1988

The Murder of the Father: Readings in Sade, Balzac and Proust.

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Louisiana State University and Agricultural & Mechanical College

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The murder of the father: Readings in Sade, Balzac and Proust

Saylor, Douglas Brian, Ph.D.
The Louisiana State University and Agricultural and Mechanical Col., 1988

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UMI
The Murder of the Father: 
Readings in Sade, Balzac 
and Proust

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the 
Louisiana State University and 
Agricultural and Mechanical College 
in partial fulfillment of the 
requirements for the degree of 
Doctor of Philosophy 

in 
The Department of French and Italian

by

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May, 1988
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The "sadomasochistic homotext" is a text in which sadomasochism, homosexuality, the place of the father, and the perversion of language intersect. In the sadomasochistic homotext, a rebellious group seeks to usurp the authority of the father through a perversion of language.

Perversion, however, is constituted in language, and etymologies reveal that terms for homosexuality were created in the late Middle Ages and mid-nineteenth centuries. Medieval thought links homosexuality with heresy; the nineteenth century labels it "illness."

Plato's Aristophanes states that original humans were cut in half, and each half seeks the other. This division caused a disruption of language as well. Freud refers back to this myth, suggesting an original bisexuality. Homosexuality and matriarchy represent a challenge to the law of the Father.

The noblemen of the Chateau de Silling and the personages of the Boudoir act as the rebellious primal horde, revolting against the Father's law. But Sadian characters do not seek to overthrow the Father's law: they
aspire to his place. Sade sets himself up as an author(ity) by the act of writing.

Vautrin sets himself up as "Father" to Rastignac and Lucien; his entourage is a manifestation of the primal horde. Vautrin and Goriot reveal the subtly sexual nature of paternity. Vautrin ultimately becomes a policeman, revealing the complementary nature of good and evil in the text. Criminals have their own inverted language, and the true perversion of the text is the perversion of the Word.

Marcel, the narrator of A la recherche du temps perdu, has a voyeuristic relationship with homosexuality. Homosexuality is presented in an ambivalent manner. On the one hand, homosexuals represent a separate race, a third sex. But by the end of the novel, almost everyone is suspected of homosexuality. Inversion is a linguistic phenomenon as well as a social fact.

The sadomasochistic homotext functions in both a reactionary and radical way. It is radical because it is a reaction against the arbitrary nature of the system, conservative because it is symptomatic of the system and its arbitrariness, a reaction to the system which is a necessary part of that system.
Chapter 1  Sadomasochism and Homosexuality

1. Introduction

Sadomasochism, homosexuality, the role of paternity, and the problems of language are important aspects of the texts of Sade, Balzac, and Proust. The purpose of this study is to examine the presence and operation of these forces, implicit in certain French texts. The works of the Marquis de Sade seem the logical beginning point of our analysis. Many critics feel that Sade is the instigator of a new literature in which Sadian personages, enraged against authority, repeatedly attempt to usurp the place of the primeval Father. Balzac and Proust might be considered, in some sense, Sade's children, as this same struggle can be seen in their works. The texts to be examined are Sade's Philosophie dans le boudoir and 120 jours de Sodome, Balzac's Le Père Goriot, Illusions perdues, and Splendeurs et misères des courtisanes, and Proust's Du côté de chez Swann, Sodome et Gomorrhe, Le temps retrouvé, and other parts of A la recherche du temps perdu. At first glance it may seem that this choice is arbitrary, but the similarities in these texts speak loudly and allow them to be considered as an ensemble. In fact, the rapport between homosexuality, sadomasochism, the significance of the father, and the place of language in these texts suggests that they be considered
as a sub-genre, which might be called the "sadomasochistic homotext."

In our reading of the sadomasochistic homotext, we will rely on the discourse of psychoanalysis to provide a theoretical framework. The writings of Freud, whose model of the murder of the father helps to explicate the texts, will frequently be cited. In general, from the late eighteenth century, Sade’s epoch, to the early twentieth century, Proust’s time, medicine and psychology were as concerned with homosexuality as was literature. Some of the prevalent sociological mythologies of homosexuality will be examined as well as their impact on the writings considered in this study: a reflection of the "scientific" writings of homosexuality can be seen in this literature.

The nomenclature "sadomasochistic homotext" is problematic. One aspect of the sadomasochistic homotext is a revolt against father figures of authority and power. Using the paradigm of the murder of the primal father by Freud, we will examine texts in which this symbolic strategy takes place. In the sadomasochistic homotext, a group (like Freud’s rebellious, homosexual band of brothers) seek to usurp the place of the father. This rebellion is always doomed to failure: it is impossible to accede to the place of the dead father.

This rebellion is constituted in language and is not just a narrative structure. In the works of Sade, the
blending of discourses epitomizes rebellion against all forms of hierarchy: no discourse is privileged. Balzac makes a mockery of what he calls "sacred nomenclature": in his writing the name (le nom) is constantly disfigured. The narrative rebellion in the works of Proust is mirrored by continual lies, where words say one thing and mean quite another. Transgression is a linguistic figure in these texts in addition to being a narrative phenomenon. Before considering sadomasochism and the law of the Father, the concept of homotextuality must be examined.

"Homotextuality" is both a rhetorical and thematic concept. It comes from the Greek stem "hemos," "same," so closely associated with "homosexuality," "homo-erotica," etc., combined with the Latin suffix "textus." "Textus" means texture, structure, context, and derives from "texere," which means to weave or compose. Thus, the concept of homotextuality proposed here suggests the way in which homosexuality is interwoven in a text. "Homotextuality" is the literary representation of the sociological phenomenon of homosexuality. It is a term to be used when discussing literary texts.

Jacob Stockinger argues for the use of the term "homotextuality" because of what he calls the "heterosexual assumption." All texts are heterotexts according to Stockinger; there is no need to talk of "heterotextuality," since it is presumed. The heterosexual
assumption affects all aspects of life (sex education should really be called heterosexual education), including literary criticism. "Virtually all discussions of sexual symbolism in literary works are accompanied by a heterosexually biased innuendo" (Stockinger, p. 138). Homotextuality is a useful term, which calls attention to the minority sexuality of the text. At a later point we shall be examining some of the ways in which homosexuality and its literary correlative, homotextuality, overlap.

Sade, Balzac and Proust all link homosexuality with sadomasochism. Many sexologists of the nineteenth century made an association between the two: Magnus Hirschfeld noted that many male homosexuals were excited by the bloody representations of Saint Sebastian; Yukio Mishima, in the Confessions of a Mask writes: "in the overwhelming majority of cases of inversion, especially of congenital inversion, the inverted and the sadistic impulses are inextricably entangled with each other."³ For Freud, both sadomasochism and homosexuality represent early stages in development. At this point it is necessary to examine the sadomasochistic aspect of the sadomasochistic homotext.

The term sadism obviously comes from the Marquis de Sade. According to Dr. Iwan Bloch, it was the psychologist Marciaf who appropriated the family name of the Marquis for this phenomenon.⁴ The corollary process, masochism, derives from Leopold von Sacher-Masoch, a nineteenth-century
Chevalier and writer. Born in 1836, some of his more famous works were *The Separated Wife*, *Legacy of Cain*, *Hungary’s Decline*, and *Jewish Tales*. Throughout these texts appears his ideal fantasy, the "Venus in Furs." Von Sacher-Masoch’s favorite paradigm is the weak man who signs himself over in slavery to a dominant woman, who will wear furs and beat him. His algolagnia (pleasure in suffering pain) apparently derived from a childhood fascination with his aunt, who once kicked him for kissing her slippers. At a later date, he watched this woman, Zenobia, have an extra-marital affair. Little Leopold’s vantage point was his aunt’s closet full of furs. Her husband intruded upon the scene, the lover fled, and Zenobia proceeded to thrash her ill-timed husband. Leopold was discovered masturbating in the closet and beaten as well. Throughout his adult life Sacher-Masoch desperately sought to re-enact this scene, paying young men to cuckold him, and bribing women to beat him. Like Sade, however, his private life paled compared to his writing. Sacher-Masoch had great difficulty in finding participants for his little dramas, and found his sexual experiences disappointing. He did not find in his wife, Wanda von Dunayev, the dominatrix he sought, and she quickly bored of her husband’s invariant recipe for pleasure.

