

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

term generally used from the end of the twelfth century onward.

Late Antiquity. Even before the end of antiquity, Western Christian controversialists, using a charge pagans had once leveled against them, had accused members of dissident sects of engaging in unmentionable orgies "for the sake of pleasure." Not satisfied with their promiscuous intercourse with women, some of them, in the words of the Apostle, "were consumed with their lust for one another." A sect called the Levites, after the members of the tribe who officiated in the Temple in Jerusalem, were reported by Epiphanius of Salamis not to have intercourse with women, but only with one another. It was these who were held in distinction and honor by other libertine Gnostics, because they "had sowed no children for the Archon," that is to say, had begotten no offspring whose souls would like theirs be trapped in the lower, material world and could not ascend to heaven. Such charges were also hurled against the **Manichaeans**, who derived from **Zoroastrianism** the dualistic doctrine that an evil god created matter and human reproduction in the sense of having more bodies to rule.

The Middle Ages. It was at the end of the eleventh century that the so-called Bulgarian heresy became known in Western Europe. It was also known as the Albigensian or Cathar heresy. This was a dualistic ideology that had flourished in the kingdom of Bulgaria, which some ascribed to a priest named Bogomil, who combined the beliefs imported from the Byzantine Empire (Paulician and Manichaean) into a new system. From the reign of Tsar Peter (927–969) onward these doctrines were propagated throughout Europe. The Bogomils believed that the Devil was the creator of the visible, material world and that Christ was a phantom who had no ordinary body, was not born of Mary, and did not truly suffer on the cross. They rejected the sacraments, including

baptism and the eucharist, in favor of initiation rites that included the laying on of hands, and identified the Devil with the Jewish god, the demiurge whose revelation in the Old Testament they accordingly repudiated. In their rejection of the Greek Orthodoxy propagated from Byzantium, the heretics were as radical as one could imagine. They subjected the Gospel narratives to an exegesis that made all the miracle stories symbolic and allegorical.

From the "Bulgarian" Heresy to Buggery. Since the Bulgarian heresy was the religious deviation *par excellence* of the later Middle Ages, all heretics in Western Europe came indiscriminately to be labeled *bulgari*, which became *bougres* in Old French and *buggers* in Middle English. But in addition to heresy, the term gained the meanings of sodomite and usurer. It has been claimed that this was only the church's way of defaming unbelievers and provoking hatred for them. In fact, however, as Catholics claimed, they advocated chastity because they retained the dualist notion of the wrongfulness of procreation, and may have tolerated sterile promiscuity, at least in the lower ranks of their sect. It is also quite possible that their highest ranks, the so-called *perfecti*, included more than their share of homosexuals, given the affinity of a certain homosexual character type for leadership in religious communities. The anti-homosexual doctrines of the Catholic Church, grounded in the prohibitions of the Old Testament which the Cathari rejected, may have added to the alienation of such types from its fold. The oft-repeated allegations of homosexual conduct were not without foundation: a promiscuous sodomite, Arnold of Verniolle of Pamiers, was caught in a heretic hunt in 1323. After careful examination of the evidence most modern historians have concluded that the accusations of debauchery and sodomy against the Cathars had some justification and corresponded to the survival of the mores of pagan Mediterranean antiquity in the folkways of Provence.

The further association of buggery with usury stemmed from the fact that medieval economic doctrine held money to be sterile, so that the earning of interest was equated with "unnatural" = non-reproductive forms of sexual expression. But all these factors coalesced to make *hougre* and *bugger*, *Ketzer* and *ketter* mean not only heretic but also sodomite. German even distinguished the sodomite as the *Ketzer nach dem Fleisch*, while the heretic proper was the *Ketzer nach dem Glauben*. In texts of the thirteenth century, it is true, the general meaning of "heretic" still prevails. Then also, however, scholastic theologians such as Albertus Magnus and Thomas Aquinas defined the "crime against nature by reason of sex" as second only to murder in its heinousness, and the social intolerance of homosexual expression rose to a point where everyone under the authority of the church was obliged to profess heterosexual interests alone. Moreover, the ecclesiastical courts gained the authority to try persons suspected of sodomy, as a crime under canon law, and then to relax them to the civil authorities for execution. Contrary to the modern belief that the term faggot for "effeminate homosexual" drives from the practice of burning such offenders at the stake, in England the penalty for both sodomy and witchcraft was hanging. As the significance of the Albigensian heresy receded, the meaning *bugger* = "sodomite" remained, and in the statute 25 Henry VIII c. 6 (1533), the word *buggery* is attested for the first time in English in the unequivocal sexual meaning. In German such terms as *Bubenketzer* for "pederast" retain the same association of ideas. Some writers even brand sodomy as worse than murder, because the murderer kills only one human being while the sodomite aims at the death of the entire human race, which in line with dualistic thinking would perish if one and all ceased to procreate so as not to enslave their offspring in the bonds of matter.

