

and (most of all) Platonic and Stoic philosophers. Sometime before 200 he succeeded Pantaenus, whom he praised for his orthodoxy, as head of the catechetical school at Alexandria, but in 202 he had to flee the persecution unleashed by the emperor Septimius Severus and perhaps died in Asia Minor. Although most of his works are lost, the chief ones form a trilogy: *Hortatory Address to the Greeks*, written ca. 190 to prove the superiority of Christianity to paganism and philosophy; *Tutor*, written ca. 190 or 195 about Christ's moral teaching as it should be applied to conduct in eating, drinking, dress, expenditure, and sex; and *Miscellanies*, written ca. 200–2 in eight books proving the inferiority of Greek to Christian philosophy. Minor works include *What Rich Man Shall be Saved!* which urges scorn of worldly wealth.

Although Clement's Christianity has been criticized as being too Hellenized, his serene hope and classical learning helped convert the upper classes. His pseudo-Platonic doctrine that homosexuality was particularly noxious because it was "against nature" served to combine that strand of classical philosophy with Hellenistic Jewish homophobia, most trenchantly exemplified by the Alexandrian philosopher Philo Judaeus (20 B.C.–A.D. 45), to justify persecution of sodomites. He thus preceded and stimulated the homophobia of the Christian emperors, from Constantine's sons to Justinian, and of the two most influential Fathers, John Chrysostom and Augustine of Hippo.

See also *Patristic Writers*.

William A. Percy

CLERGY, GAY

One of the central paradoxes of the history of homosexuality, as well as of the history of Christianity, has been the role of gay clergy in the government and the functioning of an institution that outwardly condemned any form of sexual expression between members of the same

sex. The question of gay clergy extends beyond the bounds of Christianity (the focus of the present article) to many religions, including those of primitive peoples, as seen in the *berdache* and *shamanism*. This broad diffusion tends to confirm what Edward Carpenter claimed early in the twentieth century, that there is a psychological affinity between religious ministry and homophilia.

The Early Centuries. Almost from the beginning, Christian clerics have been suspected and denounced by pagans, atheists, and anticlerical propagandists for homosexuality even more than the facts themselves merit. Among Greek and Roman orators, accusations of having prostituted oneself to other males or of having taken the passive role in adulthood became standard fare—deserved or not. Although there is no confirmation of the assertion that St. John, identified as the *beloved disciple* (John 13:23), was Jesus' sexual partner (as an anonymous Venetian and Christopher Marlowe claimed in the sixteenth century), pagan polemicists of the second and third centuries routinely accused Christians of ritual murder and cannibalism, incest and orgies both heterosexual and homosexual, notably in connection with the mass. As *celibacy* increased, especially among the monks who seemed particularly uncouth and threatening, such charges became more common, and the writers of the *monastic rules* took care to legislate in such a way as to prevent homosexual activity (see, e.g., *The Rule of St. Benedict*, chapter 22). Indeed hermit monks, who had been accustomed to an individualistic way of life, were herded into the monasteries where they could be watched and regulated to reduce opportunities for vice and occasions for slander. Fasting and vigils were imposed to reduce libido. The space allotted to homosexual acts in the *penitentials* confirms that monks often sinned with their fellows and engaged in masturbation. The penitentials aimed at clerics ministering to Celtic and Germanic laymen indicate frequent homo-

sexuality, onanism and in such agrarian societies, bestiality.

The Central Middle Ages. During the period of laxity that followed the Carolingian revival in the ninth century, several popes were particularly blatant. The patrician John XII (938–964) went so far as to model himself on the scandalous Roman emperor Heliogabalus, holding homosexual orgies in the papal palace—a practice imitated by Benedict IX (1021–ca. 1052).

These excesses helped to bring on the rigorism of the Gregorian reform movement in the middle of the eleventh century. Yet paradoxically the enforcement of celibacy on priests and even attempts to impose it on those in lesser orders increased the danger of homosexuality. Peter Damian, who led the attack on Nicolaitism (nepotism within the church) around 1050, also denounced what he perceived as widespread homosexuality among Italian priests. All the major canonical collections of the high Middle Ages from Burchard of Worms, then Gratian and the *Corpus Juris Canonici* legislated against the abuse which undoubtedly increased as the seculars had to put aside their wives, concubines, and often even female housekeepers. Friars, who unlike the monks were free to wander among the laity without much supervision, became notorious as seducers of boys as well as women, whose confessions they often heard to the disgruntlement of parish priests. Many homosexual clergy, then as now, confessed to one another and were formally absolved. Indeed, the confessional at times became the locus of seduction.