There are several striking similarities between the men who gave their names to similar perversions. Both were noblemen, and as such they exemplified a conviction of the
bourgeois nineteenth century, namely that all noblemen were perverts. Both were writers, and their literary creations are filled with sexual excesses that are not necessarily found in their private lives. Nonetheless, their names are associated with the activities they recorded in fiction. The Marquis de Sade was not a brutal monster; he was imprisoned for his "moderation" during the Revolution, and he was against the death penalty (see Cleugh, p. 127). He freely admitted to his wife that he was a libertine, and enjoyed organizing orgies at the Chateau de La Coste. There is no evidence to support a view of him as a murderous madman. Likewise, the Chevalier von Sacher-Masoch's passion for algolagnia was rarely satisfied in his private life, but nonetheless he gives his family name to an activity he writes about. Thus, sadism and masochism have a strange rapport with literature: they derive their nomenclature from novels, not actual case histories. We have insisted upon the term homotextuality to refer to the literary depiction of homosexuality, but sadism and masochism are already in the literary plane. Furthermore, it is interesting to note that the author is held "accountable" for the actions of his characters: sadism and masochism are not named for the characters in the novels who practice these activities. They are named for the authors, who may or may not have had the same tendencies.
Freud and sexologists frequently linked sadism and masochism, using the term sadomasochism (see The Language of Psychoanalysis, p.401). Sadism could be cursorily defined as aggression, especially sexual, directed towards the other, while masochism is aggression directed toward the self. Freud and Laplanche demonstrate the similarity of the two, and a phrase of Sacher-Masoch's exemplifies this: he writes "my cruel ideal woman is for me simply the instrument with which I terrorize myself" (see Cleugh, p. 205). In this phrase, the subject "I" is also the object, "myself," and thus it is revealed that masochism is sadism directed toward the self. In Vie et mort en psychanalyse Laplanche discusses Freud's complex writings on sadomasochism. Freud addresses the subject in Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality, "Instincts and their Vicissitudes," "The Economic Problem in Masochism," the New Introductory Lectures, "On Narcissism," Beyond the Pleasure Principle, and other places. In Beyond the Pleasure Principle Freud links sadism with the death instinct: sadism and aggression represent the pulsion to return to nothingness.

According to Freud, via Laplanche, the first impulse of the child is "hetero-aggression." These psychoanalysts claim that the child's aggressiveness is turned outwards, towards the Other. The child wants to control the object of his desire, the mother. Later in life, this sadism becomes competitiveness, assertiveness, etc. But, through a certain
inversion, an intermediate stage, this violence is directed inwards, and becomes focused against the self: hence the sadist becomes the masochist. For Laplanche, the starting point "A" is hetero-aggression, "B" is the reversal point, and "C" is the final outcome, self-aggression or masochism. Sadomasochism is related to the law of the Father, a subject which we will examine in the next chapter.

In *Civilization and its Discontents* and *Moses and Monotheism*, Freud discusses the role of the father in the transformation from sadism to masochism. Naturally the child directs some of its hostility toward the father, who is the obstacle in his relationship to the mother. The father represents punishment to the child, and the child incorporates the father's law in his own superego, which punishes him for his hatred of the father. According to Freud, the ego becomes masochistic under the influence of the sadistic superego. The superego is the internalized locus of the law of the father. Lacan, who re-interpreted Freud in the mid-twentieth century, speaks of the symbolic law of the father. For Lacan, the law of the Father is the symbolic dimension of the father, and he never gives a final, definitive definition of this law. It is inscribed in the unconscious, as well as in language, and revolt against this symbolic father is impossible.

Before an examination of the role of the father, and the development of a theoretical model from which to examine
the texts, we will examine the semantics of homosexuality, and we will take a brief look at some of the modern (late eighteenth, nineteenth and early twentieth-century) medical, political, and sociological fictions surrounding homosexuality. These considerations will help us to understand the milieu in which Sade, Balzac and Proust wrote, and the scientific ideas which influenced them.

II. The Invention of Homosexuality

Faggot, fairy, queer, queen, bulldike. Lesbian, Lesbienne, tribade, femme damnée. Pédéraste, tante, folle, bougre. Buggery, sodomy. Catamite. Homosexual, homosexuel, invert, inverti. Gay. The list of signifiers in both French and English is prolific: ranging from the vulgar to the medical, these substantives describe something often seen as unspeakable or unwriteable. Homosexuality has been called "the love that dare not speak its name." Yet it is strange that something not fit to be named should have such a multitude of terms unless these signifiers can be understood as attempts to define something undefinable as well as taboo.

An examination of French and English dictionaries yields confusing and contrary information with regard to the "proper" medical, Latinate terms dealing with the subject.
Many of the English terms dealing with homosexuality are French in origin. According to The Oxford Universal Dictionary (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1933, re-published in 1961), the word "bugger" entered the English language as a legal term for certain homosexual relations between males in 1555, coming from the French word "bougre." Oscar Bloch and W. Von Wartburg, authors of the Dictionnaire Etymologique de la langue française, (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1932), write that "bougre" entered the French language in 1172, coming from the Latin term "bulgarus," a Bulgarian. It is also related to the term "Bogomiles," a sect of the Cathars. Thus, deviant sexuality is associated with social or religious deviance. 12 The word "hérétique" derives from the words "(h)erege" and "herite." Bloch notes that "herite" was synonymous with "sodomite." (Both "herite" and "sodomite" appear in the twelfth-century Roman de Renart.) Thus, heresy and sodomy are related. Certainly religion has always legislated sexual behavior, and it is not surprising that forbidden sexual acts are considered in the same league as forbidden beliefs. "Buggery" has remained as a legal term in both American and British courts.

The word "catamite" also has an ancient history: it comes from the Latin word catamitus, from the proper name Ganymede, the beautiful young boy abducted by Zeus. It entered the English language in 1593. Although it derives
from the Latin, there is no modern French equivalent to "catamite," which the Oxford Universal Dictionary defines as a "boy kept for unnatural purposes." It is interesting to note that this word has a mythological (fictional) origin.

The English word "sodomite" came from the French in 1474, according to the Oxford Universal Dictionary. Bloch dates its appearance in French to the twelfth century; Larousse specifies the year 1160 (Larousse, Paris: Librairie Larousse, 1975). The word "sodomie" did not enter the language until the fourteenth century, according to Bloch, and Larousse dates it at 1393 (some critics date the word as early as 1200). Bloch states that both words come from "Sodome, nom d'une ville où regnait la luxure."

"Sodome," "sodomie," "sodomite," all these terms clearly come from the story of Lot in Genesis 19. In this biblical myth, while two angels visited Lot in Sodom, the men of Sodom called out to him asking him to bring the two visitors out so that they might "know them" (see Genesis 19:5). The word used for "to know," in Hebrew, "yadha," occasionally has sexual connotations. In about half of the several dozen times it is used in the Old Testament it has a sexual meaning. The story is definitely ambiguous: when Sodom is referred to subsequently in the Bible, homosexuality is not associated with it. When Jesus refers to Sodom, he uses it as a metaphor of inhospitality. John Boswell, in Christianity, Social Tolerance and Homosexuality, and
Derrick Bailey in *Homosexuality and the Western Christian Tradition* both analyze the change the Sodom story undergoes in Christian tradition. After the Middle Ages, Sodom came to be associated with deviant sexuality. So the use of Sodom as a synonym for homosexuality is based on a convenient interpretation, a re-reading of a myth.

