



## PEDERASTY UNCLOAKED

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Paper Received On: 25 MAY 2021

Peer Reviewed On: 30 MAY 2021

Published On: 1 JUNE 2021

### Abstract

*Through this paper the researcher aims to uncover the myriad of homosexual truths that were buried in favor of conformity to societal norms. This paper seeks to demystify disputed occurrences that surrounded these controversial and polemic artists and their literary output. This paper also sheds light on a tradition that is buried under many historic milestones that outweigh these in importance given. The researcher identifies these half truths and aims to bring to the forefront a tradition made obscure by generations.*

**Keywords:** *Homosexuality, Pederasty, Greek Tradition, Philosophy, Gay Literature*



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Long gone are the days where the binary of hetero relationships are embraced as the whole truth. Where readers sigh over Shakespeare's artful praises in sonnets dedicated to a mysterious dark lady, where the shock of the century was mixing of races. We are ashamed to admit that we have been seeing only what we wanted to see.

Because while many suffer- to this day, the biased masses take pride in being witnesses to only heterosexual pairings, and are extremely fulfilled in the pretend equilibrium being reached, because naturalists are of the firm opinion that nature follows its course and hence declaring anything that is heteronormative as the sole reality everyone is bound to live and anything that doesn't align with that narrative, is non existent. As noise one must turn their deaf ear to.

The motive of the researcher is to shed some light on the lesser known and appreciated facets of romantic expression, the very important one where expression is gender agnostic. That anyone who identified- if only perhaps secretly hidden away in their writings, as homosexual we aim to bring to life some of these motifs and give this literature its true place. It is to the great astonishment of many declared that homosexuality has existed way beyond the reaches of our generation, it pedals back to the start of the earliest societies. The socially acceptable form of it- packaged as the classic pupil-tutor relationship was the communal gift of pederasty.

Where it was socially acceptable for two consenting individuals to share a relationship stretched to accommodate a myriad of roles, and often not limited to platonic dynamics. This custom of ancient Greece accepted and in many cases encouraged such relationships to be

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formed where in the younger usually less experienced and less renowned would seek to be guided by an experienced, usually older and wise mentor. This dynamic would at some stage turn to pursuit fueled by naivete and stubbornness (of the pupil). This pervasive practice was labelled "the principal cultural model for free relationships between citizens." There is good reason to believe that no holds were barred in parlance. Where every experience of life was considered learning and was done under the tutelage of a trusting mentor, not paying any importance to the genders.

Because as is believed, these were considered educational. The members of this dyadic pair were referred to as Erastes and Eromenos and it was considered a bond stronger than any despotic forces. In addition the favour of such mentors would be sought by the families of these young men. It is interesting to note the difference found here in genders is while male students were allowed to move freely and select a mentor of their choosing, females at the same age would be wedded to a partner chosen with economic and social considerations at the discretion of the male in the family. One interesting observation to make is of the stems shared by the words Pederasty and Paedophilia because that speaks volumes of mass acceptability for a foul practice to be acknowledged and labeled but from what was a widely common phenomenon at the time was abandoned by scholars allowing this practice to be nipped in the bud traces faded away of any evidence of there being a reality alternative to the heteronormative truths. These universal edicts have cloaked our understanding of wholesome human relationships and have truncated our ability to accept a behavior that is as good as any inborn instinct as appetizing to us.

Gay Writers have existed and thrived in many forms, professions and walks of life. We are fortunate to study them. We're walking about the jailed Oscar Wilde in 1895 who gave us his thoughts on the matter brilliantly in his testimony 'the love that dare not speak its name', the jilted Herman Melville who laid out his heart by dedicating his magnum opus to Nathaniel Hawthorne, Emily Dickinson who dedicated most of her poetry to an illicit affair with someone she posed as the sister in law of, the french writer colette who donned various attires her circumstances called for- one of a ghostwriter to save her husband's dwindling empire, and that of a lover when she came into her own homo erotic sensibilities, one of an actress who tried to amplify this voice to many, TS Eliot who faced the threat of being held in contempt for the homosexual undercurrents in his world famous work Wasteland and so many more. The aspect of homosexuality in literature and the arts that is uncanny is the innumerable gifts it has bestowed and yet unlike hetero relationships, the motivations for the creation of such art is distanced from the art itself.

We cannot begin to estimate the art that we may have missed out on because an instrumental part of many makers was subdued- the part that identified with having preferences uncanny from those around them. Christopher Marlowe, a prominent Elizabethan playwright was stabbed to death before he even reached his prime, for the charges of 'Scorn of God's Word'.

Lord Byron who has given us the Byronic hero not to mention Don Juan was slandered as a flamboyant and perverse womanizer while his romantic life which involved other, younger men was not given the importance of mention let alone acceptability.

At the time the terms used to refer to homosexuality were non-existent. The term utilized to incarcerate people for this 'crime' was the 'act' of 'sodomy'. There is an endless list of people who have been prosecuted and whose lives have been irreversibly altered for choosing differently than the society decided norm. What makes this predicament worse is that they may never now be found or known. With the passage of time we have lost a link to a glorious past that never quite lived up to the potential it had.

Perhaps in time the society will realise the grave loss we have incurred by suppressing and will continue to unless we recognize and stratify those who may experience the sentiment of love differently than some of us.

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