

later view that "excess of desire" led to homosexual depravity he expounded as the outcome of God's abandonment of those in question because of the heinous sin of—excess of desire. Aware that the Greeks had long practiced pederasty, he nevertheless denounced homosexuality as a loathsome invention, "a new and insufferable crime." And he was among the first to rank homosexual sins as the supreme evil than which "nothing is more demented or noxious," though in other passages he let the rhetorician in him declare that "there are ten thousand sins equal to or worse than this one." He managed to reason that the male who takes the passive role with another not only loses his maleness but fails to become a woman; he forfeits his own sex without acquiring the opposite gender.

Chrysostom thought the gravity of homosexual transgression merited God's punishment of Sodom: "The very nature of the punishment reflected the nature of the sin [of the Sodomites]. Even as they devised a barren coitus, not having as its end the procreation of children, so did God bring on them a punishment as made the womb of the land forever barren and destitute of all fruit." Chrysostom is thus a classic exemplar of Christian unreason in regard to homosexuality, but also the prototype of preachers and moral reformers in later centuries who from the pulpit incited the authorities and the populace to campaigns of repression against those guilty of "unnatural vice." More homophobic even than St. Augustine, he set the stage for the persecutions that would fill the annals of the centuries to come.

William A. Percy

CHUBB, RALPH NICHOLAS (1892–1960)

English writer and artist. His experiences connected with World War I created severe emotional stress which affected him for the rest of his life. Between the two world wars, he retired to rural England and, in the tradition of Wil-

liam Blake, he produced an astonishing series of hand-made illustrated books in limited editions. These include, among others, *The Sun Spirit* (1931), *The Heavenly Cupid* (1934), *Water-Cherubs* (1937), and *The Secret Country* (1939). There were also some earlier and later works that do not match these books for quality.

Chubb's memory was rescued by the bibliophile Anthony Reid and the bookseller Timothy Smith, and his first editions are much sought after by a limited audience of pedophile men. A mystic, Chubb created a private mythology focused on adolescent boys, especially the youngest ones, who were the erotic gods of his pantheon. Although he was a pacifist, this commitment did not stop him from sadistic fantasies about older teenagers. His books blended poetry, fiction, drawings, and paintings to create a never-never land where he was free to pursue hordes of naked boys. His real sexual life was unhappy.

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Stephen Wayne Foster

CHURCHES, GAY

The emergence of Christian churches with predominantly gay and lesbian congregations, as well as interest groups within or allied to existing denominations, is a recent phenomenon, centered in the English-speaking world. There are records of homosexual monks, nuns, and priests, especially in the later Middle Ages and in early modern times, but no indication that they even thought of organizing on the basis of their sexual preference. Christian homosexuals drawn to particular parishes, where cliques occasionally even became a visible segment of the congregation, would not openly avow this shift in the church's character: they remained closeted gay Christians, so to speak.

The contemporary trend toward gay churches—and other religious organi-

zations, including gay synagogues—is a product of the increasing visibility of the gay/lesbian movement in the 1960s, which in turn had its roots in the well publicized social assertion of the civil-rights and antiwar movements that preceded it. Perceived exclusion from full participation in mainstream churches impelled many gay men and lesbians to set up their own institutions.

Background. A homoerotic atmosphere enveloped the High Anglican movement as it emerged in Britain toward the middle of the nineteenth century. The emphasis on elaborate liturgy appealed to the aesthetic sense, while the revival in some sectors of clerical celibacy (as suggested by the alternative expression “Anglo-Catholicism,” Roman Catholic clergy being always celibate) relieved homosexual priests from the traditional Protestant clerical marriage. Appalled by the goings on that they detected in some High Anglican parishes, members of the broad church attacked them as “un-English and unmanly.” This disapproval notwithstanding, the alliance of aestheticism with aspects of Anglicanism was destined to endure.

Out of this ferment came Charles Webster Leadbeater (1854–1934), who began his career as an obscure curate in the Church of England. After many years as a leader of the Theosophical Society in Ceylon, India, and Australia, Leadbeater founded the Liberal Catholic Church in Sydney in 1916; the organization’s claim to apostolic succession was assured by his receiving his orders from a man who had obtained them from an Old Catholic bishop in England. A pederast, known familiarly as the “swish bish,” Bishop Leadbeater liked to surround himself with boy acolytes. Although the Liberal Catholic church has since modified its original character, the atmosphere developed in Leadbeater’s Sydney establishment gives it a claim of being the first gay church.

Gay people have emerged from all denominations. For converts, however,

those with rich liturgical traditions seem to have more appeal (as Ptolemy anticipated in the astrological classic *Tetrabiblos* [second century])—suggesting a parallel with the well-known homosexual attachment to theatre and opera. This aspect need not preclude a deeper concern with religious values, as in tribal societies in which the *berdache* exercised priestly functions. At all events, until the 1960s many gay men and women felt drawn to particular congregations, largely because of the sympathetic reception they received there, regardless of whether the individual pastor was homosexual. Churches of choice tended to be theologically liberal, rather than conservative Protestant or Roman Catholic. Significantly, the first convention of the *Mattachine* Society was held in 1953 at the First Universalist Church in Los Angeles, headed by the Reverend Wallace de Ortega Maxey.