It is interesting to note, throughout these terms dating from the late Middle Ages, that crimes against religion are so linked with crimes "against nature." The punishment for witchcraft, heresy and sodomy was the same: all offenders were burned. Up until the twelfth century these "crimes" remained unpunished: from the late Middle Ages until the eighteenth century, innumerable "witches," "heretics" and homosexuals were burned. In the reports of the inquisitors, homosexuality is constantly associated with the "witches." Some estimate that in a given two-hundred-year period, nine million people were burned at the stake as witches. Most of the "witches" were women; the number of men burned as sodomites has not been estimated. The American term "fag" or "faggot" for a male homosexual is a trace of the fate that awaited countless deviants: being burned.

The French term "pédérate," another term from the remote past appears in 1580, coming from the Greek *paiderastes*. In French it does not have the connotation of a man/boy relationship that it has in English, and in
current French argot, the abbreviation "pédé" is commonly used to refer to a male homosexual. It is also from the Greek that the term "tribade" for a female homosexual derives. It entered French in 1568 from the Greek *tribein*, to rub. It came into English in the same century, along with the words "tribadism," and "tribady."

Some popular terms for lesbianism have their roots in literature. The expression "femme damnée" for a female homosexual is an example of this: it comes from Diderot’s novel *La religieuse*. Baudelaire used the term as a title for two of his poems about lesbianism; it is used in Sartre’s *Huis-clos*. In Diderot’s eighteenth century "libertine" novel, the young heroine, Suzanne, goes through a variety of horrors in her life as a nun. She encounters a vicious and sadistic Mother Superior at the convent Longchamp, Mother Sainte-Christine. She is taken away from this hostile environment and put in the convent of Sainte-Eutrope. Critics have long been puzzled by the name of this convent: Saint Eutrope was a male saint, but Diderot feminizes his name. Vivienne Mylne, in her book on *La religieuse* writes: "Diderot erroneously wrote ‘Ste Eutrope’ apparently thinking that the saint in question was feminine. I shall follow the usual practice of giving the correct form of the name."¹⁹ This "error" of Diderot’s is very significant: it is at this place of confused sexual identity that Suzanne encounters a Mother Superior who is
lesbian and who makes overtures to her. Suzanne virtuously but kindly refuses, and the Mother Superior dies, declaring on her deathbed, "Mon père, je suis damnée" [Father, I am damned].

The terms "lesbian," "lesbienne," "sapphic," and "sapphique" were used in both French and English since the sixteenth century, but they had no real sexual connotations until the nineteenth. The 1933 edition of the Oxford English Dictionary lists them both, but gives them no sexual inference. Until the nineteenth century, lesbian meant "pertaining to Lesbos," and "sapphic" was an adjective used to describe a certain poetic meter. Gradually in the nineteenth century these words began to have sexual meanings in medical journals.

Very little is known about the historical Sappho. She was a poet of the sixth century B.C. on the isle of Lesbos. According to the research of Jeffrey Duban, she was married to a wealthy merchant named Cercolas and had a daughter, Cleis. Legend has it that she had a girl's school, and one frequently hears of Sappho's circle. This idea comes from the work of the famous classical scholar Ulrich von Wilamowitz-Moellendorff, who believed that Sappho ran a kind of religious boarding school. The Greek word for this kind of association is thiasos, and modern critics do not necessarily adhere to the boarding school theory, since the word thiasos, which would indicate this type of bond is
never used in Sappho’s texts. Instead, Sappho uses the word hetairai, or companions, which connotes a close relationship. While the school theory has been abandoned by scholars, it has remained an intimate association with Sappho.

Roman poets heterosexualized Sappho. Both Menander and Ovid wrote of Sappho’s burning love for Phaon, resulting in her jump from the Leucadian heights. In Menander’s Leukadia as well as Ovid’s Sappho-Phaon Epistle this jump is mentioned. It is from Ovid that we get the idea of Sappho as a very slight unattractive woman whose only redeeming quality is her poetic voice. According to Duban, Sappho’s plunge from the cliff for love of Phaon may have had its origin in an ancient sacrificial rite performed at a temple to Apollo on top of the Leucadian promontory, and it may be related to Aphrodite’s leap for Phaethon (both names mean "bright" in Greek).

In the same way that the Roman poets "heterosexualized" Sappho, nineteenth-century scholars tried to rehabilitate Sappho and ignore the clear lesbian overtures of her poetic fragments. Prudish readers of the poet went to great lengths to make her acceptable, and one finds this kind of denial in editions of Sappho’s work through the 1920’s.

The word "homosexual" is very problematic. According to the Oxford Universal Dictionary, it entered the English language in 1897, from an "irregular" root. The word was
invented in 1869 by the Hungarian writer, Karoly Maria Benkert, who wrote a paper on the subject, under the pseudonym Kertbeny. Its prefix is from the Greek word "homo," meaning "same" (homogeneous, homonym, etc.) added to the Latin suffix "sexus." Ten years after it appeared in English, it appeared in French, according to Larousse, who dates the French word "homosexuel" at 1907. In the Paul Robert Dictionary, sanctioned by the Académie Française, the word "homosexuel" is dated at 1906. This dictionary lists a variety of synonyms for homosexual, including the word "inverti," which we will examine at a later point. The antonym for homosexuality is the strange word "heterosexual": while listed as an antonym, it is not in the dictionary anywhere else. Monique Wittig, in "Paradigm," explains: "The concept of heterosexuality was created in the French language in 1911. It corresponds to an effort at normalizing the dominant sexuality undertaken particularly by psychoanalysis, despite its pretensions to being a revolutionary science." This link between heterosexuality and psychoanalysis is very important: the terms "homosexuality," "invert," and "heterosexual" are all legacies of turn-of-the-century psychoanalysis. Foucault, in Histoire de la sexualité, comments in great length upon the nineteenth century's compulsion to classify deviance. The Librairie Larousse dictionary upholds Wittig's statement and dates "heterosexualité" at 1911, while the adjective and
noun "heterosexuel" does not appear until 1948. So, for thirty-seven years, the concept of heterosexuality flourished, even though there were no "heterosexuels" actually to practice it. (The Dictionnaire Etymologique does not list either "homo-" or "heterosexuel." ) The Oxford Universal Dictionary, while containing the word "homosexual," does not list either heterosexuality or heterosexual; one must turn to the 1976 Supplement to the Oxford English Dictionary. The Supplement dates both homo- and heterosexuality to the year 1892, when they appeared in C. G. Chaddock's translation of Krafft-Ebing's Psychopathia Sexualis. The 1970 Webster's New World Dictionary lists both homosexual and heterosexual, but does not date them. In addition, the Webster's New World Dictionary lists "homophile" and "homoeroticism." It does not list the 1967 creation of Dr. George Weinberg, "homophobia;" the widespread success of Weinberg's book Society and the Healthy Homosexual introduced the word "homophobie" into French (see the introduction to the 1983 edition of this book).25

Before "homosexuality," psychiatrists spoke of "inverts," the term that Freud uses the most. Larousse dates the use of the word "inverti" in a sexual sense at 1902; the Robert dictionary dates the use of the word
"inveri" "comme homosexuel" at 1907. The Oxford Universal Dictionary does not list "invert" as a noun, but once again, if we turn to the 1976 Supplement, we find the word, dated to an 1897 work of Havelock Ellis. According to Paul Dupont, "inveri" comes from the Latin word "invertere," a common word in Latin, but rare in French until the nineteenth century. The Latin "invertere" means "retourner", in all its senses. Thus, it seems that an invert is one who is "inside out" as well as one who has returned. But returned to what? That is where we may speculate, examining both psychoanalysis and myth. "Inverts" have returned to a former era, the bisexual age Freud writes about in Totem and Taboo. This early stage of bisexuality in pre-history corresponds to the "polymorphous perverse" stage of undifferentiated sexuality in the child. (The term "invert," like the term "uranian," to mean "homosexual," has fallen into disuse.)