Unlike the Roman Catholic church, Greek Orthodoxy has never adopted the principle of obligatory celibacy for the entire clergy. The result is that homosexuals are tracked into careers in the “black” or monastic clergy from which the high dignitaries of the Orthodox church are chosen, while the “white” or parish clergy are allowed to marry and have children. The offspring of the latter played a

great role in the formation of the Russian intelligentsia in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

The military orders were drawn, like the episcopate, mainly from the insouciant lustful nobility. Many of these recruits proved wanting in serious religious conviction or were placed often unwillingly by their relatives at an early age. Sometime suspicions arose of secret rites, as with the Knights Templars who paid dearly by being cruelly tortured and burned.

St. John (conventionally identified with the beloved disciple) was only the most famous of a number of saints suspected by contemporaries or by modern scholars. The eastern saints Sergius and Bacchus have been interpreted as a pair of lovers, but close examination of the evidence does not support the claim. In twelfth-century England St. Aelred, abbot of Rievaulx, left behind writings saturated with deep feeling for male spiritual friendship. Yet as in the case of many other medieval monks claimed by modern homophiles as “gay,” this theme of *amicitia* probably belongs more to the realm of homosociality than homosexuality in any genital sense. The martyr St. Sebastian has been a homosexual cult object at least since the second half of the nineteenth century, but there is no basis for assuming that he himself was homosexual. Penitential flagellation, practiced by many monks, has secondary sexual connotations.

The hypocritical visitations of the Middle Ages and the papal inquisitions periodically unearthed homosexual clergy, as did secular courts, especially those of the Italian towns. The archdeacon Walter Map observed of St. Bernard of Clairvaux unsuccessfully attempting to revive the corpse of a boy: “The *was* the unhappiest monk of all. For I’ve never heard of any monk who lay down upon a boy that did not straightaway rise up after him. The abbot blushed and they went out as many laughed.” Heretics accused Catholic clergy of sodomy just as the Catholics in turn

accused Cathars and Fraticelli, the Beguines and Bogomils. Opponents of the popes sometimes accused them of sodomy: Philip IV of France charged Boniface VIII not only with heresy, usury, and simony, but with sodomy and masturbation as well.

The Early Modern Period. The Renaissance in Italy, with its revival of classical antiquity and love of art, saw a number of popes who were interested in their own sex. Among them were the antipope John XXIII (d. 1419), who began his career as a pirate. Entering the clergy he quickly acquired the reputation of an unblushing libertine. The humanist pope Pius II (1405–1464) watched boys run naked in a race at Pienza, noting a boy “with fair hair and a beautiful body, though disfigured with mud.” The vain Venetian Paul II (1417–1471) toyed with adopting the name Formosus (“beautiful”). Affecting the most lavish costumes, he was attacked by his enemies as “Our Lady of Pity.” His successor, Sixtus IV (1414–1482), made his mark as an art patron, erecting the Sistine chapel. He also elevated to the cardinalate a number of handsome young men. Julius II (1443–1513), another art-loving pope, provoked such scandal that he was arraigned under various charges, including that of sodomy, but he managed to survive the attempt to depose him. His successor, the extravagant Medici Leo X (1475–1521), became embroiled in intrigues to advance favorite nephews, a hobby that strained the treasury to the utmost. Julius III (1487–1555), who had presided over the Council of Trent before his pontificate, was nonetheless sometimes seen at official functions with catamites, one of whom he made a cardinal.

After the Reformation, Protestants—who rejected clerical celibacy and thereby made heterosexuality virtually obligatory for the clergy as well as the laity—undertook vigorous campaigns of slander directed at the homosexuality of the Catholic clergy. It has been claimed that Henry VIII’s visitors greatly exagger-

ated the extent of sodomy and every other vice among English monks in order to precipitate suppression of the monasteries and confiscation of their property, but the actual text of the correspondence between him and his agent in Scotland indicates that a “covert action” was intended and that imputed to the monks were such vices as laziness with which no court, even in the Middle Ages, would have concerned itself for a moment. Thus only Orthodoxy had the wisdom to divide its clergy into two groups, one of whom would be wholly dedicated to its service, while not depriving society of the offspring of the other. Given the virtual monopoly of higher education which the clergy enjoyed in the Middle Ages and even afterwards in many places, the Orthodox solution seems more viable than the Catholic or Protestant one.