In the early 1950s in England a group of Anglican clergy and physicians began to study the question of homosexuality under official ecclesiastical auspices. This work led in due course to the pioneering study by Canon Derrick Sherwin Bailey, *Homosexuality and the Western Christian Tradition* (1955), to the *Wolfenden Report* (1957), and to sodomy law reform (1967). Apart from his historical survey, Bailey sought to reinterpret some of the scriptural passages, holding, for example, that the Sodom story in Genesis 18–19 concerns not homosexuality, but inhospitality.

This controversial trend in exegesis continued in the work of such scholars as John McNeill (a Jesuit until forced out of the order in 1987) and Roman Catholic convert Professor John Boswell of Yale, first to be promoted to that rank in an Ivy League university because of a major monograph on homosexuality. Despite the fact that these scriptural reinterpretations have not commanded assent among mainstream exegetes, gay churches have eagerly embraced them as the “enabling act” for their foundation, offering assurance—

at least in their own view—that Christianity was not primordially or essentially antihomosexual. Needless to say, this optimistic supposition puzzles and even scandalizes the average Christian believer.

Gay Religious Organizations. In 1968 the charismatic Reverend Troy Perry (originally ordained in a southern Pentecostal denomination) began the first American gay church with a handful of congregants in his southern California home. This was clearly an idea whose time had come. Three years later 600 men and women gathered each Sunday for services in a downtown Los Angeles building acquired by the Metropolitan Community Church, as the organization had come to be known. Missions spread the church to other American cities and abroad, chiefly in English-speaking countries. By 1983 the Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches (UFMCC) included 195 congregations in ten countries.

While attempting to maintain organizational unity around a broad ecumenical theology, many UFMCC pastors (including Perry) are theologically conservative, taking a fundamentalist approach to scripture. In order to maintain this hermeneutic, they generally follow gay exegetes who deny the antihomosexual character of key passages in the Old and New Testament. Some maintain that Jesus—an unmarried man in a Jewish milieu where marriage and procreation were de rigueur even for the religious elite—had a passionate relationship with John, the **beloved disciple**. Liturgically and sociologically the UFMCC tends to be of a “low church” character, with notable exceptions in some congregations. The evangelical-fundamentalist domination of the UFMCC may be regarded as a response to the homophobic vehemence of the mainstream fundamentalist churches, which drives gay Christians out of their fold with a vengeance and forces them into an external redoubt, in contrast to the relatively more tolerant atmosphere, hospitable to

internal gay caucuses, of the more liberal churches.

Other gay churches with a generally liberal approach developed in some American cities, contributing to the rise of gay synagogues, beginning in New York in 1973 and spreading across the country and abroad. In Paris the Belgian Baptist Reverend Joseph Doucé founded the Centre du Christ Libérateur in 1976, which branched into some other European countries, an exception to the rule that gay churches, like gay student groups, characterize English-speaking countries.

Although the UFMCC and the other gay churches exist outside the existing denominations, many gay people have preferred to retain their connection with their own churches, securing within them a better situation for themselves. They form study groups, typically consisting of both homosexual and heterosexual persons, to reexamine church doctrine and pressure the denomination’s governing body to adopt a statement in favor of gay rights. In 1963 a group of English Quakers (Friends) privately published the first statement of this kind. In 1970 the Unitarian Universalist Association (U.S.) and the Lutheran Church in America declared support, both with full denominational backing. Many other statements have followed (*see* Batchelor, appendix). Recognition of the inherent dignity of homosexual persons has gained endorsement more readily than overt sexual relations; the latter are usually permitted only with the stipulation that lifetime fidelity be maintained. Although a particular bone of contention has been ordination of homosexual men and women, some openly gay people have been consecrated, including the lesbian priest Ellen Barrett by New York’s Anglican bishop Paul Moore, Jr. (1976). At its convention in the summer of 1988, the Assembly of the United Church of Canada with 800,000 members voted after long discussion to ordain worthy homosexual men and women—a decision that provoked threats of secession.

Many denominations have gay and lesbian affiliates, seeking official recognition and sometimes holding services in established churches. Their prototype, the Catholic-linked Dignity, was founded in San Diego in 1969. It was quickly followed by an episcopal twin, Integrity (1972), and by Affinity (Mormon), Brethren/Mennonite Council on Gay Concerns, Evangelicals Concerned, the Seventh Day Adventist Kinship, and others. While they aim to function within their denominations, many have found themselves forced outside. After a long period of quasi-toleration, the publication of Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger's Vatican letter in 1986, perhaps inspired by the reactionary new American cardinals Law of Boston and O'Connor of New York, began a process of exclusion of Dignity itself, the largest group, which attracted about 7000 members at its zenith.