It is unclear how long the term "gay" has been used to mean homosexual. In the nineteenth century, Whitman uses the word in a letter, and admits going to the "gay places." In 1922, Gertrude Stein's "Miss Furr and Miss Skeene" also uses the word, possibly in its modern sense. Many linguists believe that "gay" came from the Gothic word "gāheis," meaning "impetuous." Although Larousse and Webster still mention this as the origin of the word, its actual source is
greatly debated. It entered the French language in 1175, and its date of entry into English is not known. "Gai" is related to the Old Provençal word "quai," and cognates are found in the Old Spanish "gayo," the Portuguese "gaio," the Italian "gaio," and the German "jah." The English word, since 1637, according to the Oxford Universal Dictionary has been euphemistic of "immoral life." A "gay" woman was a woman of loose morals. It is possible that the word has had its present meaning for only a certain group of people; it may have served as a private password.

Lexical evidence strongly suggests that terms for homosexuality were either introduced in the Middle Ages or else created in the nineteenth century. It is during the Middle Ages that the Church began to lose its power, and civil authorities claimed jurisdiction over crimes that the Church alone had tried. In the sixteenth century, one first begins to see laical persecutions of homosexuals. In the nineteenth century, medicine and psychology took up again the war against the homosexuals. (See Foucault, vol. 1.) Bullough notes that in the years between 1898 and 1908, approximately one thousand articles on homosexuality were published, mainly in medical and psychological journals. If psychiatric findings on homosexuality met with little resistance from the public, it was because they came to conclusions similar to those of the Church. Instead of being a sin, homosexuality was an illness.
being morally transgressive, homosexuality became a medical problem.

During the eighteenth century, homosexuality was regarded ambivalently. Libertines of the eighteenth century enjoyed all forms of non-procreative sex. For the libertine, influenced by Enlightenment philosophy, the Church's views on sexuality no longer held true. The eighteenth century was a time of sexual exploration and celebration. Sex was at the center of "art, gastronomy, fashion, and literature."30 But the eighteenth century was also the "age of confinement," as Foucault points out in Histoire de la folie à l'âge classique. Some homosexuals (the "lucky" ones who weren't burned alive) were put in places like the Bastille and Bicêtre, where "curative" as well as punitive measures were taken.31

There was a great contradiction between philosophical enlightenment regarding sexuality and actual legal practice of the eighteenth century. While the Church no longer legislated morality, aberrance was punished. While Sade could be read with delight in certain circles, he nonetheless spent the major portion of his life in prison. The treatment of homosexuals was related to the treatment of prostitutes during this period. Dupin, the Commissioner of the Department of the Seine reported in 1798 that "Sodomy and sapphic love have also appeared with the same boldness until they are as prevalent as prostitution" (Bloch, p.
Iwan Bloch has called the eighteenth century the "Golden Age of Prostitution." Many of the finest bordellos were protected by the police, but individual prostitutes were often punished, and some sent to New Orleans. Clearly the greatest arbitrariness appeared in the punishment of "vice:" finally at the end of the century, in the Constitution of 1791, homosexuality was decriminalized, and put on an equal basis with heterosexuality. The last public burning of a homosexual had occurred just seven years earlier. The Code Napoléon maintained the legal rights of homosexuals, and criminal persecution of homosexuals ended in all the European countries that retained that system of laws.

Although politically homosexuals were liberated at the end of the eighteenth century, socially and medically they were not. Homosexuality, in the minds of the masses, was associated with the decadent aristocracy. Stockinger, in "Homosexuality and the French Enlightenment," notes that even the most "tolerant" minds scorned homosexuality in their criticism of the church and the nobility. (Freud, in Three Contributions on the Theory of Sex, written a century after the French Revolution, notes that there is still a high amount of inversion among the aristocracy, and blames this on the fact that the boys spend too much time around the men. Freud writes: "the frequency of inversion in the present day nobility is probably explained by their
employment of male servants, and by the scant care that mothers of that class give to their children. It is a highly unlikely reason, which seems most un-Freudian, but reveals the idea that homosexuality is linked with the upper classes.)

The rise of capitalism had a definite effect upon sexuality. Sex became dependent upon a certain "performance principle," which demanded that sex be limited to genital relations between members of different sexes. Bayer writes that "Only in that way could the body be desexualized and made available for work. Only heterosexuality could guarantee the reproduction of labor so necessary for the conquest of nature" (Bayer, p. 5). Foucault also writes of the necessity to "reproduce the labor force" (p. 51). The nineteenth century saw the body symbolically as a machine that could reproduce itself. Industrialization affected all aspects of life, including sexuality. Non-industrial societies tend to view sex, both homosexual and heterosexual, as an activity of pleasure as well as a symbolic ritual. The concept of sex for pleasure has been revived recently by sexual research which dispels the myth of the vaginal orgasm, indicating that the woman's true sexual organ is her clitoris, thus revealing that the goal of sex is not procreation, but pleasure. The idea of sex for pleasure, so abhorred by Church and government, is closely linked with homosexual activity. Since procreation
is impossible between two members of the same sex, clearly
the only reason for coming together is pleasure. This
pleasure is illicit, especially to the nineteenth century
capitalist mind, because it doesn't "produce" anything.

At the beginning of the nineteenth century, doctors
were loath to speak about the "nauseating" phenomenon of
homosexuality for fear they would be defiled by the mere
mention of the subject. Dr. Fournier-Pescay, in his 1819
_Dictionnaire des sciences medicales_, proclaimed that
although he wrote about the subject, his pen nonetheless
remained "chaste."³⁵ Carl Westphal (1833-1890), a Berlin
psychiatrist, is considered to be the first person on the
Continent to study homosexuality on a true scientific level.
Westphal had developed a classification for the variety of
homosexual activities, and concluded that homosexuality was
innate and hereditary. Richard von Krafft-Ebing, in his
_Psychopathia Sexualis_ (Stuttgart, 1886), continues the trend
of classifying and listing sexual "deviance." Krafft-Ebing
divides sexual minorities into various categories:
pederast, homosexual, and invert. Foucault notes that
science, from the mid-nineteenth century on, was obsessed
with classifying all forms of deviance. This mania for
classification can be seen in the literature of the period.

In the late nineteenth century, Jean Martin Charcot,
one of Freud's professors, and a director of the
Salpetrière, along with his colleague Valentin Magnan,
claimed that homosexuality was inherited because hypnosis failed to change the subject's sexual orientation. Paul Moreau, on the other hand, attributed homosexuality to environmental as well as hereditary factors.

During this time, homosexuals came to be perceived as "different" and "special." Karl Ulrichs, one of the founders of the movement for homosexual rights, (he was himself homosexual), saw homosexuals as hybrids: homosexual men had women's souls trapped in their bodies, and lesbians possessed the male soul in a female body. Ulrichs most important work was Memnon, (1868) in which the male homosexual character was defined in the Latin phrase "anima muliebris virili corpore inclusa," or "the soul of a woman enclosed in the body of a man." Ulrichs developed the concept of the "zwischenstufen," or the "third sex." Later scientists discarded this notion, but it greatly influenced writers and activists of the day. Ulrichs also coined the term "uranian" for homosexual, from an allusion to Uranus in the Symposium. Havelock Ellis and Magnus Hirschfeld, (a homosexual and a transvestite), early activists of the homosexual rights movement, upheld the notion of the "third sex," and in their writings emphasized the idea that homosexuality was genetic, and that homosexuals were "different."

Freud certainly did not perceive homosexuals as "special" or members of a "third sex." He attributed
homosexuality to both hereditary and environmental factors. Freud's more or less final ideas about homosexuality can be found in his famous 1935 "Letter to An American Mother." In this letter he writes, "Homosexuality is assuredly no advantage, but it is nothing to be ashamed of, no vice, no degradation, it cannot be classified as an illness; we consider it to be a variation of the sexual function produced by a certain arrest of sexual development." The idea of an arrested development has been seized upon by certain American psychiatrists to prove that homosexuals are immature or defective: Freud is merely referring to the stage of bisexuality in children and "primitive" tribes.

