Julius Caesar and then wife of Mark Anthony. Even members of the lower classes began to marry their sisters, but many in vast city slums and in the countryside were doubtless too poor to marry: like slaves unable to secure regular access to women they must have often turned to homosexuality. Poets such as Theocritus and Callimachus, scholars at the Library of Alexandria, testify to the ready availability of boys. Pederasty was a subject for Alexandrian as it had been for Athenian tragedians. Beginning with Rhianus of Crete (flourit ca. 275 B.C.), Aristides of Miletus (ca. 100 B.C.), Apollonius of Rhodes (ca. 295 B.C.), Diotimus (third century B.C.), Moschus (ca. 150 B.C.), Bion (ca. 100 B.C.), and Meleager of Gadara (ca. 100 B.C.) number among the pederastic poets. Phanocles (ca. 250 B.C.) composed his garland of elegies entitled Love Stories of Beautiful Boys (ca. 250 B.C.). The Musa Paidike, Book XII of the Greek Anthology, contains poems mostly composed in this era exhibiting a frankly sensual pederasty without even a pretext of paideia (education). This attitude continued in the Greek-speaking east until the Christian sexual counter-revolution of the fourth century, contemporaneous with the establishment of the Byzantine Empire.

Instead of recommending civic virtue as their classical predecessors had done, philosophers argued how one should best inure oneself against the changing fortunes controlled by the goddess Tyche or arbitrary despots. These philosophers included: Epicurus; Zeno of Citium, founder of Stoicism; Peripatetics, who continued Aristotle’s tradition in the Lyceum; and members of the Academy of Plato. Jews, like Philo, especially in Alexandria, where their largest colony lived, and in Jerusalem, where under the Maccabees they revolted against Antiochus IV, condemned pederasty and some other aspects of Hellenism which they found morally repellent, while absorbing still others.

The lasting importance of the Hellenistic monarchies lies in the interface which they created between Judaic and Hellenic cultures; this setting fostered the new syncretistic religion of Christianity which was destined to embrace the entire Greco-Roman world—with tragic consequences for homosexuality.


William A. Percy

HEMINGWAY, ERNEST (1899–1961)

American novelist and short story writer. Hemingway first achieved fame as a member of the “Lost Generation” in Paris in the 1920s. His trademark, a lean, almost laconic style, was widely imitated. Noted for his exploration of “supermasculine” subject matter—war, bullfighting, safaris, deep-sea fishing—Hemingway became a veritable icon of heterosexuality.

Yet careful readers could note hints of sexual unorthodoxy. The short story “Mr. and Mrs. Elliott” (1925) concerns lesbianism, and in fact Hemingway was fascinated with the expatriate world of lesbian Paris typified by Natalie Barney, Sylvia Beach, Gertrude Stein, and their associates. In The Sun Also Rises (1926) the hero is unable to consummate a sexual relationship because of impotence. The material for the novel derives from a trip to Spain financed by his traveling companion, the bisexual writer Robert McAlmon.

Hemingway’s mother, Grace, who may have been a lesbian, dressed the boy in girl’s clothes to make a twin sister of him for the older Marcelline. The Garden of Eden, a novel published in abridged form only in 1986, reveals homosexual and transsexual fantasies. Rumors that his suicide was the result of an unhappy gay affair have not been substantiated.
HENRI III OF FRANCE (1551–1589)

French king, the son of Henri II and Catherine de' Medici. Elected to the throne of Poland in 1573, he left the country on the death of his brother Charles IX of France to ascend the throne at the age of 23. Because he refused to adopt the measures for extermination of the Protestants advocated by the Catholic party under the leadership of the Duc de Guise which had in 1572 perpetrated the massacre of St. Bartholomew's Eve, he found himself at war with its supporters, and even Paris and other cities rebelled against him. He made common cause with the Protestant Henri of Navarre, but, in his camp at St. Cloud he was assassinated by a fanatical Dominican monk and died at the age of 38.

Seldom has the homosexuality of a ruler been so public and undisguised, or have the favorites of a monarch been so clearly identified as in the life of Henri III. Though exhibiting many traits of the stereotypical homosexual, and that of the effeminate variety, he is indicated by reliable sources to have felt passionate attraction to women as well. If he remained childless, it was in the opinion even of his foes because an incurable gonorrhea had left him sterile. Many writers have tried to ascribe his homosexual leanings to a stay in Venice in 1574, where satiated with the charms of the opposite sex which he had known only too well, he succumbed to the pederastic vice so rampant in Italy, or to the syphilis which he contracted in the city on the Adriatic. The most that he could have learned was how many others shared his proclivities, and the moment Henri became king of France, he gave free rein to his homosexual urges and also to the fondness for luxury and extravagance which the ancients equated with effeminacy.

Henry was well-built, charming in looks, and gracious in manner; his hands were especially beautiful. His character was marked by the feminine traits of tenderness and religiosity. In 1583 an anxiety-provoking dream even caused him a crisis of piety in which he founded a brotherhood called the Penitents that staged processions in which the king, his mignons, and other dignitaries of the court participated in masks. Other feminine traits of his were a fondness for lapdogs, for childlish games and toys, and for elegant costumes. He loved to wear women's clothing and even to appear at public events clad in the style affected by the ladies of his court. Not long after ascending the throne he surrounded himself with handsome young men in their early twenties—the mignons, who used all the feminine arts to ape the king's own proclivities in dress, speech and walk. Two categories of mignons can be differentiated: the mignons de coeur, who shared his pleasures and erotic passions—Quélus, Maugiron, Livarol, Saint-Mégrin and others, and the mignons d'état, who played a military and political role and acquired a real influence over the affairs of the reign—notably Joyeuse and d'Epernon. Henri cemented his ties with the mignons not just by showering them with favors and gifts of all kinds, but also by arranging marriages for them that were celebrated in a lavish and fabulous manner. He was not troubled by jealousy when they took an interest in the opposite sex.

A contemporary satire entitled L'Ile des Hermaphrodites (The Isle of the Hermaphrodites) depicts the life of the mignons and their protector in a quite perceptive manner. The author describes how entering the palace of the hermaphrodites he sees them beautifying their persons to enter the inner sanctum of their lord for sensual mysteries in which he cannot follow. The walls of one room are hung with tapestries depicting Hadrian's passion for Antinous, another with scenes from the life of Heliogabalus, a third cham-