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POLAND

This major nation of east-central Europe has undergone many vicissitudes. The western Slavs who occupied the area of present-day Poland were first united under the Piast dynasty and Christianized beginning in 966. The crown passed to the Jagiello dynasty, under which Poland, having lost its western territories, then expanded eastward, so that by 1568 the Polish-Lithuanian commonwealth embraced not just those two nations but most of Belorussia and the Ukraine as well. The confluence of the Renaissance and the Reformation brought Poland to the zenith of its political and cultural greatness, while a policy of toleration in religion not only spared the country the Protestant-Catholic wars that ravaged Western Europe but also allowed Polish Jewry to enjoy its golden age, while dissenting groups such as Socinians and Unitarians found refuge within its borders. Declining from the mid-seventeenth century onward, Poland after 1718

was virtually a protectorate of the great powers. Between 1772 and 1795 the country was thrice partitioned by Russia, Austria, and Prussia. Under the oppressive rule of the tsars the Poles twice rebelled, while Catholicism kept a grip on the masses as a symbol of opposition to the Lutheran Prussians and the Orthodox Russians. **Nationalism** ultimately triumphed in 1918 with the reconstitution of an independent republic as one of Woodrow Wilson's Fourteen Points. It was the discussion of nationality problems in central Europe that introduced the concept of an ethnic or religious **minority** to the English-speaking world. Interwar Poland was racked by economic problems and the inability to find a *modus vivendi* with the non-Polish components of its population. Once again partitioned by Nazi Germany and Soviet Russia in 1939, Poland was restored in 1945 with a new set of boundaries, the eastern territories having been annexed by the Soviet Union, with large areas of Prussia and Silesia being ceded to the country as compensation for its losses. The Communist regime that long ruled Poland has had to cope with constant unrest from a nation unwilling to be a Russian satellite.

Religious and Legal Background.

Although the reception of Latin **Christianity** and of the medieval version of Roman law entailed the adoption of laws against **sodomy**, there is evidence that the anti-Trinitarian sects which found refuge in Poland were influenced by the Nicodemites and similar trends of thought in Italy to abandon the notion that homosexual sins were the "crime of crimes" which the Scholastic theologians had proclaimed them to be. Even if they did not proclaim this departure from orthodox Christianity openly, they influenced the Quakers in western Europe. Their heritage was still active in the thought of William Penn who reduced the penalty for buggery to a nominal one in his law code for the colony of Pennsylvania (1682).

The partition of Poland meant that four separate codes—the German, the

Austrian, the Hungarian, and the Russian—all of which penalized male homosexual acts and the second and third of which also penalized lesbian acts before 1918, were in force on its territory when it was reunited. The discussion of a uniform code for the entire country led to proposals such as one by the physician Andrzej Mikulski in 1920: "Poland is waiting for a reform of these laws or rather their abrogation. . . . Even those who advocate the need to penalize homosexual acts are forced to admit that Paragraph 516 of the Russian and Paragraph 175 of the German Penal Code prove a total want of logic."

When the new Penal Code (*Kodeks karny*) came into force in 1932 under the authoritarian regime of Marshal Pilsudski, the model of the Code Napoléon prevailed: homosexuality ceased to be criminal on the entire territory of the Polish Republic, and the age of consent was uniformly fixed at 15 for both heterosexual and homosexual acts. The revised Penal Code introduced by the Communist regime on April 19, 1969 did not depart from this basic principle; its Article 176 condemns only a person (regardless of sex) who engages in acts of a sexual character with a person under the age of 15 regardless of the latter's degree of physical or psychological development.

Poland's homosexuals have to contend, not with legal repression, but with the long-standing prejudice and intolerance instilled by the prevailing Roman Catholicism of the country's population, a legacy that reached its peak in the Counterreformation. As in Cuba, this repressive tendency has been augmented by Stalinist homophobia stemming from the Soviet Union.

Cultural Aspects. The nationalistic emphasis of Polish literature hindered writings that emphasized physical love. It was only in 1917 that a literary outsider, the homosexual composer Karol Szymanowski (1882–1937), composed a two-volume autobiographical novel, *Ephesos*, written in 1917 but published only in

fragments; the manuscript was burned during the bombing of Warsaw in 1939. Jaroslaw Iwaszkiewicz (1894–1980) is celebrated by the Communist regime as one of Poland's greatest contemporary writers. Though homosexual, he carefully maintained a façade of conventional married life, and homoerotic themes are rare in his uneven work. It emerges most clearly in a story entitled "The Teacher," in which an aging, disappointed woman accuses a tutor of "unworthy acts" with a young gardener, whereupon he is dismissed and the oldest son of the family, platonically in love with the teacher, commits suicide.

