Ackerley's compatriots.

Nevertheless, there are tensions in *Hindoo Holiday*'s portrayal of friendship that escape sociohistorical and political intelligibility, just as there are tensions in *My Father and Myself* that evade therapeutic repair. This is because friendship and sexual love have a stubbornly perplexing character throughout Ackerley's work that evokes the limits even of liberated eros and of candid intimacy. Having found no all-absorbing intimate homosexual relation in his life, in 1946 Ackerley became exclusively attached to a pet Alsatian bitch. The responsibilities of his relation to his dog are recounted in the memoir *My Dog Tulip* (1956) and are novelized in *We Think the World of You* (1960), where interspecies affection is weighed against homosexual, heterosexual, and bisexual human eros. Both books brilliantly dramatize a constraint that appears to be inherent in all love, no matter how free, honest, and unashamed love's forms might become.

Ackerley's career began in 1925, when his autobiographical play, *The Prisoners of War*, about homosexuality in a World War I internment camp, had a brief success in London. Ackerley joined the Talks Department of the BBC in 1928, and from 1935 to 1959 he was arts editor of the BBC magazine *The Listener*. Ackerley's work is influenced by the writers T. E. Lawrence and David Garnett, and Ackerley' s writing and editorial activity influenced many contemporaries, among them E. M. Forster, whom he encouraged to write gay stories (and whose *A Passage to India* receives a gay rewriting in *Hindoo Holiday*), and Christopher Isherwood.

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See also Censorship; Religious Right; Same-Sex Marriage; U.S. Government; U.S. Law: Discrimination; U.S. Law: Equal Protection; Voting Behavior

Arabian Nights

The Eastern or "Oriental" tales known collectively in the English tradition as the *Arabian Nights' Entertainments* or, alternately, *The Thousand and One Nights*, were first translated from their original Arabic sources into French by the Orientalist Antoine Galland at the beginning of the eighteenth century (1702–1717). The collection, which even in its earliest Western version consisted of some twelve volumes, was translated from French into English almost immediately by an anonymous "Grub Street" translator. This edition of the stories—read and enjoyed by writers such as Alexander Pope, Thomas Gray, and Horace Walpole—remained the most popular version in English well into the nineteenth century. Later translations and editions of the collection, each of which grew larger and more ambitiously inclusive in their retelling, prominently included those of Dr. Jonathan Scott (1811), E. W. Lane (1839–1841), John Payne (1882–1884), and Sir Richard Burton (1885–1888). It is owing largely to Burton's supposedly "unexpurgated" translation, originally published by private subscription in a limited edition of ten monumental volumes, that the *Nights* has subsequently enjoyed a reputation for being a collection of ribald or erotic tales, set within the sexually ambiguous confines of the "mysterious East." While earlier translators such as Galland attempted to impose a certain decorum on the bawdier aspects of their source texts, Burton chose rather to emphasize the erotic nature of many of the stories included in the collection. His extended and often overwhelming footnotes to the *Nights*, which pretended in a pseudoscientific manner to explain the anthropological and sociological ramifications of the text, are likely to strike modern readers as a bizarre and highly idiosyncratic mixture of racism and sexual fetishism. Burton believed that much of the Islamic world lay within a so-called "sotadic zone"—a geographically proscribed area extending from the shores of the Mediterranean well into the Middle East—within which homosexual behavior (between men) was the norm. In fact, of course, the Koran itself on several occasions characterizes homosexuals as "great transgressors," and under Islamic law sodomy was punishable by castration and death. The injunctions included in the Koranic suras did not, however, prevent homosexual behavior from becoming fashionable in certain circles of Islamic culture in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, and several stories in Burton's version of the *Nights* reflect this popularity or (at least) tolerance. Foremost among those tales that include casual reference to the attractions of young boys for mature men are those featuring the historical figure of Abu Nowas, or Abû Nuwâs, a ninth-century poet patronized in the court of the Caliph al-Amîn (e.g., "Abu Nowas with the Three Boys and the Caliph Harun Al-Rashid"). Other collections of Arabic stories and folktales generically related to the *Nights* and known as *kutub al-bah* were more specifically dedicated to erotic and pornographic stories. Ahmad ibn Yusuf al-Tayfashi's *Nuzhat al-Albab* (Delight of the Hearts), for example, is a work from the early thirteenth century that shows a particular interest in narratives involving homosexuals and pederasts.