Freud believed strongly in the legal emancipation of homosexuals. As early as 1903 he had given an interview to Die Zeit, a Viennese newspaper, saying "It is a great injustice to persecute homosexuality as a crime, and cruelty too... I advocate the standpoint that the homosexual does not belong before the tribunal of a court of law" (Abelove, p. 60). Yet Freud never joined political groups which advocated homosexual rights, although he was asked to do so. Freud was as uncomfortable with the ideologies of the homosexual rights movement as with the socialist movement. Freud writes in the "Letter" that "the blighted germs of heterosexual tendencies... are present in every homosexual" (Abelove, p. 59). Likewise, all heterosexuals have made unconscious homosexual object choices. Just as all
homosexuals have some degree of heterosexual desire, so all heterosexuals possess some homosexual desire. This desire is usually sublimated in heterosexuals, or can be seen in close same-sex friendships. For Freud, people are originally bisexual, and they carry this predisposition with them through life. Freud anticipates Kinsey, who in his 1948 *Sexual Behavior in the Human Male* creates a continuum of sexuality, ranging from zero to six, where the zero end represents extreme heterosexuality, and the six end complete homosexuality.  

Medical and social views of homosexuality vary greatly from the late eighteenth to the early twentieth century. The writers we are considering all show a marked influence from the mythologies of homosexuality of their day. In Sade, for instance, the word "bougre" is occasionally used by men who practice anal intercourse, but these men are not truly defined by their sexual practices. In Sade's world, sodomy is an act rather than a condition. (Foucault writes that the pre-modern world saw sodomy as a "lapse" rather than a personality.) In the nineteenth century this view changes, and homosexuals are seen as special, or different. Vautrin, for instance, "doesn't like women." He is limited and defined by his sexual proclivities. In Proust both views are upheld: homosexuals are presented as being descendants of Sodom, and as a distinct group. But Proust undermines this rhetoric towards the end of the *Recherche*.
where almost all of the major characters are suspected of bisexuality. Homosexuality and sadomasochism are major issues for all three writers as is the transgression of the law of the Father. Homosexuality, or non-productive sexual pleasure, could be seen as a slap in the face of the Father, but sadomasochism is the Father's revenge. The pleasure of homosexuality is punished by the pain of sadomasochism. Sadomasochism is the means by which the super-ego, the internalized locus of the Father's law, punishes deviance.

In the next chapter we will examine in detail the law of the Father, and look at a theoretical framework with which to examine our texts.

Summing up several important connections, we can note that homosexuality is associated with religious and social deviance: heresy and sodomy are related in the Middle Ages. Homosexuality has mythical origins, as lexical evidence suggests: the term "catamite" hearkens back to Ganymede, and "sodomite" refers to a late interpretation of the biblical story of Sodom and Gomorrha. Terms surrounding lesbianism also date from the mythic past: a variety of legends surround Sappho and the isle of Lesbos. Freud as well links homosexuals with an ancient past, suggesting they are remnants of a former, bisexual era. In the nineteenth century, when discourse concerning homosexuality blossomed, homosexuals were seen as a kind of "third sex." Freud dispels this notion, claiming that everyone is homosexual to
some degree.

III Conclusions

The nineteenth century saw a great awakening of interest in homosexuality, although the conclusions drawn by the medicine of the time did not greatly differ from the religious perspective of the Middle Ages, the other great time of interest in the subject. It is during both epochs that neologisms were created for the phenomena of same-sex sexual intimacy; while the Middle Ages burned its "faggots," the nineteenth often incarcerated its inverts. In the nineteenth century, homosexuals represented "stunted development," "fixation," or as Freud believed, the remnant of a former age of bisexuality. The threat of homosexuality is its association with the past age: the reminder that things were once very different reveals the arbitrary nature of the system. Freud suggests that before patriarchy, the law of the Mother prevailed; Earth and Fertility goddesses were the center of worship. In the mythical world of matriarchy, homosexuality was associated with the concept of sex for pleasure.

This study is concerned with the "sadomasochistic homotext." This is a thematic category of narrative: the sadomasochistic homotext is a text in which homosexuality, sadomasochism, paternity and the problem of language play dominant roles. Clearly, the labelling of any work as a
sadomasochistic homotext is problematic: like all categories, it is somewhat arbitrary and includes inconsistencies. Texts have degrees of homotextuality and degrees of sadomasochism; at what point does one establish taxonomic borders? As we have stated, the sadomasochistic homotext is one in which the problems of language and the role of the father are linked to images of sadomasochism and homosexuality. The problems of designating a work of literature as "sadomasochistic homotext" are no graver than those implied by such terms as "realism" or "naturalism," or by any discussion of literature which involves extra-literary terms.

In considering homotexts since the late eighteenth century, we would expect to see some clear structure emerging, a structure that is both mythic and scientific, and which might explain the place of homosexuality, sadomasochism and paternity within the problematics of language. In the area of myth and allegory, Plato is invaluable, and in the area of science, whom could we consider but Freud? Plato and Freud intersect on the subject of homosexuality, and an examination of these two author(ities) will give us the structure with which to examine Sade and his children.
Notes

1 Mario Praz, for instance, in *The Romantic Agony*, chooses Sade as the logical starting point for his discussion of nineteenth and twentieth century French and English texts. His work is too complicated to be abridged into a footnote, but in a word, Praz traces the evolution of the satanic hero into the femme fatale. See also Roland Barthes, *Sade, Fourier, Loyola*, (Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1971) where Barthes considers Sade the founder of a new kind of language.


5 Perhaps we should write "phantasy," as the *Critical Dictionary of Psychoanalysis* suggests. For a discussion of the term "phantasy" see Laplanche and Pontalis, *The Language of Psychoanalysis*, trans. Donald Nicholson-Smith, (New York:


8 The first violent act for which Sade is punished is the alleged beating of a prostitute. See the discussion of the Rose Keller incident in Gilbert Lely's Vie du Marquis de Sade, vol. 1 of the Marquis de Sade: Oeuvres complètes, (Paris: Au Cercle du Livre Précieux, 1966).

9 "Is it not plausible to suppose that this sadism is in fact a death instinct which, under the influence of the narcissistic libido, has been forced away from the ego and has consequently only emerged in relation to the object? It now enters the service of the sexual function." Sigmund Freud, Beyond the Pleasure Principle, trans. James Strachey, (New York, Norton and Co., 1961), p. 48.


11 "The fear of this critical agency [the super ego] (a fear which is at the bottom of the whole relationship), the
need for punishment, is an instinctual manifestation on the part of the ego, which has become masochistic under the influence of a sadistic super-ego; it is a portion, that is to say, of the instinct towards internal destruction present in the ego..." Sigmund Freud, Civilization and its Discontents, trans. James Strachey, (New York: Norton and Co., 1961), p. 83.

12 Vern Bullough writes of "buggery:" "The term derived from a group of heretics in southern France who had revived the ancient Manichean beliefs.... their support for celibacy set them apart from others and they were looked upon not only as socially deviant but sexually deviant; buggery became a new term for all types of dark, hidden sex crimes. Long after the Manicheans had disappeared (through wars of extermination), certain forms of nonprocreative sexual activity were called buggery." Vern and Bonnie Bullough, Sin, Sickness and Sanity, (New York: New American Library, 1977), p. 35.

13 "Jesus himself apparently believed that Sodom was destroyed for the sin of inhospitality: 'Whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear your words, when you depart out of that house or city, shake off the dust of your feet. Verily I say unto you, it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgement, than for that city' (Matt. 10:14, KJV, cf. Luke 10:10-12)." John Boswell, Christianity, Social Tolerance and Homosexuality, (Chicago:
"Although the original understanding of the story of Sodom survived in some circles until well into the Middle Ages, the increasing emphasis of Hellenistic Jewish and Christian moralists on sexual purity gave rise in late Jewish apocrypha and early Christian writings to association of Sodom with sexual excess of various sorts," (Boswell, p. 97).

