



AZANDE Press Zines  
(Incarcerated Black Queer Affirmations)

AZANDE Press Zine •issue #18

Titled, Gay Warriors, a crash intro featuring liberated facts about some of histories greatest warrior's that identified to some degree as, what we now view as LGBTQIA+, like, Alexander The Great, Shaka Zulu, Queen Nzinga, Sacred Band of Thebes, AZANDE Warriors, Knights Templar, and Karl-Maria Kertbeny. This issue was specifically designed for readers to fact check, engage critically, be affirmed and empowered.





*John Boswell*

**"Battle-Worn: Gays in the Military, 300 B.C."**

The most counterintuitive aspect of ancient same-sex eroticism is not its frequency, which is well known, but its long and hallowed relationship to democracy and military valor. Modern military officials tend to find this improbable or even unbelievable. But since sexual orientation was a matter of minor public and ethical concern to most of the city-states of the ancient world, and citizenship was a crucial privilege and obligation of all adult male citizens, many persons who might now be considered "gay" played prominent roles in the military, taking part in the earliest form of democracy through such involvement. A majority of the population of any ancient city-state—women, slaves, non-citizens—could not serve in the army; but they were not voting citizens anyway. Ancient city-states maintained the belief that all those who benefitted from the state had an obligation to defend it.

The association of homosexuals with democracy and the military was intense and widespread, extending from Harmodius and Aristogiton, a pair of lovers who were believed to have founded the Athenian democracy by concerted violence against the last tyrant, who tried to come between them, to the noted generals Pelopidas and Epaminondas, to the great military genius Alexander and his male lover Bagoas.



**Recommended Book**

*Print out and mail  
online to the incarcerated  
queer person  
in your life*

**Gay Warriors: A Documentary History from the Ancient World to the Present...**

Written by Burg, B. R., published by NYU Press (2001)





Sacred Band of Thebes — An Army of Gay That Defeated Spartans | by Krishna V Chaudhary | Lessons from History | Medium

Of Harmodius and Aristogiton, no less acute a mind than Plato's observed that:

Our own tyrants learned this lesson through bitter experience, when the love between Aristogiton and Harmodius grew so strong that it shattered their power. Wherever, therefore, it has been established that it is shameful to be involved in sexual relationships with men, this is due to evil on the part of the rulers, and to cowardice in the part of the governed.

In the same *Symposium* Phaedrus argued that no one's behavior is better than that of those who are in love (with other men), because they would rather behave badly in sight of father or comrade than in view of those they love. He even advanced the idea that:



If we could somehow contrive to have a city or an army composed of lovers and those they loved, they could not be better citizens of their country than by thus refraining from all that is base in a mutual rivalry for honor; and such men as these, when fighting side by side, one might almost consider able to make even a little band victorious over all the world. For a man in love would surely choose to have all the rest of the host rather than the one he loves see him forsaking his station or flinging away his arms; sooner than this, he would prefer to die many deaths: while as for leaving the one he loves in the lurch, or not succoring him in peril, no man is such a craven that the influence of Love cannot inspire him with a courage that makes him equal to the bravest born; and without doubt what Homer calls a "fury inspired" by a god in certain heroes is the effect produced on lovers by Love's peculiar power.

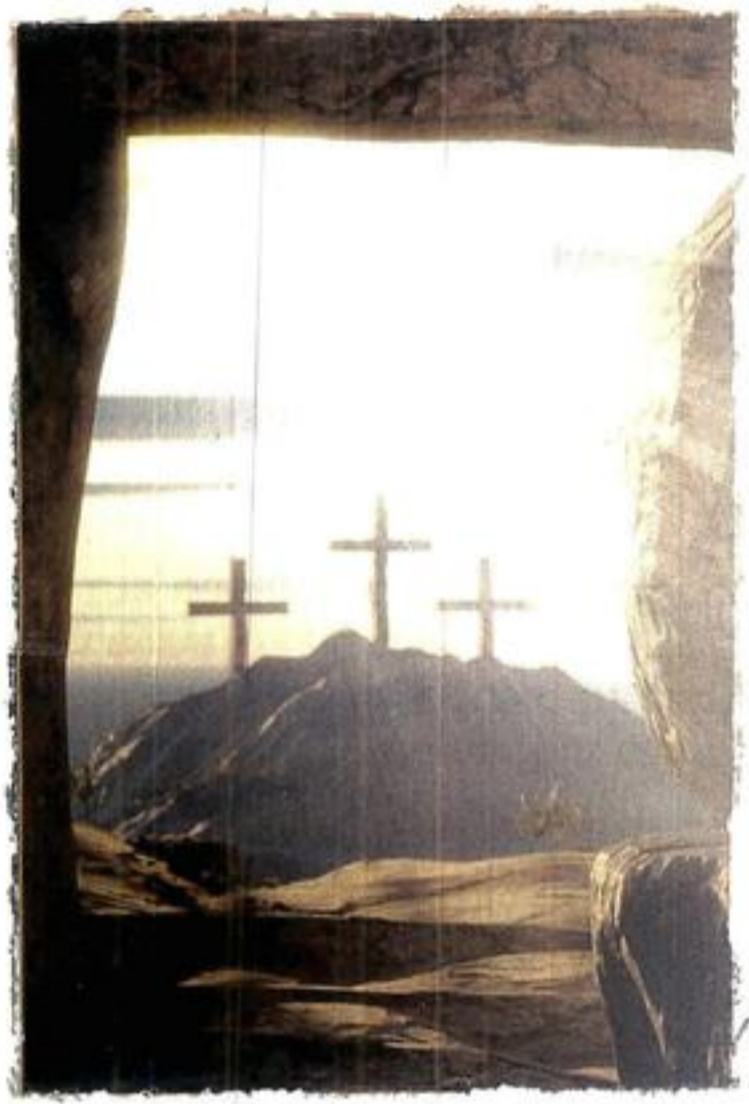
Moreover, only such as are in love will consent to die for others.

