

investigations of the homosexual aspects of France's own past showed that the Gallic spirit had its own inimitable contribution to the homoerotic culture of the late twentieth century. Even the provincial cities began to boast their own organizations, periodicals, and rendezvous for the gay public. All are recorded in the *Gai Pied Hebdo Guide*, published annually since 1983.

The political battles that had to be waged before courts and legislatures in other countries to gain the minimum of legal toleration were spared the French movement; its principal foe was the unenlightened public opinion surviving from the recent past, but receding as the subject of homosexuality became an everyday matter in the mass media. So France joined the ranks of those nations with a politically conscious and culturally enterprising gay community.

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FREDERICK II (1197-1250)

Hohenstaufen king of Sicily and Holy Roman emperor (1212-1250). Called *Stupor mundi* (Wonder of the World) by contemporaries, he was designated the "first modern man" by the Swiss historian Jakob Burckhardt in his *Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy* (1860). Son of the German Emperor Henry IV and Constance, the Norman heiress of the Kingdom of

Sicily, as well as grandson of the Emperor Frederick Barbarossa, he was born in the square in a small town in Southern Italy, in full public view so that no one could doubt that his mother, old in the estimation of contemporaries for a first conception, produced him. Orphaned at the age of one and entrusted to the guardianship of Innocent III (1198-1216), the most powerful of medieval popes, he actually grew up on the streets of Palermo in Sicily, where he received a most unorthodox education, learning Arabic and Greek as well as German, French, and Latin in that melting pot of cultures.

When Frederick attained his majority he broke his promises to his now dead guardian by failing to surrender the Sicilian crown, which included all of Southern Italy up to the border of the Papal States, when he received the crowns of Germany (1215) and of the Holy Roman Empire (1220), which included all of Northern Italy down to the Papal States. Innocent's successors excommunicated him when he also delayed his promised crusade. Frederick was the only leader to crusade while excommunicated, but he recovered Jerusalem, which Saladin had recaptured from the Christians, by negotiating with Saladin's sophisticated nephew al-Kamil. When he returned he completed the reorganization of Sicily, making it the first autocratic European monarchy, basing it on Arab, Byzantine, and Norman models and Roman law precedents. He issued at Melfi in 1231 the constitution known as the *Liber Augustalis*, which remained in effect until 1860. He was then drawn into the disastrous second Lombard war by the papacy that feared renewed imperial domination more than before, now that Frederick's lands surrounded the papal states. The struggle renewed the War of the First Lombard League (1162-1183) that the popes had waged against his grandfather Barbarossa and the earlier war of the Investiture Controversy (1076-1122) that Pope Gregory VII had launched against

another of Frederick's relatives, Emperor Henry IV (1050–1106), who has frequently been considered bisexual.

The Guelph allies of the Papacy captured one of Frederick's sons, Enzo, and held him captive in a cage in Bologna for years, breaking the emperor's heart. Later popes ordered the extermination of "that breed of vipers." Charles of Anjou, brother of St. Louis of France, dutifully beheaded the last of the line, Frederick's grandson Conradin and his noble Austrian companion in the marketplace of Naples in 1268. Here to this date German tourists weep for the fate of these royal youths, who were still adolescents and probably lovers.

Propagandists accused Frederick of keeping a harem and also of homosexual sodomy—both Moslem practices. He supposedly blasphemed "Mankind has had three great deceivers: Moses, Jesus, and Mohammed," a legend that underlay the belief in the apocryphal *Liber de tribus impostoribus*. At his court in Sicily Frederick encouraged the beginning of Italian literature in the form of troubadours, poets who copied the Provençal lyrics and inspired the Tuscans and Dante. He himself composed outstanding love poems as well as what became the standard text on falconry. Many medieval poets were homoerotic and some modern scholars believe that courtly love with its unattainable ladies spurred homosexual instincts and even acts among knights and squires.

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FREDERICK II (THE GREAT) OF PRUSSIA (1712–1786)

Prussian general and enlightened ruler of the eighteenth century. The son of the brutal, anti-intellectual, homophobic,

and fanatical Friedrich Wilhelm of Prussia, Frederick was in his adolescence small and pretty, loved French literature and art, wore French clothes and curled his hair. His relationship with his father was hideous; almost every day of his life until he was eighteen Frederick was beaten and verbally abused. At that time he decided to run away from home with his dearest friend, Lieutenant Hans Hermann von Katte, who was eight years older than Frederick, well-educated, a lover of the arts, and a freethinker. Just what their sexual relationship was remains unknown, as Frederick took care to destroy the evidence. The father discovered their plot and had them both arrested; then, overruling the decision of the court-martial that had sentenced Katte to life imprisonment, he ordered him beheaded and forced Frederick to watch the execution. At the moment the sword fell on Katte's neck Frederick fainted, and after regaining consciousness he hallucinated for a day and a half.

Upon ascending to the throne of Prussia in 1740, he immediately displayed the qualities of leadership and military skill that characterized his reign, during which Prussia expanded territorially and gained the basis for its later role as cornerstone of the German empire. Frederick's officials, confidants and friends never doubted that he was homosexually oriented. Ecclesiastical Councilor Busching declared that "Frederick forewent a good deal of 'sensual pleasure' because of his aversion to women, but he made amends for it by his intercourse with men, recalling from the history of philosophy that Socrates had a great fondness for Alcibiades." Hard put to account for Frederick's unorthodox social life, historians ascribed it to misogyny, but this assumption has no other ground than his separation from his wife and the general absence of women from his court. He did have female friends and correspondents with whom he had an intellectual affinity, but his courtiers in residence were all male, and Prussian