Later Middle Ages. In Cologne Meister Johannes Eckhart (d. 1327) began a pantheistic mysticism that often became heretical among his Rhenish followers. Partly inspired by the Rhenish mystic, Beguines and Begards, lay groups living communally in celibacy, concentrated in the Flemish towns, were accused of lesbianism more often than of sodomy with males. The general disruption of order by famines, endemic after 1314, the Black Death, which returned every ten years for a century after 1347, and the Hundred Years War led to both flagellants and dissipation as well as anti-Jewish outbursts, witch trials, and intensified persecution of sodomites.

Aftereffects. Certainly the theological overlap of heresy and sodomy served to magnify the hatred and aversion with which homosexuality was regarded by the masses of the faithful in Western Europe from the late thirteenth century down to modern times. In later medieval law codes heresy and sodomy were both capital crimes, and the accusation of "unnatural vice" was one of the charges brought against the Templars in a series of trials the objective basis of which remains disputed among medieval historians. Again, there is a real possibility that sexual non-conformity was the initial impetus that distanced the heretic from the Church, both then and in later times, when skepticism and unbelief replaced heresy as the chief foes of Christian dogma. It is noteworthy that in Great Britain *bugger* has, apart from the slightly archaic legal usage, been an exceedingly obscene taboo word that could not be used in polite company because of the images and emotions which it evoked.

A final consequence of the association of heresy and sodomy was the positive one, that both crimes were ultimately seen as expressions of the religious intolerance decried by antitrinitarians in the seventeenth century and by deistic thinkers in the eighteenth. The antithesis of the doctrine of the medieval Church

was the conviction that crimes against religion and morality, which included heresy and sodomy *par excellence*, should not be the object of criminal sanctions unless they harmed third parties or the interests of society in general. It is therefore all the more regrettable that in the English-speaking world, where freedom of conscience and toleration of sectarianism in religion came comparatively early, the place of buggery in the scheme of medieval intolerance was overlooked and the statutes adopted from canon law were perpetuated as bulwarks of morality.

See also **Christianity**; **Patristic Writers**.

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HERMAPHRODITE

The hermaphrodite, a human being fusing male and female characteristics, is the physical embodiment of the principle of **androgyny**. In mythology and art, hermaphrodites may be divided horizontally (where developed breasts may signal the female on top, with a complete penis below) or, more commonly, vertically (one side containing a breast and half of a vulva, the other side flat-chested with half of a penis). Sometimes hermaphrodites are regarded positively, standing for a desirable equality and balance between the sexes. Other traditions despise them as symbols of an unacceptable blurring of categories. In some instances the fusion seems relatively successful; in others, presenting a mere juxtaposition of forms, the result is grotesque. In behavior the hermaphrodite may be predominantly male or predominantly female. Cross-cultural data suggest that "male" hermaphrodites, who are likely to be viewed favorably, are much more frequent than "fe-

male" hermaphrodites, whose image is generally negative. With respect to their origin, some hermaphrodites result from the merger of a separate male and female person; others come into the world in a fused form, only splitting later into a separate male and female.

Scientific Research vs. Cultural Traditions. Early in the twentieth century the work of Franz Ludwig von Neugebauer demonstrated that in nature true human hermaphrodites, with fully developed male and female organs, are extremely rare—virtually nonexistent. What does occur is a situation where an individual is born with more or less complete organs of one sex and rudimentary or vestigial ones of the other. In other instances both sets may be undeveloped. For the first few weeks the human embryo is undetermined as to sex, and the hormones that effect the determination sometimes do not fully accomplish their task. Since our society dislikes the ambiguity of any anatomical intermediacy, the perceived flaw is usually surgically corrected and the individual takes his or her place as a "real" man or woman. In contrast with the sexual dimorphism of mammals, true hermaphroditism is the rule in many lower animal species, such as snails and worms, and in many kinds of flowers.

Cross-culturally there is no close link between physical and cultural hermaphroditism: the Greeks, who had a well-developed concept of the mythological hermaphrodite, were accustomed to kill hermaphroditic babies after birth. What is of greatest interest is in fact the cultural (that is imaginary) aspect of hermaphroditism, for it is a vehicle of feelings and speculation about gender, gender roles, and sexual orientation.

European Mythological Traditions. In Greek the word *hermaphroditos* stems from a fusion of the name of a male god, Hermes, with the goddess of love, Aphrodite. According to a story in Ovid's *Metamorphoses* (IV, 285–388), the god Hermaphroditos was in fact the son of the