For a study of Middle Age literature and its perspective on homosexuality, see Alexandre Leupin, "Ecriture naturelle et écriture hermaphrodite," in Digraphe, 9, (September 1976), p. 118.

Montesquieu, in De l'esprit des lois, notes "It is very odd that these three crimes, witchcraft, heresy, and that against nature, of which the first might easily be proved not to exist, the second to be susceptible of an infinite number of distinctions, interpretations, and limitations, the third to be often obscure and uncertain---it is very odd, I say, that these three crimes should amongst us be punished with fire." Montesquieu, The Spirit of Laws, trans. Thomas Nugent, (New York: Haffner, 1966), p. 189.


The lack of statistics on homosexual burnings throughout the Middle Ages could be an instance of
homophobia among researchers: the extermination of male homosexuals in the Nazi concentration camps has been ignored until fairly recently. Hundreds of thousands of "Pink Triangles" were exterminated during Hitler's regime; male homosexuals were not liberated from the camps by the Allies, and homosexuality remained a crime until 1968 in Germany. It is only since that time that some of the escaped male prisoners have been able to write of their experiences in the camps.

26 In the mid-nineteenth century, Walt Whitman spoke of the "gayest Party" of young men, and wrote in a letter: "I put my arm around him and we gave each other a long kiss
half a minute long.... I go around some... to the gay places," (see Homosexuality: A History, p. 51). In 1922, Gertrude Stein published a seemingly innocent story, "Miss Furr and Miss Skeene." Miss Furr and Miss Skeene live together, trying to find "ways of being gay," ending each day "in a gay way," and Miss Furr discovers that "She was gay enough, she was always gay exactly the same way, she was always learning little things to use in being gay... she would always be gay in the same way" (see Grahn, p. 25). This story could pass the censor of the time with no problems, and still contain a secret meaning for the initiated reader.


28 See Vern Bullough, "Challenges to Societal Attitudes toward Homosexuality in the Late Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries," Social Science Quarterly, 58, no. 1, (June 1977), p. 33.

29 Psychiatry of the late nineteenth century, "In seeking to provide explanations for aberrant behavior... has been charged with having assumed from the faltering religious tradition the function of serving as a guarantor of social order, substituting the concept of illness for
that of sin." Ronald Bayer, *Homosexuality and American Psychiatry*, (New York: Basic Books, 1981), p. 5. See also Bullough: "While the medical model had the theoretical advantage over the previously accepted religious model of being changeable, it initially proved acceptable because its conclusions were essentially the same. It also allowed society to explain deviance through the illness concept: by classifying something as an illness some sort of treatment was implied" (Bullough, p. 29).


31 "No longer seen as a moral aberration, homosexuality was now viewed as a psychopathological dysfunction that required 'curative' as well as punitive measures, both of which were administered in places such as the Bastille and Bicêtre" ("Homosexuality and the French Enlightenment," p. 172).

32 Stockinger writes that "France had gone from the last public burning of a homosexual in 1784 to placing homosexuality on a more or less equal basis with heterosexuality in the Constitution of 1791" ("Homosexuality and the French Enlightenment," p. 175). In 24 of the United States this event has yet to happen, two hundred years after France ceased to prosecute homosexuality. The Supreme Court decision of June 1986 claims that the United States
government protects only certain privileged heterosexual acts.


34 The heterosexual male "does not live in his body. He simply has a body that he uses like a tool or a machine... It follows that this forced enmity toward the body goes hand in hand with another form of oppression---that of homosexuals. If society does not allow people to affirm their own sex, if there is either open or subtle discrimination against homosexuality, the inevitable result is the mechanization of the body that observers from the Third World find so typical of white male culture.... In an oppressive society, heterosexuality and antipathy toward the body are key elements in the image of the ideal man. Homosexual men often have a very different relationship to their own bodies... For them, the body is not just a machine that has to be oiled and refueled." Dorothee Soelle, The Strength of the Weak, trans. Robert Kimber, (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1984), pp. 51-52.


36 J. E. Rivers, "The Myth and Science of
Homosexuality in *A la recherche du temps perdu,* "Homosexualities and French Literature, p. 266.


38 After the First World War in Germany, homosexuals enjoyed complete legal and social emancipation in Germany. Homosexuals from all over the world, especially the repressive United States, migrated to Berlin. This heyday of homosexuality ended abruptly in the early 1930's as Hitler took power.

39 Freud believed in the redistribution of wealth, but found the socialist party idealistic and naive: Freud did not believe in the "goodness" of people as socialists did.

Chapter 2  Freud, Plato, and the Death of the Father

I. Origins

In the previously cited "Letter to an American Mother," Freud speaks of homosexuality as a "certain arrest of sexual development." \(^1\) Freud believed that children and primitive tribes exhibited an undifferentiated sexuality, a "polymorphous perversity." In *Three Contributions to the Theory of Sex*, Freud notes "inversion was a frequent manifestation among the ancient nations at the height of their culture." \(^2\) He also notes that homosexuality is "widely prevalent among savages and primitive races" (Freud, p. 536). Homosexuality, so despised in modern civilization, was privileged among the ancients. Homosexuality is a remnant of a former age, an early orientation: "there is an original predisposition to bisexuality, that in the course of development... changes to monosexuality, leaving only slight remnants of the stunted sex" ("Three Contributions," p. 558). Freud never fully developed his ideas on primeval bisexuality: he is much criticized for neglecting to systematize rigorously his notions on the subject. (See Laplanche and Pontalis, *The Language of Psychoanalysis*, "bisexuality.")

In *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, Freud hints at the origins of bisexuality. He admits that science has made few
inroads in understanding the original single-celled ancestor of humanity and the origins of sexuality. In this work, Freud also does literally what the title suggests: he explains that the compulsion to repeat, to restore, is stronger than the drive towards pleasure. Freud comes to the conclusion that in sexuality there is an inherent "need to restore an earlier state of things," (Beyond, p. 51).

Since science cannot explain this "earlier state of things," Freud turns to myth/philosophy. Freud cites the Symposium of Plato for a possible explanation of the origin of the sexual impulse. Freud has already hinted at this text in "Three Contributions," where he stated "The popular theory of the sexual instinct corresponds closely to the poetic fable of dividing the person into two halves—man and woman—who strive to become reunited through love" ("Three Contributions," p. 554).

The Symposium, or "dinner party" was based on a dialogue that probably took place around 416 B.C. Few works have had such an impact on Western mythologies of love: it greatly influenced the Middle Ages, via Ficino's de-homosexualized translation. There are only two direct speakers in the piece, Apollodorus and an unnamed friend. Apollodorus discusses a story he has heard from Aristodemus, one of the guests who actually attended the dinner party discussed in the Symposium. The reader is curiously removed from the actual dinner party and its conversation; the
narration comes third hand. The reason for the party is Agathon’s success at a recent dramatic competition. After the meal, Eryximachus proposes that instead of entertainment by a flute girl, each guest should give a speech in praise of love. This idea is adopted, and each person present has the opportunity to speak about love. It must be noted that "love" in this case means homosexual pederasty, or the love of an older man for a younger boy. Educated Athenian men of the Classical period presumed that only this kind of love was meaningful.  

Aristophanes’ delightful speech on love discusses not only the fragmentation of the individual that necessitated love, but also the violent rupture of language that resulted. Although it is somewhat lengthy, it seems appropriate to quote most of his speech rather than merely paraphrase it:  

In the first place there were three sexes, not, as with us, two, male and female; the third partook of the nature of both the others and has vanished, though its name survives. The hermaphrodite was a distinct sex in form as well as in name, with the characteristics of both male and female, but now the name alone remains, and that solely as a term of abuse. Secondly, each human being was a whole, with its back and flanks rounded to form a circle; it had four hands, an equal number of legs, and
two identically similar faces upon a circular
neck, with one head common to both the faces,
which were turned in opposite directions....