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See also Abû Nuwâs; Arabic Literature; Persian (Iranian) Literature and Culture

Arabic Literature

As in all culture-related subjects, words are controversial, and much debate has been aroused around the use of the term *homosexuality* concerning classical, premodern, and present-day Arab societies. It is probable that the widespread modern Arabic term *shudhûdh jinsi* (sexual deviationism) and the more politically correct but still seldom found term *mithliyya jinsiyya* (homosexuality) coincide with the Western notion of homosexuality, but these are both recent and modern terminologies that have no equivalent in local dialects or in classical Arabic. The

classical language has no word to cover the wide spectrum of same-sex attraction and sexuality, using such specialized terms as *liwât* (anal sex), *lûti* (active sodomite who prefers boys to women, thus not concerning what modern terminology would qualify as occasional bisexual), *ma'bûn* (passive sodomite), *mukhannath* (effeminate passive sodomite), *mu'âjir* (passive male prostitute), *dâbb* (active sodomite who likes raping his victims in their sleep regardless of their age), and *musâhiqa* (lesbian).

Indeed, the classical Arabic concept of *adab* and the Western word *literature* have been covering approximately identical fields of meaning for only a century. Moreover, Arabic literature covers over fifteen hundred years, and although the linguistic alterations have nothing in common with their equivalents in Western languages, notions and words do change, especially when confronted with other civilizations. It is therefore natural that research on same-sex eroticism in Arabic literature has been very cautious with its vocabulary, prefering to *homosexuality* terms such as *homoeroticism* or *same-sex sexuality*, or even *homosensuality*. It should also be stressed that male-male relationships are far more documented than lesbianism, thus orienting the general tone of this article.

A few basic notions concerning homoeroticism in classical Arabo-Islamic societies must be stressed: first, this culture's recognition of male beauty, even in the eyes of other males, and this beauty's ability to cause *fitna* (disorder). The Koran depicts the effect of Prophet Yûsuf's (Joseph) beauty on the women of Egypt, who were so seized by his charm that, at his mere sight, they cut their hands with knives they had been given to peel fruit, and exclaimed, "He is not a human being, he must be a noble angel." Yûsuf will subsequently become a rhetorical cliché depicting young male beauty in love poetry. The Koranic paradise is filled with elements to which men are naturally inclined but are lawful only in the Other Life: wine that "causes no intoxication" (56:19), served by lads "eternally young" and "if looked at seem scattered pearls" (56:17, 76:19).

A second point is the admittance that a grown man's attraction for a handsome adolescent is a natural tendency (even for theologians as Imâm Ibn Hanbal [d. 855]), and that the unforgivable sin lies in its *realization* as a sexual practice. Third, man-to-man attraction is not a mere sexual phenomenon but is also related to love, passion, and their subsequent dangers. Authors concerned with the effects of passion on man such as Ibn Hazm (d. 1064) in his *Tawq al-hamâma* (The Dove's Necklace) or Ibn al-Jawzi (d. 1201) in his *Dhamm al-hawä* (Condemnation of Passion) do not treat man-to-man passions differently from heterosexual ones and depict similar consequences. When preparing his *Masâri' al-'ushshâq*, an anthology of anecdotes about lovers stricken by death over losing their beloved, al-Sarrâj (d. 1106) also includes homosexual tragic love affairs scattered among heterosexual anecdotes. A fourth point: whereas man-to-boy attraction is a commonplace of poetry and prose literature, grown man-to-grown man attraction is often underplayed, and is almost uniquely acknowledged in *mujûn* (ribaldry) and *sukhf* (obscenity) related literature.

The effeminates, female-identified men who participated in pre-Islamic and early Islamic social life as singers and entertainers, freely mingling with high-rank women, are mentioned in both *hadîth* (sayings attributed to the Prophet) and later compilations of anecdotes, such as al-Isfahânî's (d. 967) "Book of Songs." But the taste for the male adolescents' beauty becomes for classical authors a sign of "civilization," as opposed to "beduoinity," the less refined taste for slave girls that was practiced by an earlier nomad culture. This contrast is expressed in in al-Jâhiz's (d868) epistle "Mufâkharat al-jawâri wa-l-ghilmân" (an imaginary controversy between a lover of young boys [*ghilmân*] and a lover of slave-girls [*jawârî*], each one using poetry verses and anecdotes as arguments). The *ghilmân* that the boy-loving character is referring to are not free adolescents, but servants attached to a noble house and often exchanged as presents. When the girl-loving character argues that in referential seventh-century poetry, one has never heard of a man dying for his love of a boy, the *lûtî* answers that if such seventh-century poets had had the chance of a glance at some of the high-priced, handsome servants of present days, they would have cast their beloved from a high mountain and left them to the dogs. He adds that those early poets were unrefined Bedouins, unaware of life's pleasures, eating hedgehogs and lizards' grease, whereas educated and refined people of our times (*udabâ' wa-zurafâ'*) have produced the most delicate poetry about boys, both in the fields of seriousness and jest.

