

ber has a bed whose roof depicts the marriage of Nero and Pythagoras. The mignons join in the praises of their master and his fair hands. The significance of this work has not been fully appreciated, as it owes its title to the misunderstanding of the phenomenon of the *berdache* in accounts of the New World; the *berdaches* were mistaken for genuine hermaphrodites rather than as individuals who had adopted a culturally prescribed cross-gender role. Given the attitude toward homosexuality that had prevailed in Latin Christendom since the thirteenth century, the conduct of Henri and his mignons inevitably provoked enormous hostility and indignation, and a considerable literature defaming the king and his court was composed that formed the basis for later treatments of the period by historians who gave vent to their homophobia. Only in modern times has it been possible to form a truer picture of the virtues and foibles of a monarch whose public and private life was molded by the homosexual and effeminate in his personality.

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### HENRY, PRINCE (1726-1802)

Brother of Frederick II (the Great) of Prussia. Less distinguished than his brother, who occupied the throne for forty-six years, Henry was another homosexual member of the House of Hohenzollern. The portrait of him drawn by historians varies according to the degree of sympathy or aversion which they feel for him. A great lover of the military, Henry took an

aggressive part in the Seven Years War and was particularly renowned for his role in the battle at Friedberg (October 29, 1762), which he won, ending the war. He retired early from active duty and lived thereafter as a dilettante in castle Rheinsberg, a few hours distant from Berlin. Like Frederick, he used the French language exclusively for his literary compositions. An enthusiastic admirer of Voltaire and of French philosophy, Henry loved uninhibited discussions of morality and metaphysics. He took particular pleasure in the theatre, while maintaining his own troupe of French performers. His friends fell into two categories: one group satisfied his intellectual and literary needs, the other his homoerotic passions and sensual cravings.

Henry's personality was profoundly masculine: reflective and calculating, endowed with firm will and extraordinary memory, real talent for literature, and outstanding ability as a military strategist. But with these qualities he combined a feminine sensitivity and antipathy to cruelty and brutality in any form, compassion for the weak, and nobility and generosity toward his foes, especially the French. Physically he was small, his face unattractive, his whole figure somewhat ill-proportioned, so that one author remarked that seldom has such a beautiful soul and great talent had such a wretched exterior. All authors who dealt with the sexual side of his character agreed that he felt no love for women, and the compulsion which his older brother exercised on him to marry only strengthened his aversion to the opposite sex. He scarcely concealed his passion for young men and effeminate homosexual types, and he even had a temple of friendship built whose walls were decked with French inscriptions glorifying friendship—which in his case often meant a sensual passion for his youthful adjutants. Some of his favorites were of quite inferior station in life and unworthy character, yet possessing a coarse male attractiveness which the prince could not resist. One of these, a Major Kaphengst,

exploited the prince's interest in him to lead a dissipated, wasteful life on an estate not far from Rheinsberg. Others, such as the actor Blainville and the French émigré Count La Roche-Aymon, were better able to reciprocate his affection for them. Subsequently German novelists such as Theodor Fontane in *Stechlin* and Alexander von Ungern-Sternberg in *Der deutsche Gil Blas* alluded to the prince's character in works that indirectly furnish additional details about his private life.

Of interest is one detail of his political career: At the moment when Americans were considering the possibility of a constitutional monarchy, and George Washington had indignantly declined the honor, Henry's name was put forward as that of a cultured and liberal-minded soldier who would make an excellent king. On November 2, 1786 his old friend Baron von Steuben wrote to convey the support of his candidacy by many prominent Americans, but Henry waited until April 1787 to reply and then refused to commit himself until he could be assured of the sentiment of his future subjects.

If less renowned than his brother Frederick, Henry was still one of the homosexual members of the high nobility who, sympathizing with the ideas and ideals of the **Enlightenment**, put their rank and wealth at the service of the movement for political and ideological change in the closing decades of the Old Regime.

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## HERESY

Defined as willful and persistent departure from orthodox Christian dogma, heresy forced the church progressively to refine the formulation of its doctrines and to anathematize deviant theological opin-

ions. At times heretical movements such as **Gnosticism**, the mystical belief that the elect received a special enlightenment, and **Arianism**, greatest of the Christological heresies, seemed almost to overshadow the universal church. From Constantine the Great (d. 337) onward, the church used state power to impose uniformity of belief. In both eastern and western halves of the Roman Empire law subjected pertinacious heretics to branding, confiscation of property, exile, and even death. The assumption that the church had the right to call upon the secular power to suppress heresy survived the Empire itself. In the early Middle Ages in the West, few heretics were noticed or prosecuted from the sixth through the tenth century. When prosperity returned after 1000, however, ecclesiastical and secular authorities noted and persecuted heretics who multiplied particularly at first in the reviving cities of southern France and Italy. The iconoclastic controversy of the eighth and ninth centuries nearly destroyed the **Byzantine Empire** where other heresies such as dualistic **Paulicianism** flourished continuously.

*The Image of the Heretic.* Modern hypotheses on the causes of heresy were foreign to the churchmen of late antiquity and the Middle Ages, who simply considered heresy the work of the devil. Author after author repeated stereotypical descriptions and denunciations and often applied such beliefs and practices with scant discrimination to later heretics. These clichés were assembled into a type-figure of the heretic with conventional traits: his pride, since he has dared to reject the teaching of the official Church; his superficial mien of piety, which must be meant to deceive, since he is in fact an enemy of the faith; and his secrecy, contrasted with the teaching of the Church, which is broadcast to the four winds. Most significantly, the heretic is often accused of counterfeiting piety while secretly engaging in **libertinism**—and the form of sexual libertinism most often imputed to him is homosexuality, or **sodomy**, as the