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CHRISTINA, QUEEN OF SWEDEN (1626–1689)

The daughter of Gustavus II Adolphus and Maria Eleonora of Brandenburg, she lost her father at the age of six when he was killed in the Thirty Years War. Until 1644 Sweden was ruled by a regency headed by the Imperial Chancellor Axel Count Oxenstierna. The talented girl received an excellent education and was reared almost exclusively under male guidance. On December 17, 1644, she assumed personal rule, but remained another two years under Oxenstierna's influence, then chose Gabriel de la Gardie as her chief counselor. More interested in science and art than in politics, she took little part in the negotiations at Bromsebro (1645) and Osnabrück (1647) that culminated in the Peace of Westphalia (1648), which redrew the political map of Europe on lines that largely remained until the French Revolution. She was a generous patron of the sciences, supported native scholars and corresponded with foreign ones, and attracted such intellects as Descartes and Grotius to her court. The former she is reputed to have asked for advice on her amorous disposition.

Her aversion to official duties, her extravagance, and the favor that she accorded to constantly changing and unworthy courtiers earned her the displeasure of her subjects, and her growing sympathies for Catholicism provoked the resistance of the Lutheran clergy. At a session of the Parliament in Uppsala in 1654 she abdicated in favor of her cousin Karl-Gustav of Pfalz-Zweibrücken and his

male descendants. In Brussels she converted secretly to Catholicism, then at Innsbruck she formally adopted the new faith and journeyed to Rome, where she kept a brilliant court and soon became the center of a circle of scholars. She undertook numerous travels, and attracted attention by her political activity in papal and ecclesiastical affairs and also in French, Polish, and above all Swedish matters. The friendship of Cardinal Azzolino, her adviser in financial and economic affairs, played a great role in the last years of her life. She died in Rome in 1689.

Contemporary accounts of Christina unanimously emphasize the masculine qualities of her personality. Her deep voice and her fondness for men's clothing are particularly noted. A description of her by the Duc de Guise mentions that "her hand is white and well-shaped, but resembles a man's more than a woman's. The face is large, all the features quite pronounced. . . . The footwear resembles a man's, and likewise she has a male voice, and almost her whole deportment is male too. She sets great store on appearing as an Amazon. She is as proud as her father. She speaks eight languages, French in particular like a native Parisian." Another account of her tells that "all in all, she struck me as a handsome little boy." The ascription of her homosexuality is based on the fact that she refused marriage, even with so distinguished a suitor as the Kurfürst of Brandenburg. On the other hand she is supposed to have had a series of erotic escapades with men, in particular the Italian Monaldesco, whom she later had murdered, allegedly because he learned of her lesbian tendencies. Only one of her female partners is known, Countess Ebba Sparre, whom she met in Paris in 1654 after her abdication. Many of her letters to the Countess contain the epithet "belle." The German historian Leopold von Ranke said of her that she was "the greatest princely woman from the race of intermediate types. Women's tasks she never assumed, . . . but

on the other hand she sat boldly on horseback. While hunting she hit the game with her first shot. She studied Tacitus and Plato and understood these authors at times better than did philologists by profession."

Christina of Sweden is thus a classic type of woman with a decidedly masculine intellect and personality that carried over, at least in part, into her sexual life. The film *Queen Christina* (1932), in which the heroine was played by the Swedish actress Greta Garbo in one of her memorable roles, resonated with homosexual and lesbian innuendo; it has served to reinforce the image of the queen in modern times.

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CHRYSOSTOM, JOHN, SAINT (CA. 347-407)

Greek patriarch of Constantinople, the first to claim its primacy over the eastern sees, and leading theologian of the Orthodox church. This most famous Greek father fully brought the extreme asceticism of the desert fathers into the mainstream of the church.

Chrysostom was educated at Antioch by the pagan sophist and rhetorician Libanius, more of whose works have survived than of any other pagan writer. After being baptized about 370, John retired to the desert for asceticism and study, but after ten years illness forced him to return to civilization. Ordained deacon in 381 and priest in 386, he won fame for his inspiring sermons and only reluctantly became bishop of Constantinople in 398. Having alienated many by strident criticism and fanaticism, including the empress Eudoxia and bishops in the Eastern provinces, who were resentful of his attempts to subordinate them to his see

which he deemed preeminent, he was deposed by the Synod of the Oak in 403. Banished, recalled by popular demand, and then banished again in 404, he died in exile in Armenia in 407.

For his eloquence he received the title Chrysostom, "Golden mouthed," but many Western scholars consider his theology mediocre. In the Antiochene tradition, he expounded scripture historically, practically, and devotionally, denouncing luxury and demanding alms for the poor. His numerous writings fill volumes 47 to 64 in J.-P. Migne's *Patrologia Graeca*. The people loved him for his charities and his support of hospitals, as well as for his devout and eloquent denunciations of the extravagance of courtiers. He forbade the clergy to keep "sisters" as servants, and confined wandering monks to monasteries where they could be disciplined. Upon his second deposition arranged by his numerous enemies, the populace set fire to the Cathedral of Hagia Sophia and the Senate House. In 437 the Emperor had to bring his bones back to the capital, imploring divine forgiveness for the empire's persecution of the saint. Probably the most venomous of a long line of vehement early Christians who preached against Judaism, he was also the most violent of a long series of homophobes stretching back to St. Paul.

Chrysostom's invectives against homosexual sins reveal the paradoxes and circular reasoning in which the Christian apologist was trapped by his need to justify the apodictic prohibition of the **Old Testament** in terms adequate to Greek philosophical notions of right and wrong. The **Stoic** reverence for nature and the **Manichaean** condemnation of pleasure both determined his rhetoric; on the one hand "the passions in fact are all dishonorable," but on the other homosexual acts fail even to provide pleasure: "Sins against nature . . . are more arduous and less rewarding, so much so that they cannot even claim to provide pleasure, since real pleasure is only according to nature." The