Abû Nuwâs (d. 815?), one of the most celebrated poets of the Abbasid period, illustrates an age of self-confidence in which Arabo-Islamic society lovingly tolerates the transgression of its values, allowing the poet to celebrate his earthly love of

heavenly pleasures, chasing boys for a kiss, admiring naked bodies at the *hammâm* (bath), drinking wine served by fifteen-year-old Christian boys, or by *ghulâmiyyât*, slave girls dressed as boys with short cut hair, a stratagem invented by the mother of the caliph al-Amîn (reigned 809–813) to force him to look at females.

The depiction of both the lover and the beloved as males in Arabic poetry should not, however, always be taken as homoerotic. While homoerotic allusions are a standard cliché in Abbasid and Andalusian poetry, they can also be a cover for heterosexual love, since mentioning a free woman's name is an insult to her family and a far greater danger for the poet than boasting of his love of slave boys. The use of masculine in love poetry becomes a convention, still followed in present-day popular love songs (by Umm Kulthûm for instance), that allows for all combinations of lovers. Sûfi (mystical) medieval poets such as Ibn al-Fârid (d. 1234) make extensive use of chaste, homoerotic clichés, like describing a beloved who, if looked upon by Jacob, the latter would have forgotten the beauty of Joseph. But the true beloved of the Sûfis is no less than God himself.

Homoeroticism is also found in works standing at the inner or outer limits of the classical notion of *adab* (for the *adîb* has the right to write and read about lower subjects [*bâtil, sukhf*] to rest his mind from seriousness, but the language used has to be that of *adab*). The *mujûn* poetic tradition of chaste homoeroticism would be found, for instance, in the famous treatise on eroticism by the Maghriban mineralogist Ahmad al-Tîfâshî (d. 1253) "Nuzhat al-albâb fî mâ lâ yûjad fî kitâb" (The promenade of hearts in what is to be found in no other book), which is ripe with piquant and often hilarious anecdotes on the underworld of active and passive homosexuals, their argot, their classifications of the male organ according to shape and size, and their witty (often blasphemous) replies when scorned by heterosexuals or men of religion.

At the outer limits of *adab* lies "popular" literature, such as the shadow plays that were popular in Egypt under the Mamluk age. The only remains of this type of production is a highly literary rendition of it by Ibn Dâniyâl (d. 1310) in three shadow plays, two of which, "Tayf al-khayâl" (The Imaginary Shadow) and "Al-mutayyam wa-l-yutayyim" (The Man Stricken by Passion and the Little Orphan/The Cause of Passion) expose a character's rowdy life, full of homosexual adventures, until final repentance and death. This image of homosexual attraction as a possible entrapment in a youth's formation is repeated in many stories of the *Arabian Nights,* in which the recurrent pederast Maghriban sheikh chanting his love of the young fifteen-year-old hero is nothing but a common ambush on the path initiating a boy to manhood.

But whether homoeroticism is to be found in its chaste and often symbolic version, or, on the contrary in its coarsest expression in amusing anecdotes, it is a natural phenomenon in classical literature. If a tragic tone is to be found, it is because unrewarded love is tragic, never because of its homosexual nature.

In contrast, the invisibility of same-sex relationships in modern Arabic literature is somehow puzzling. There is no Proust, Wilde, or Gide among modern novelists, the works of whom could be read in such a light. "Homosexual" characters are rare, although not necessarily depicted in derogatory terms. The first obviously "gay" character in a modern Arabic novel is the character Kersha in Egyptian novelist Naguib Mahfouz's *Zuqâq al-midaqq* (Midaq Alley, 1947). Kersha is a sixtyish coffee-shop owner who unwisely invites his younger and effeminate lovers to free glasses of tea at his place, to the knowledge of the whole neighborhood, until his crazed wife (and mother of five) decides to make a public scandal, sweeps her dazzled boy-loving husband out of the coffee shop, and insults him before a company of amused customers. But when the Sheikh Darwish, the café's local Sûfi, draws the moral of the scene, he simply declares, "This is an old evil, that is called in English homosexuality, but it is not love. True love is for the Family of the Prophet." Such a conclusion, which should not be mistaken for Mahfouz's view on homosexuality, does not seem far from the medieval mystical conception: if homosexuality is not true love, it is not because it is against nature but because true Love is reserved to God. Other novels by Mahfouz portray homosexuals, such as Ridwân in the last part of the trilogy *Al-Sukkariyya* (1957). This character is a young and handsome youth who uses his beauty to seduce an aging pasha and soon becomes a prominent figure in a right-wing monarchist party.