Jan Lechon (1899–1956) was also unable to reveal the homoerotic side of his personality in his work, but in his *Diary*, written in exile in New York in 1949–56, he justified his reserve, but at the same time composed interesting critical sketches on the homoerotic literature of France (Gide, Genet, Peyrefitte).

In the novel by Tadeusz Breza *Adam Grywald* (1936) homosexuality was treated as a modern psychological problem. The hero, at first enamored of a young woman who fails to reciprocate, then finds consolation in her brother. The Adlerian theory of homosexuality as an acquired, neurotic condition forms the theoretical background of the narrative.

The avant-garde writer Witold Gombrowicz (1904–1969) was far more overt in his treatment of the homoerotic, first in his *Diary* of 1933 and then in *The Happenings on the Brig Banbury*, which deals with the sexual cravings of sailors that find expression in sexual contact between them. Inclined to mock the conventional patriotism and religiosity of his countrymen, he continued to write while in exile in Argentina during the war. His novel *Trans-Atlantic*, published in Paris in 1953, develops an amusing conflict situation with a gay character.

Jerzy Andrzejewski (1909–1983) was at first a supporter of the Communist regime, and then a leading dissident. His *Gates of Paradise* (1960), a historical novel

about the medieval children's crusade, includes a love affair between two young men. In a short story he retells the Biblical story of Cain and Abel, with the boys as lovers. *No One*, a particularly explicit homosexual retelling of the Odysseus story, was published posthumously in 1983. Despite the repressiveness of the military regime, other fictional works dealing with homosexuality have also been published.

The media have also shown a surprising openness. In 1974 Tadeusz Gorgol published a remarkably positive article in *Życie literackie*. At the end of the 1980s the Warsaw monthly *Relaks* began printing gay "contact" personal ads, though this policy was discontinued in July 1984. On November 23, 1985, Krzysztof Darski published in *Polityka* an article, "We Are Different," that called for a homophile organization. By 1988 informal gay groups had formed in Wrocław, Łódź, Gdańsk, and Warsaw. Information bulletins, however, are limited to a printing of one hundred copies to avoid censorship.

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POLICE

The regulation of sexual behavior would be incomplete without an administrative branch of government to enforce the laws on the statute books, and in Western society this task has traditionally fallen to the police. However, the police as an institution came into being only gradually, between the second half of the seventeenth century and the first half of the nineteenth.

The word stems from *politeia*, in turn derived from Greek *polis*, "city." Originally it referred to civic organization and administration as instruments for shaping citizenship and *politesse*. In French usage the meaning gradually narrowed

from this broad sense to the more specific denotation of the corps of agents who carried out the instructions of the lieutenant of police. Among the special functions of this authority was the suppression or at least the monitoring of vice, the so-called *police des mœurs*, out of which the English-speaking world developed the "morals squad" or "vice squad."

Functions and Practices. One of the primary tasks of this branch of the police force has always been the regulation of **prostitution**, at least to the extent that prostitutes had to be registered with the authorities and to confine their activities to certain areas of the city and particular times of day. Male prostitution far less often was controlled in this manner because the acts in which the prostitute and his client engaged were ipso facto criminal, quite apart from any payment which the hustler or call boy received, so that the whole relationship had to be exceedingly clandestine. And despite social disapproval and periodic campaigns aimed at driving **sodomy** out of existence, the principal cities of Europe from the late **Middle Ages** to the present have always had a homosexual **subculture** of parks, streets, taverns, and other places where men seeking partners of their own sex habitually congregated. These areas came under police surveillance, and at least from the early eighteenth century onward, the Paris police kept lists of such persons, even if it did not proceed to arrest them. These "homo-files," to use a modern play on words, often included the names of thousands of individuals from all classes of society. In 1725 Lieutenant General Lenoir estimated that there were 20,000 sodomites in Paris, and in 1783 Mouflage d'Angerville gave an account of a ledger in which the names of 40,000 pederasts were inscribed, "almost as many as there were whores."

Another practice of the police was entrapment, whereby a plainclothesman would encourage the victim to make an advance and then—often with accomplices