Rationale. Many participants hold that the purpose of the gay churches and organizations is not to set up permanent rivals to mainstream churches but to provide transitional institutions awaiting a time when the established denominations welcome homosexual persons as full members. Nonreligious and atheist gays regard the new religious organizations as an aberration, a collaborationist movement, even a kind of surrender to the enemy—a negative view that cannot be readily dismissed considering the historic role of Christian churches in persecuting homosexuals.

Nonetheless, the organizational success of the gay groups speaks for itself. Because religion has deep roots in human life and psyche, many homosexuals in spite of the historical record seek outlets for their feelings somewhere in the Western religious tradition which has dominated the culture in which they were raised. Homosexuals are hardly the first group which has sought to alleviate oppression by working from within to change the attitudes and practices of their oppressors. In this respect the gay movement has more

in common with the black civil rights movement which had a deep foundation in the black churches than with the feminist movement, which made little if any appeal to traditional religion. In any event, the persistent dialogue which has ensued with the leaders of the established churches has perhaps done more to undermine, dilute, and perhaps eventually neutralize a major source of Western homophobia than all the appeals issued by homosexuals using purely secular, biologicistic, and psychological value systems. Mainstream leaders and their congregations are being educated and continually forced to rethink their positions. Progress within Protestant denominations is dramatic indeed, viewed from the perspective of centuries of Christian homophobia. In recent decades clergy have routinely volunteered or been enlisted as allies in confrontations with homophobic insurgents, and provided critical support for passage of gay rights bills, the ending of police harassment, and the like. It is a long way from burnings at the stake to the ordination of an avowedly homosexual priest in a major denomination, and the gay Christian groups must be given credit for contributing to that evolution.

Gay churches have also provided the wider community with leadership, money, volunteer workers, and demonstrators, meeting space, printing facilities, and publicity when these requisites were scarce. In some smaller towns the gay church is the only social facility that homosexuals can openly attend and the only venue where gay political activity is permitted.

Unlike most bars and baths, gay churches do not discriminate on the basis of age or looks. Pastors and congregations are committed to providing understanding and support: when all else fails they are there. Filling a genuine social need for their parishioners, gay churches are likely to continue.

See also Clergy, Gay; Heresy; Monasticism.

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Wayne R. Dynes

CICERO, MARCUS TULLIUS (106–43 B. C.)

Roman politician, orator, and writer, who left behind a corpus of Latin prose (speeches, treatises, letters) that make him one of the great authors of classical antiquity. Unsuccessful in politics, he was overestimated as a philosopher by the Middle Ages and the Renaissance and underestimated in modern times, but was and is ranked as one of the greatest masters of Latin style. His career as an orator began in 81 B.C., and from the very beginning his speeches revealed his rhetorical gifts. His denunciation of Verres, the proconsul who had plundered the province of Sicily, opened the way to his election as aedile, praetor, and then consul, but subsequently the intrigues of his enemies led to his banishment from Rome (58/57), followed by his triumphal return. In the civil war he took the side of Pompey and so failed again, but was pardoned by the victorious Caesar, after whose death he launched a rhetorical attack on Mark Antony. The formation of the triumvirate meant that Cicero was to be proscribed by his opponent and murdered by his henchmen.

The theme of homosexuality figures in Cicero's political writings as part of his invective. In the last turbulent century of the Roman republic in which he lived, a

contrast between the austere virtue of earlier times and the luxury and vice of the present had become commonplace. Also, as we know from the slightly later genre of satirical poetry, a taste for salacious gossip had taken root in the metropolis. In his orations Cicero remorselessly flays the homosexual acts of his enemies, contrasting homosexual love with the passion inspired by women which is "far more of natural inspiration." The glorification of male dignity and virility goes hand in hand with the condemnation of effeminacy as unnatural and demeaning. Something of the Roman antipathy to Greek *paiderasteia* transpires from Cicero's condemnation of the nudity which the Greeks flaunted in their public baths and *gymnasia*, and from his assertion that the Greeks were inconsistent in their notion of friendship. He pointedly noted: "Why is it that no one falls in love with an ugly youth or a handsome old man?" Effeminacy and passive homosexuality are unnatural and blameworthy in a free man, though Cicero remained enough under the influence of Greek mores to express no negative judgment on the practice of keeping handsome young slaves as minions of their master. The right of a free man to have sexual relations with his male slaves Cicero never challenges, though he distinguishes clearly between the slave in the entourage of his master and the "hustler" whose viciousness is imputed to his keeper. The Judaic condemnation of homosexuality per se had not yet reached Rome, but the distinction that had existed in Hellenic law and custom between acts worthy and unworthy of a citizen was adopted and even heightened by the combination of appeal to Roman civic virtue and his own rhetorical flair.

Cicero's denunciation of homosexual conduct in his enemies—not of exclusive "homosexuality," which is never in question—remained in the context of effeminacy, debauchery, and other sexual offenses designated by the general term *stuprum*. He depicted the other side as