The homosexual in contemporary Egyptian novels or short stories is seldom a central character, with one of the few exceptions being "Al-raqsa al-mubâha" (The Permitted Dance, 1981), a short story by Yahyã al-Tâhir 'Abdallah in which a small boy caught being sodomized by a friend his age is killed by his father because of the shame brought upon the family, while the friend is expelled from the village. The

homosexual is usually just another typical character of the popular *hâra* (quarter) of Cairo, such as in Gamâl al-Ghitâni's novel *Waqâ'i' hârat al-Za'farânî* (Incidents in Zafarani Alley, 1975), in which we find Samîr, a shy young man who secretly visits popular *hammâms* at night to get sodomized by 'Ewês, the Upper Egypt stud who works all night through and can satisfy seven customers in succession, although he has vague fears that practicing sex only with men might diminsh his attraction to females.

Since the modern Egyptian novel is more preoccupied with society as a whole, and characters tend to be mere representative archetypes of this society's diversity, there is little place for the individual, and the questionings triggered by his sexual preferences or identity are avoided. Only in the indirect free style of Yûsuf Idrîs's (d. 1991) short story "Abû al-rigâl" (The He-man, 1987), the reader enters the mind of Sultân, the aging leader of a group of gangsters, who finds himself confronted by the unbearable fantasy of being raped by one of his subordinates, al-Tôr (the Bull). He remembers his village's effeminate miller, Shâhîn, who payed boys to sodomize him in the cornfields, and, in the ambiguous conclusion of the story, imagines himself becoming another Shâhîn after a whole life as the most manly male of the community. The reader is given no basis for deciding whether his sexual fantasy of proposing himself to al-Tôr is realized or merely imagined, but the clear impression left by the story is that allowing oneself to be possessed by another male leads to general mockery and loss of social status..

Such a feeling is beautifully depicted by the Syrian playwright Sa'dallah Wannûs (d. 1997) in *Tuqûs al-ishârât wa-l-tahawwulât* (The Rites of Signs and Transformations, 1994), a play set in an imaginary nineteenth-century Damascus in which an effeminate male prostitute, Semsem, reveals to 'Abbâs, a famous braggart who has already used his services, that his best friend and feared braggart, al-'Afsa, is a closeted homosexual dying of love for him. Al-'Afsa confesses his love to his friend, who uses him sexually and swears to keep it secret. But burned by his love, al-'Afsa is slowly transformed into an effeminate creature, while 'Abbâs gets disgusted with him and explains that his attraction to him was merely sexual, and that his pleasure was to have taken posession of a man universally considered a braggart. Al-'Afsa boasts about his love for 'Abbâs around the city, his lover rudely rejects him, and he consequently commits suicide. This interesting work depicts the homosexual relationship as casual for the active partner, and it presents a dialectical conflict between a fantasy of virility and domination, and another of femininity and need for affection. Sa'dallah Wannûs makes 'Abbas and al-'Afsa's ulfulfilling love affair a tragedy that unlike in classical literature is a consequence not of passion but of homosexuality.

Various explanations can be proposed for the absence of homoerotic themes in modern literature, as compared with classical. And though the moral standards of Arab societies have changed since the colonial confrontation with the West, one point remains: the common feeling that unveiling one's inability to conform to standards or, worse, demanding a space of freedom to practice one's own moral standards is a far greater offense than discretely satisfying one's taste as long as one keeps quiet about it. This is what Stephen O. Murray has rightly named "the will not to know," and it is a clear reason for the lack of a "gay" movement comparable to what has appeared in the West. But any society needs to create its own secret "space of transgression," and the relative absence of homosexuality in the Arabic literary field still needs to be studied. It is partly explainable by censorship and the close relationship between the act of writing and local cultural dicta which enforce a kind of silence on these matters. The present moral code of Arab society is a mixture of traditional Islamic morals and European colonial fascination and distaste for the "Oriental vice." The rejection of homosexuality in modern Arab societies is mainly based on rigorous sexual standards that however stringently imposed do not go so far as to disrupt the aesthetic appreciation of the classical expressions of same-sex love. At the same time Arab societies seem to have started delegating this "function of transgression" to the Western world, with which contact is nowadays constant, therefore ridding itself of the task of producing its own transgression and consumming an imported transgression, both delightful and easy to condemn when necessary as examples of a moral failure of the West. But as modern Arabic literature is starting to break the wall of silence and increasingly include sexuality in its narrative discourse, homosexuality will perhaps also find in it a greater expression.