Skeptics and libertines from the Renaissance through the Enlightenment also ridiculed the sodomitical practices of the clerics and monks as an example of the hypocrisy of the church, and of the idle, vicious, parasitic way of life that its clergy led, all the while urging others to abstinence and self-denial in every form. Voltaire repeatedly suggested that the Jesuits liked young boys, and Pierre-Jean de Béranger (1789–1857) continued the anti-Jesuit tradition with a song about their propensity for spanking young boys.

The Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries. During the religious revival and triumph of bourgeois morality in the nineteenth century, only leftists and eccentrics continued to emphasize the homosexuality of the clergy. The anticlerical literature of the last decades of that century delighted in exposing cases in which a clergyman had committed a sexual offense, to the point where in 1911 the Pope had to issue the *motu proprio* decree *Quamvis diligenter* forbidding the Catholic laity to bring charges against the clergy before secular courts. This step unilaterally abolished the principle of the equality of all citizens before the law established by the French Revolution, reinstating the

"benefit of clergy" of the Middle Ages. The anticlerical literature of that period still needs study for the light that it can shed on the homosexual subculture of the clerical milieu. In England the Anglican High Church was particularly identified with effeminacy and homosexuality, a state of affairs that produced a certain amount of puritanical revulsion in the middle class.

The Communists and then the Nazis attacked clerics and their other enemies by charging homosexuality. The classic of Soviet anti-religious writing, *The Bible for Believers and Unbelievers* (1922), identified the "crime of Sodom" with the practices of the medieval monks, and violation of Paragraph 175 of the Penal Code of the Reich was an accusation which the Nazis used against Catholic priests who may have been convicted solely on perjured testimony.

Because of the decline in the number of applicants for the priesthood after World War II in England and America, it has been estimated recently that more than 50 percent of Catholic priests under 40 in the United States today are gay, many of whom support Dignity (the gay Catholic organization), and also that 40 percent of Anglican priests are (in both countries). In the wake of the AIDS crisis in England an open attack on homosexuals in the church was mounted by conservative circles.

One aspect of the gay liberation movement in the United States has been the demand for ordination of openly gay and lesbian postulants as members of the clergy, and several denominations, among them the United Church of Canada, have acquiesced—to the dismay of the tradition-minded among their followers. Church organists as a professional class tend to be homosexual, for whatever denomination they practice their art, and in recent years some of them have "come out of the closet." Francis Cardinal Spellman (1889–1967) of New York was well-known in homosexual circles even while he publicly condemned every form of sexual

"immorality"—and it was the only aspect of immorality about which he cared. A biography that was prepared for publication after his death intended to reveal to the world the awful truth, but the archdiocese intervened with the publisher to have the offending passages excised. In the final version Spellman's homosexuality was relegated to the category of rumor. According to the French novelist Roger Peyrefitte, pope John XXIII (1881–1963) and, more plausibly, Paul VI (1897–1978) conducted homosexual affairs before their election.

The distinction between the **androphile** and the **pederast** extends to the gay clergy as well. Some homosexual members of the clergy—androphiles—seek only other adults as partners and move freely in the gay subculture of the large cities, while others are attracted only to adolescents or at times to even younger partners. In the mid-1980s in the Cajun area of Louisiana, the Roman Catholic church was embarrassed by the revelation that there were pedophile priests who had abused children in their parishes, and the families were able to collect such large sums in civil damages that the church could no longer obtain insurance to cover its potential liability in such cases. In fairness, however, it must be acknowledged that there are homosexual and lesbian religious who take their vows of celibacy seriously and abstain from any sex, even though as members of communities of their own gender they are exposed to temptations that would have no meaning for the exclusive heterosexual.

The plight of homosexuals as clergy of a religion that condemns all homosexual expression remains unresolved, and will be a source of turbulence within the denominations for decades to come, until Christianity as a whole finds a *modus vivendi* with the phenomenon of attraction to one's own sex.

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