Perhaps inspired by this recommendation (although it merely expressed common sense in relation to the social relations of men in antiquity), about twenty years later (378 B.C.) the Theban leader Gorgidas did create such a company of 300 men, composed of pairs of lovers. They were known as the "sacred band" of Thebes, because, as Plutarch later explained, "even Plato calls the lover a friend 'inspired of God.'" Living long after, Plutarch was in a position to know

The idea that same-sex relationships would compromise the masculinity of military personnel and introduce morale problems is so fixed and unquestionable in the modern U.S. military establishment that this idealization of homosexual relationships in warrior societies may seem preposterous. And some thought it so in ancient times as well. Philip was aware of a contrary prejudice and condemned it vehemently when confronted with the dazzling courage of the Sacred Band. "It is not only the most warlike peoples, Boeotians, Spartans, Cretans, who are the most susceptible to [this kind] of love," noted Plutarch in recording Philip's opinion, "but also the greatest heroes of old: Meleager, Achilles, Aristomenes, Cimon, Epaminondas. Epaminondas, in fact, loved two men, Asopichus and Caphisodorus. The latter died with him at Mantinea and is buried close to him." In his "Life of Pelopidas"—a great military hero even among warlike peoples—Plutarch adds that "Iolaus, who shared the labors of Heracles and fought by his side, was beloved of him. And Aristotle says that even down to his day [fourth century B.C.] the tomb of Iolaus was a place where same-sex lovers plighted mutual faith."

In the *Symposium* Plato also cites the eagerness of the great warrior Achilles to join his military comrade Patroclus in death as an explicit parallel to a wife's being willing to die for her husband. Their bones were burned and mixed together in a golden amphora, as was often done in the case of married heterosexual couples.





Anne Gilmour-Bryson

"Sodomy and the Knights Templar"

In this article, I will analyze testimony relevant to the charges of the Inquisition that members of the order of Knights Templar throughout Christendom practiced homosexual acts of various sorts from illicit kisses to sodomy. I intend to examine the testimony of Templars in hearings that took place in France and Italy for the most part, since it was in these areas that confessions of guilt were given. My aim is to illustrate how members of the order reacted to the questions concerning these matters, how they described what occurred, and in what terms.