Their strength and vigour made them very
formidable, and their pride was overweening; they
attacked the gods....

So Zeus and the other gods debated what was
to be done with them....At last, after much
painful thought, Zeus had an idea...."I will cut
each of them in two; in this way they will be
weaker....

Man's original body having been thus cut in
two, each half yearned for the half from which it
had been severed....When one member of a pair died
and the other was left, the latter sought after
and embraced another partner, which might be the
half either of a female whole (what is now called
a woman) or a male....if male coupled with female,
children might be begotten and the
race thus continued, but if male coupled with
male, at any rate the desire for intercourse would
be satisfied, and men set free from it to turn to
other activities and to attend to the rest of the
business of life. It is from this distant epoch,
then, that we may date the innate love which human
beings feel for one another, the love which
restores us to our ancient state by attempting to weld two beings into one and to heal the wounds which humanity suffered....

Each of us then is the mere broken tally of a man, the result of a bisection which has reduced us to a condition like that of flat fish, and each of us is perpetually in search of his corresponding tally. Those men who are halves of a being of the common sex, which was called, as I told you, hermaphrodite, are lovers of women, and most adulterers come from this class, as also do women who are mad about men and sexually promiscuous. Women who are halves of a female whole direct their affections towards women and pay little attention to men; Lesbians belong to this category. But those who are halves of a male whole pursue males, and being slices, so to speak, of the male, love men throughout their boyhood, and take pleasure in physical contact with men. Such boys and lads are the best of their generation, because they are the most manly....

(L)ove is simply the name for the desire and the pursuit of the whole (Hamilton, p. 64).

Aristophanes' discourse is playful at the same time that it is philosophical. Aristophanes refers back to a remote past, a time when human beings were whole and not
fragmented, and a time when the sign truly and simply denoted. Language itself has been ruptured, the hermaphrodite "has vanished, though its name survives." The signifier remains, although it no longer has any referent. Aristophanes repeats a few lines later that "the name alone remains, and that solely as a term of abuse." The words "man" and "woman" denote partial entities: Aristophanes declares that what is now called "woman" is really only half a woman, part of the whole. What we currently call "man" is only a vestige of what he once was. Love, which is the search for one's other half, is also a vain attempt to restore meaning: half of the signifier is trying to unite with its other half in order to produce signification.

Aristophanes' speech is somewhat discredited later in the Symposium as Diotima speaks in praise of the spiritual, and not the physical, expression of love. We will consider this aspect of the Symposium at a later point. But let us note that the discourse of Aristophanes and Diotima, with its magisterial style and curious blending of the mythical and philosophical planes, serves as an "authoritative" text for much Western writing; it makes reference to a remote past, a mythic former age when language and sex were whole, and unruptured.

It is interesting that Freud should quote this story of mythic origin in a scientific text. Freud traces the idea of an original rupture back to the Upanishads, and mentions
this as a possible source of Plato's inspiration. Based on
this myth of separation, Freud hypothesizes that "living
substance at the time of its coming to life was torn apart
into small particles, which have ever since endeavoured to
reunite through the sexual instincts" (Beyond, p. 52).
Freud speculates about the biological and chemical
possibilities of such a theory, but refuses to accept it
definitively. Sexual desire could represent a regression
to an original state of unity; certainly many lower forms
of life are hermaphroditic. However, Freud does not
directly link original hermaphroditism with bisexuality: he
remains silent on Aristophanes' explanation of the origins
of same-sex desire. Presumably both homo- and hetero-
sexuality represent perversions of the original
predisposition to bisexuality. Homosexual desire, both
latent and manifest, serves as a reminder of this early
condition. In later works, such as Civilization and its
Discontents, Freud admits that there is great "obscurity"
surrounding his theories of primal bisexuality.

Sadism, like bisexuality, is related to the incipience
of the human race. The sadistic component is one of the
most basic sexual impulses, Freud writes. Freud believed
that sadism represents a death instinct, a desire to return
to the original state of nothingness. As such, sadism is
prior to sexual desire: sexual desire seeks to restore
individuals to a single bisexual organism, but sadism, a
manifestation of the death instinct, wants to carry things farther back, back to non-existence. In order to understand fully masochism, or sadism directed towards the self, we must understand the development of the super-ego, the internalized voice of the father.

In *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, Freud discusses the beginnings of life, the origins of sexual desire in the mythic past of cell-division, and the roots of sadism in the death instinct. In *Totem and Taboo*, (1912-1913), Freud speculates about the beginnings of civilization. Culture begins with a murder, that of the primeval father. Only this murder, Freud explains, could account for the psychic obsession with the role of the father. It must be noted that this is one of the most controversial of Freud's writings, and the least scientific. However, literary critics such as Girard and Bataille have seized upon the poetic significance of Freud's theories.

In creating this scientific myth, Freud quotes Darwin with much less trepidation than he quotes Plato: needless to say, Freud privileges scientific discourse over philosophical discourse. The irony is that Freud's theory of the primal horde is as poetic and allegorical as Plato's text. In an essay entitled "The Return of Totemism in Childhood," Freud combines Darwin's theories of the earliest state of society with psychoanalysis and studies of the totem meal. In Darwin's primal horde, there is a "violent
and jealous father who keeps all the females for himself and drives away his sons as they grow up."\(^\text{13}\) Obviously no one has ever seen this earliest state of society; the closest thing that can still be observed, in certain tribes, is a band of males where all the members have equal rights and abide by the totemic system. According to Freud, this developed out of the original structure.\(^\text{14}\) He explains, "One day, the brothers who had been driven out came together, killed and devoured their father and so made an end of the patriarchal horde. United, they had the courage to do and succeeded in doing what would have been impossible for them individually" (\textit{Totem}, p. 141). This was probably due to some new weapon or tool that they had created. After killing the father, they ate him in a cannibalistic feast. Freud explains, "The violent primal father had doubtless been the feared and envied model of each one of the company of brothers: and in the act of devouring him they accomplished their identification with him, and each one of them acquired a portion of his strength" (\textit{Totem}, p. 142). This was the origin of the totem meal, possibly the first real festival. The totem feast became a repetition and commemoration of this incident, which was the beginning of "social organizations, of moral restrictions and religion" (p. 142).

The rebellious horde of brothers, who ultimately overthrew the father, lived in a homosexual band. After the
murder, they created taboos against incest, "by which they all alike renounce the women whom they desired and who had been their chief motive for dispatching their father. In this way they rescued the organization which had made them strong--and which may have been based on homosexual feelings and acts, originating perhaps during the period of their expulsion from the horde. Here, too, may perhaps have been the germ of the institution of matriarchy, described by Bachofen, which was in turn replaced by the patriarchal organization of the family" (Totem, p. 144). (Bachofen had written a book, Myth, Religion, and Mother Right, in 1926.) (It must be noted, however, that the brothers lived in a homosexual band by force, not by choice, and that the chief reason for the murder of the father was to obtain women.)

In Totem and Taboo Freud writes, "I cannot suggest at what point in this process of development a place is to be found for the great mother-goddesses, who may perhaps in general have preceded the father-gods" (Totem, p. 43). Freud had been interested in the juxtaposition of male and female gods as early as the late nineteenth century. In the Fliess Letters he wrote "I am ready to believe that we must consider the perversions, of which hysteria is the negative, as the traces of a primitive sexual cult that was even, in the Near East, a religion (Moloch, Astarté)." 15 In Moses and Monotheism, one of Freud's final works, he finds the place of these goddess religions and matriarchy: "A good
part of the power which had become vacant through the father's death passed to the women; the time of the matriarchate followed.\textsuperscript{16} Freud believed that after the father's murder, women were able to assume power, religious as well as political.