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See also Abû Nuwâs; *Arabian Nights Beloved*; Islam; Morocco; Persian (Iranian) Literature and Culture; Turkey

Araki, Gregg (1960–)

A sharp-witted writer-director-cinematographer, Gregg Araki is one of a few underground gay filmmakers to emerge in the 1990s. Struggling for artistic originality, Araki, a Japanese American and graduate of the University of Southern California's School of Cinema-Television, demands that contemporary audiences negotiate with AIDS as it has come to transform gay sex into metaphors of suicide and cautions against risk, rather than just say no to male-male desire. Concerns with sexual identity, self-disclosure, and subversiveness resonate urgently in Araki's work, which borrows paradigmatic motifs of his predecessor, French filmmaker Jean-Luc Godard.

Like Godard, Araki uses jump cuts, intertitles, blackouts, handheld cameras, and eccentric points of view to appropriate and transform conventions and images of standard Hollywood productions into narratives that exploit them to their own sovereign end. In each of the films that his "teenage apocalypse" trilogy comprises, Araki is clearly marking out a space and an opportunity for gay men to represent themselves in a way that had previously been unimaginable. *Living End*, *The Doom Generation*, and *Nowhere* formally articulate his association with the gay underworld through allusion and appropriation of gay and camp iconography. His characters' anticipation of adult sex is repeatedly marred by the prospect of the inevitable approach of illness and death.

The contemporary dystopia that AIDS has created is central to the suspended animation of *Living End*, a film that explores inner emotions condemned to unspeakable states, fragmentation, and ennui mirrored in the desolate, postindustrial California landscape. As for drama, two gay HIV-positive lovers bash back at some of the more diabolical evil and oppressive members of society (namely, gay bashers) and have what Araki terms "a lot of cathartic fun along the way." Like all of his films, *Living End* received both independent and mainstream attention, but this notice has not always secured critical acclaim. One critic warned, "For those who haven't walked out before the closing credits (of [*The*] *Doom Generation*), good luck searching for meaning—you'll find mostly blood and epithets." This review exemplifies the controversy imparted to depictions of gay sexuality in the late twentieth century. An outlaw on the run himself, Araki is an unquestionably dynamic filmmaker who, when he refuses to temper himself, contributes to our world in cinematically and socially meaningful ways.

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See also AIDS; Asians in North America; Film: New Queer Cinema

Architecture

There appears to be a natural affinity between same-sex desire and architecture. Throughout the ages, gay men and women have made places for themselves whose elaborate articulation stood in contrast to their more functional surroundings. To a certain extent, this ability came from the simple fact that they had to. Living in societies in which the expression of their most body-based social relations was usually taboo, gay men and women had to come up with ways of representing themselves in and to the world through everyday objects and spaces. Architecture allowed them to make a home for themselves in a hostile world. It also allowed them to erect within that domain a place that fixed in physical form the artifices through which they acted out their self-constructed personae.

This process was further helped by the dissolution of class structures as the Industrial Revolution took hold in Western culture. If middle-class men and women had to erect their own space separate from the land in both time and place, then gay middle-class men and women had to do so in a self-conscious manner, because they could depend on few of the mass-produced spaces of collectivity, such as cultural or entertainment institutions that marked the territory of the middle-class city.

form of the music. Notoriously crass and openly gay, Morris has long held a reputation as an enfant terrible. His work is tremendously popular with mainstream modern dance audiences titillated by his reputation. While there are certainly choreographers who more fully address gay issues in their choreography, no one reaches as large an audience as Morris. In his restaging of the familiar narrative of *The Nutcracker*, called *The Hard Nut* (1991), Morris explores cross-dressing in different ways, at times for camp appeal, at times intentionally blurring gender distinctions perpetuated by ballet. In his frankly erotic *Dido and Aeneas* (1989), Morris himself dances the role of Dido, Queen of Carthage. Other dances are more subtle in their references to sexuality. For example, in *Going Away Party* (1990), danced to western swing music by Bob Wills and His Texas Playboys, one section is reminiscent of a traditional square dance. Morris has no partner but dances alone among the male-female couples. There is no limit to what becomes source material for Morris's dances; his early training in flamenco, essays by Roland Barthes, music by the Violent Femmes, poetry by Milton, and American Sign Language all have merited Morris's choreographic attention. What remains constant is Morris's celebration of the human body's performing unexpected rhythms with lusty physicality *Maura Keefe*

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See also Dance: Concert Dance in America