The Templar Order

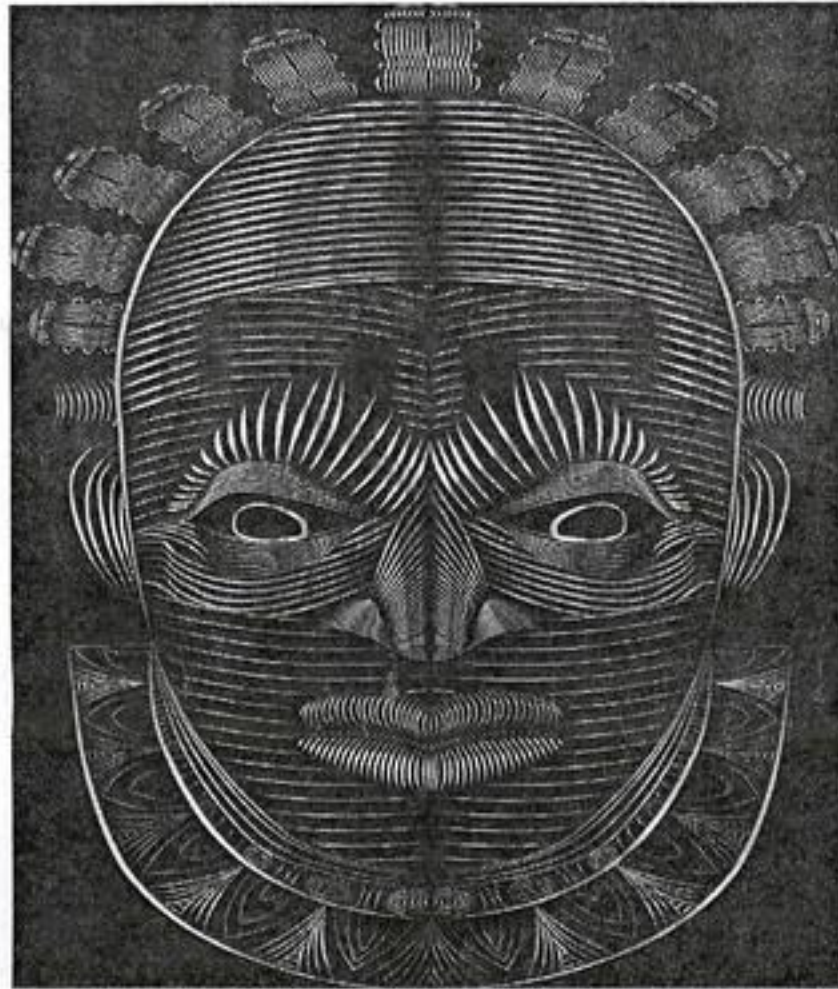
The Order of Knights Templar, founded in Jerusalem in 1120, became the Western world's first military order. Its exclusively male brethren were devoted to a dual role as members of a religious order who took the normal three vows of chastity, poverty, and obedience, but who also undertook a fighting role in the Holy Land. Their ideology can be seen both in the Templar Rule itself, and in Bernard of Clairvaux's highly idealized portrait of them written about 1128.

The Articles against Singular Persons

1. That at their reception, and some times after, and as soon as they could have conveniency for the same, they renounced Christ, or Jesus, or the person crucified or sometimes God, and sometimes the Blessed Virgin, and sometimes all the saints of God, being induced or admonished so to do by those who received them.
2. Item, That the brothers did this commonly.
3. Item, That the major part of them did it.
4. Item, That sometimes they did it after their reception.
5. Item, That the receivers said, and taught those that were received, that Christ was not true God, or sometimes Jesus, or sometimes the person crucified.
6. Item, That they told those they received that he was a false brother.
7. Item, That they said, he had not suffered for the redemption of mankind; nor been crucified, but for his own crimes.
8. Item, That neither the receivers, nor the persons received, had any hopes of obtaining salvation through him; and this they said to those they received, or something equivalent, or like to it.

- \*30. Item, That at the reception of brothers of the said order or about that time, the receiver sometimes and the person received, now and then kissed one another's mouths, navels, bare bellies and in the anus, or the backbone.
- \*31. Item, That sometimes in the navel.
- \*32. Item, That sometimes in the backbone.
- \*33. Item, That sometimes on the members, or yard.
34. Item, That at the reception they obliged those they received to swear, that they would not quit the order.
35. Item, That they presently regarded them as professed.
36. Item, That the receptions of their brothers were made clandestinely.
37. Item, That none were present but the brothers of the said order.
38. Item, That for this reason, there has been for a long time a vehement suspicion against the brothers of the said order.
39. Item, That the same were very common.
- \*40. Item, That they told the brothers they received, that they might have carnal copulation with one another.
- \*41. Item, That it was lawful for them to do so.
- \*42. Item, That they were to do this to one another, and to be passive.
- \*43. Item, That it was no sin among them to do this.
- \*44. Item, That they, or many of them, did this.
- \*45. Item, That some of them did it.





**Question**

06 Jun 2008



# Shaka Zulu?

I heard an argument that being gay is un-African and an 'import' from Europe, but then someone said that Shaka the Zulu king was gay, has anyone else heard this? Can it be true?

**Answer** 12,086 views



**Gay, lesbian and bisexual expert**

01 Jan 0001

Hi Duncan, welcome to the forum and thanks for an interesting post.

Yes - there is research indicating that Shaka was, at the very least, 'gay friendly'. Two theories: one is that he knew his warriors would fight better to protect a partner they loved, and the second is that during his army's long, extensive travels male-to-male sex and emotional bonding were tolerated. There is other evidence of same-sex relations in various African groupings - including same-sex relations between women