Mujûn

"Libertinism" or "profligacy" in classical Arabic. According to Ibn Manzûr's (d. 1311) dictionary *Lisân al-'Arab*, the verb *majana* means "to be solid and coarse." The Egyptian lexicologist adds "and therefrom derives the term *mâjin* (libertine), because of his solid [unabashed] face and his absence of modesty," thus analyzing the common use of the notion as a metaphor. The definition of the *mâjin* as one who "commits vile acts and shameful scandals, indifferent to the blame of blamers and the withering of witherers" underlines an essential dimension: *mujûn* is an open and public transgression of moral norms, and a remorseless scorn of those. Both poetry and prose were to reflect the word of the *mâjin*, although it is not clear whether literary *mujûn* corresponds to a ritualized genre, highly fashionable from the Abbasid era until the first half of the nineteenth century, or is the true reflection of a space of freedom in a strictly regulated society. *Mujûn* is closely associated in literature with *hazl* (jest), since amusement is a most natural function of literature, as ascertained in his *Book of Maids and Lads* by the famous writer al-Jâhiz (d. 868): the soul must be soothed with jest, for an excess of seriousness would burden it. This author adds that "some of those who flaunt piety and asceticism, express embarrassment and revolt at the mention of vulva, penis and coit. But such people are most often of little knowledge, devoid of elevation and dignity if only in this affectation of theirs." Among the most famous collection of *mujûn*-related anecdotes (*akhbâr*), judges and men of religion are to be found both as authors and actors. *Mujûn* is also close to two other notions: *khalâ'a* and *sukhf* (ribaldry). Whereas *khalâ'a* seems to designate a free attitude toward moral and social restraints, especially those connected with sexual codes, *sukhf* seems to qualify outright obscenity, whether sexual or scatological, although most often in piquant anecdotes or witty lines by the lowest orders of society or marginals like open passive homosexuals or effeminates (*mukhannath*). The possible moral outcome of the anecdote is not necessarily relevant, for a *denunciation* is primarily an *enunciation*.

Sexual irregularity is not the sole indecency classified as *mujûn* in classical literature: wine drinking and disrespect toward religion are also part of the notion, but the mention of sexual activities, particularly illicit, whether masturbatory, heterosexual, or homosexual, is central. In the sixteenth night of his "*al-imtâ' wa-l-mu'ânasa*" (Book of Pleasure and Nice Company), a night wholly devoted to *mujûn*, Abû Hayyân al-Tawhîdî (d. 1010) provides a *mâjin*'s definition of life:

> security and health, slapping the bald spots on their heads, shamelessly scratching one's scabies, eating prime pomegranate in the summer, having pure thick wine delivered every two months, mounting silly women and beardless youths, walking without pants before those you do not fear, behaving as a wag with the heavy-spirited, never disagreeing with friends, enjoying the company of idiots so as to glean anecdotes, getting acquainted with people of trust, and deserting the vile.

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Poets qualified as *mâjins* generally claim to be adulterers or lovers of boys, as "one is unlikely to claim to be a catamite, since in this society . . . even the desire for such an activity is thought to be both pathological and shameful" (Rowson 91). Listen to Mus'ab al-Kâtib (nineth century, lived under the reign of the caliph al-Mutawakkil, a *mujûn*-friendly sovereign):

ana l-mâjinu l-lûtiyyu dîniya wâhidun
wa-'inni fi kasbi l-ma'âsî la-râghibu
alûtu wa-lâ 'aznî, fa-man kâna lâ'itan
fa-'inni lahu hatta l-qiyâmati sâhibu
(I am the libertine, the ass-fucker, I have only one religion
Performing what is forbidden is my only desire
I fuck male asses and never touch a woman, and all ass-fuckers
Are my companions until the day of the Judgment)

or Amr al-Warrâq (ninth century, died in the days of al-Ma'mûn):

ayyuha s-sâ'ilu 'anni
lastu min ahli s-salâhi
ana 'insânun murîbun
ashatahî nayka l-milâhi
qad qasamtu d-dahra yawmay—
—ni, li-fisqin wa-li-râhi
la 'ubâli man lahânî
la 'utî'u d-dahra lâhî
(If you ask about me
You will learn I am not a righteous man
I'm a dubious character
Who loves fucking good-looking lads
My days are of two sorts:
days of illicit pleasures and days of wine
I do not mind whoever blames me:
I shall never obey the orders of censors!)

Few poets, with the exception of ninth-century Jahshawayh, evoke passive homosexuality other than in biting satire, as in those verses by Abû al-'Aynâ' (ninth century):

ishtakâ diqqata l-'uyûri ilayna
fa-agabnâhu, wa-l-gawâbu 'atîdu
lam tadiqqa l-'uyûru ya-bna lûlû
innama 'istuka-ttisâ'an yazîdu
(He complained to us about the small size of cocks
so we answered on the spot:
Cocks haven't shrunk, my little pearl
Your asshole just went sloppier!)

or in the usually playful Ibn al-Rûmî's (d. 896) satire of a certain Ibn Surayj:

Ibnu Surayjin qâla lî marratan
wa-qad ra'â ramhi fî tursihi:
'ayruka hâdha nâhilun jismuhu
ka'annahu l-mayyitu fî ramsihi
fa-ghâzani dhâka wa-'akhrajtuhu
minhu wa-ta'mu n-nayki fî darsihi
fa-qâla min hammin wa-min hasratin
wa-qad ra'â l-ma'tama fî 'ursihi:
ma yablughu l-a'dâ'u min jâhilin
ma yablughu l-jâhilu min nafsihi!
(Ibn Surayj told me once,
While my spear was up his shield
This cock of yours is awfully thin
It looks like a dead man in his coffin
I was so outraged I took it out of him
while in his mouth remained the taste of fucking
So he said out of sorrow and desolation
Having seen a burial at his wedding
Enemies will never hurt an ignorant
As he himself might be hurting.)

Frédéric Lagrange

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See also Arabic Literature; Libertine and Libertinism; Mukhannath; Persian (Iranian) Literature and Culture

Mukhannath

The word *mukhannath* means "effeminate" in Arabic. Etymologists derive *khinâth* (effeminacy) and the passive participle *mukhannath* from the verb *khannatha* ("to bend"). The common meaning is thus explained by the effeminate's "pliability" and "languidness" (*takassur*), for suppleness and lack of firmness both in gestures and moral standards are seen as feminine. Indeed, much of the arguments used by al-Tawhîdi (d. 1010) against his foe, the Vizir Ibn al-'Abbâd, in order to establish his effeminacy and passiveness are based on the latter's extravagant gesturing while speaking and his unmanly whims. The *mukhannath* is a commonplace of medieval literature, whether as an object of satire in polemic poetry or of jest in *mujûn* literature. Literature also reflects "a form of publicly recognized and institutionalized effeminacy . . . in pre-Islamic and early Islamic Arabian society" (Rowson, 1991), as well as in many pre-modern Muslim societies.

In the first century of Islam, the *mukhannaths* of Mecca and Medina were allowed to visit high-ranking women freely, including the wives of the Prophet, for no risk was taken with such "men of no desire." A famous *hadîth* (saying of the Prophet) tells of Hît the Effeminate's banishment from Mecca after the Prophet overheard him praise the desirable body of a woman. It is not clear, however, whether Muhammad feared in him a man attracted to the other sex or disapproved of the crudeness of his tone. During the first half of the Ummayad caliphate (seventh century), when Mecca and Medina became cities of leisure and pleasure, the effeminates were renowned as talented musicians and singers, encouraging the development of love poetry and often working as go-betweens for lovers. Tuways (the small peacock), whose name has remained in books of proverbs as a reference in effeminacy, is said to have been the first learned musician in the history of Arabs. Some of those men sported feminine nicknames such as *bard al-fu'âd* (delightment of hearts) and *Nawmat al-Duha* (slumber of the morning). The golden age of the effeminates in Hijâz was to end tragically when the Umayyad caliph Sulaymân ordered their castration. Although historically dubious, an anecdote explains that the caliph had merely asked his governor to establish a census of the town's effeminates (in Arabic *ahsi*), but a dot of ink fell on the letter *h*, turning it into a *kh* and the governor read *akhsi* (castrate). The effeminates' reaction, as reported by Hamza al-Isfahânî (d. ca. 970) a few centuries later in a typical *adab* style, offer a good example, if most probably imaginary, of "queer humor" at its tragic best. Tuways is said to have answered, "This is simply a new circumcision which we must undergo again"; Nawmat al Duha added, "We have become women in truth"; and Zill al-Shajar (shade of the tree) concluded, "What would we do with an unused weapon, anyway" (Rowson, 1991, 691).

In his article "The Effeminates of Early Medina," Rowson has defended the hypothesis that the effeminacy described in seventh-century Arabia is essentially an attitude, reflected in softness of gesture and voice, and the use of feminine clothing, perfumes, and habits, such as the use of henna, but argued that it is not proved those *mukhannaths* necessarily engaged in homosexual intercourse. Anecdotes found in later compilations, however, explicitly mention the homosexuality of famous seventh-century *mukhannaths* such as "Musaffar Istuhu" (he who has coated his anus with saffron) and Dalâl. When caught with a young servant in the desert, Dalâl was condemned by the caliph to the lash. He answered, "What will your lashes do to me, for I am receive lashes everyday."

> The caliph asked "Who lashes you?"
> "The cocks of the believers."
> "Lay him face down."
> "I gather the Commander of Believers desires to witness how I am fucked?"
> "Raise him, may God curse him, and exhibit him around the town with the young servant." When asked by the people of Medina what was happening, Dalâl answered :
> "The Commander of Believers wanted to associate two lovers, so he joined me to this young man, showed us all around town, but he loses his temper when called a pimp." The governor ordered his releasing, fearing more scandals from the *mukhannath*'s sharp tongue.

The term *mukhannath* became in later times specifically attached to the most obvious passive homosexuals. The last and longest chapter of al-Tîfâshî's (d. 1253) anthology of sexual deviances *Nuzhat al-albâb* (The Promenade of Hearts) is devoted to effeminacy and the effeminates, but it is clear that the real subject of the chapter is rather passive sodomy, seen as the most obvious expression of effeminacy. *Khinâth* is thus considered as a synonym of *ubna* (bending of a stick, metaphorically the illness of bending before other men) and *bighâ'* (desire for illicit sexual relationship.) The word *baghiyy* is de-

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scribed in the conservative thirteenth-century dictionary *Lisân al-'Arab* to be feminine in essence and applied to the adulteress (*zâniya*), although the usual meaning, from ninth-century until premodern literature, is a man who has an irrepressible desire to be penetrated.

Mujûn (libertine) literature in the Abbasid period (eighth to thirteenth centuries) insists on the *mukhannaths'* shamelessness, which offers matter for countless anecdotes, but also underlines their wit and sharpness, which demand a perfect command of the language. *Khinâth* is a consequence of urbanity, as opposed to bedouinity. Remarkably, the profession most frequently associated with effeminacy is of the *kâtib,* the secretary in caliphal chancellery, a man of great knowledge and extreme refinement (*zarf*). The description of the perfect *zarîf,* the delicate courtesan, as found in the *Kitâb al-Muwashsha* by al-Washshâ' (d. 936), seems quite ripe with effeminacy of manners, if no allusion to sexuality is made. The languid and effeminate servant boy also appears to be a fad during the late seventh and eighth centuries in court poetry, just when the *ghulâmiyyât,* slave girls who cut their hair short and dress as boys, are all the rage: the caliphal court of Baghdâd patronized and almost institutionalized, for purposes of entertainment, transvestism and gender-crossing.

The effeminate boy will remain a cliché in poetry, and forms of institutionalized effeminacy managed to live through the centuries. In eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Egypt, the *khawals,* male dancers performing dressed as women, were a common sight in cafés and a source of shock or delight for European travelers, such as Gérard de Nerval. They even replaced female dancers (*ghawâzî*) when "the presence of public women might have detracted from the respectability of the event or its sponsors" (Dunne 1996, 112), and were the only available entertainers after Muhammad Ali Pacha ordered in 1836 a ban on female prostitutes and dancers, which did not extend to male prostitutes and performers. There is no doubt the *khawals* were available to rich patrons, and in modern colloquial Egyptian, the term *khawal* has lost its technical signification, simply meaning (passive) homosexual. The normalization of sexuality according to European standards in the nineteenth century put an end to the *mukhannath*'s role in Arab societies. In the modern world, institutionalized gender-crossing is an exception, solely encountered in peripherical societies; as late as the 1980s *khanîths* (the local colloquialism for *mukhannath*) could be found in Sohar, on the northeastern coast of Oman, the status of whom reminds one of the pre-Islamic effeminates of Mecca and Medina (Murray 1997, 244–55).

Frédéric Lagrange

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See also Arabic Literature; Dancing Boys; Effeminacy; *Mujun;* Persian (Iranian) Literature and Culture; Transvestism

Müller, Johannes von (1752–1809)

This Swiss historian and politician was born January 3, 1752, in Schaffhausen, the oldest son of a pastor. After attending the local gymnasium, Müller studied theology at the University of Göttingen. Following a brief period of lecturing and tutoring in his hometown, Müller held various positions as adviser, councillor, and diplomat at German courts in Kassel, Mainz, Vienna, and Berlin. Müller was knighted in 1791 by Emperor Leopold II.

The publication in 1772 of an essay on the Cimbri, an ancient Germanic tribe, confirmed his talent as a scholar of history. But it was the first volume of the five-part *History of the Swiss Confederacy* (1780), a brilliantly composed account of the country's struggle for freedom and independence, that won Müller the admiration of Europe's foremost intellectuals and the hearts of German-speaking people. His endeavor "to present historical developments objectively and truthfully" set an example for many future historians. Through Müller's intriguing characterization of folklore, the heroic tale of William Tell entered the popular consciousness. J. W. Goethe, J. G. Herder, Georg Forster, Jacob Grimm, Alexander von Humboldt, Mme de Staël, and Grand Duchess Anna Amalia were among Müller's over two thousand correspondents.

He was only twenty when, "like a flash of lightening" (Müller 33), Müller fell in love with Karl Victor von Bonstetten, who, for the next twelve