Merlin Stone, in the previously cited When God Was a Woman, discusses the early matriarchal religions, which she claims dominated spiritual expression from the Upper Paleolithic Age (25,000 B.C.) until about 500 A.D. Based on her speculations about worship of the Mother Goddess, Stone comes to conclusions about primitive society which are not supported by archaeological findings. Judy Grahn, in the same way, tries to draw broad conclusions about a pre-patriarchal matriarchy. G. Rattray Taylor, in Sex in History divides the history of civilization into "matrist" and "patrist" periods.\textsuperscript{17} All of these attempts at proving the actual existence of matriarchy are unscientific speculation; creative writers confuse matrilineal birth rites and worship of female deities with sociopolitical matriarchy. The science of Freud's time made it possible to speculate about a matriarchal epoch: current research does not. For the purposes of this study, we will be interested in only the symbolic importance of this mythical matriarchy. The actual existence of matriarchy is not as important as its symbolic value.

In Moses and Monotheism Freud calls the re-institution
of patriarchy "the great social revolution" (p. 105). Freud notes that during the reign of the mother "the memory of the father lived on" (p. 104), and notes that even though the "power of the father was broken and the families were regulated by matriarchy," the "ambivalence of the sons towards the father remained in force during the whole further development" (p. 168). The matriarchal period was a period of incubation or latency, after which the father's law returned with incredible vigor. Patriarchy represents the original "return of the repressed." Freud notes that "every memory returning from the forgotten past does so with great force, produces an incomparably strong influence on the mass of mankind, and puts forward an irresistible claim to be believed, against which all logical objections remain powerless" (Moses, p. 107). The father returned with a power that he had never had when alive. Throughout the age of matriarchy, people had been harboring an internal guilt, and remorse for the murder of the father. Unconsciously, all knew that they had killed the father. This knowledge festered in them throughout the age of matriarchy, and patriarchy represents the triumph of the super-ego, the internalized control of the father. The sons had a "primordial ambivalence" toward the father: they hated and loved him. Their hatred was manifested in their aggression toward him, their desire to replace him, and their love came to surface in the remorse they felt for the deed. The guilt
overwhelmed them to such a point that they masochistically punished themselves, via the super-ego. The dead father became stronger than the real one had been, and his law was merciless. "It must be confessed that the revenge taken by the deposed and restored father was a harsh one: the dominance of authority was at its climax" (Totem, p. 150).

This was the beginning of the modern age, the age of God the Father, the reign of kings by divine right, and above all the age of sublimation and sexual repression. Freud notes that the turning "from the mother to the father... signifies above all a victory of spirituality over the senses" and "This declaration in favour of the thought process, thereby raising it above sense perception, was proved to be a step charged with serious consequences" (Moses, pp. 145-146). In matriarchy, sexuality was privileged, and sexual expression privileged. In patriarchy, the intellect is prized above the body. Part of this is due to the sublimation of the sex drive that Freud believes is so necessary for the advancement of civilization: a progress that demands a high personal toll. It must be noted that the commencement of the father's law marks the beginning of civilization as we know it.

In the conclusion of the Symposium, Diotima speaks to Socrates about the purest kind of love, which is non-sexual. The term "platonic love" comes from texts like these, where the physical is denigrated. Socrates even refuses the
sexual delights of a young boy that is offered to him, preferring his mental aspirations toward the Ideal. Thus we can see that it is not just homosexuality which is taboo in patriarchy, but rather any physical expression. Thought is such a privileged bodily function that it is even given the power to end all the other bodily functions.

It seems that the Western world is caught up in the rule of the dead father. In *The Daughter's Seduction* Jane Gallop examines Freud's myth of the father's murder in the light of linguistics and feminism, and examines ways of dealing with the father's law. Closely reading Lacan, Gallop concludes that no attempt to overthrow the father will ever succeed. "For if patriarchal culture is that within which the self originally constitutes itself, it is always already there in each subject as subject. Thus, how can it be overthrown if it has been necessarily internalized in everybody who could possibly overthrow it?" The law of the father is inscribed in the unconscious of all members of civilization. To eradicate the father's law from culture would mean ridding the mind of the super-ego, and that would be as disastrous as impossible. The father is as inaccessible as he is invulnerable: after all, Gallop notes, "One cannot kill the Father who is already dead" (Gallop, p. 14).

Gallop reads Lacan with a feminist perspective. She notes that although the father is male, men cannot reach his
privileged position. The law of patriarchal culture is on
the level of the symbolic, and living men have no better
chance of usurping the father's power than do women. Lacan,
in his re-interpretation of Freud's writing, distinguished
between the penis and the phallus. Men have a penis,
obviously, but that does not give them the phallus. The
penis is the biological organ, and the phallus is the symbol
of the dead Father's power. The penis exists on the level
of reality, and the phallus is on the level of the symbolic.
Gallop points out that there is no phallic inequity, because
neither sex can have the phallus. The phallus, that
ultimate signified, is the exclusive possession of the dead
father.

Western literature is situated in what Gallop calls the
"phallocentrism of discourse." The father is the only one
with the symbolic phallus of power, and society must make
the distinction between penis and phallus. No one can usurp
the phallus from the father. More powerful dead than alive,
he situates all discourse within his own language, the
language of the phallus. Escape from the phallocentrism of
discourse is impossible and unnecessary: rather, what one
must do is to cease confusing pen(is) with phallus.

Lacan writes extensively about the phallus in Four
Fundamental Concepts of Psychoanalysis (trans. Alan
Sheridan, New York: Norton, 1977) and in his essay, "La
signification du phallus." In that text Lacan makes several
statements about the phallus, but as with the term, "law of the father," he does not give precise definitions. In addition to being the ultimate signified, the phallus is also a signifier, and integrally linked with the process of language. It is related to both male and female desire: at one point Lacan calls the phallus "le signifiant du désir de l'Autre" [the signifier of the desire of the Other]. Like the "law of the father," the phallus has a certain indescribability.

The only way to function actively within phallocentric discourse is to be aware of it, and constantly challenge it. Gallop envisions a dialectic of assertion and critique. The father will always assert himself in and through us (especially via the super-ego), but he must constantly be called into question. "The only way to move is to exercise power and criticize it, not let it gel into a rigid representation" (Gallop, p. 121). Gallop elaborates upon the duality of the discourse she proposes: "Each must exercise and criticize the power.... To avoid the paralysis of an infantile, oceanic passivity one must exercise. But to avoid the opposite paralysis of a rigid identity one must criticize. And the process cannot, must not stop. There must be a 'permanent alteration: never one without the other’" (p. 121).

Returning to the concept of homotextuality and its
relationship to homosexuality, let us note that one is in the domain of the actual, and one is in the domain of the imaginary. Homosexuality is to homotextuality what the penis is to the phallus. The penis is the biological organ and the phallus is the symbol of power. Similarly, actual homosexuality is in the sociological dimension, and homotextuality is on the level of the imaginary. One is "real" (we use that term with great trepidation) and the other in the realm of discourse. Homotextuality, within the confines of literary discourse, is closely related to the murder of the phallocratic father. The rebellious brothers banded together in a homosexual horde: after the return of the father, homosexuality could only be seen as a vestige of revolt, and affiliated with the free sexuality of the matriarchate. As the religion of the father became more intense, and sublimation was increasingly stressed for the development of civilization, homosexual acts came to represent a non-productive act, a superfluous pleasure. Thus, homosexuality represents a rebellion against the law of the father.

In literary homotexts, when homosexuality does appear, it is often in the context of rebellion. Homosexuality is a direct threat to the prevailing magisterial discourse. Homotextuality challenges that discourse, and reveals the arbitrary nature of the system. In a world where phallocentrism and reproduction are
constantly asserted, homotextuality challenges that assertion. Homotextuality signifies rebellion to sublimation; sadomasochism both doubles and undermines that threat. For the purposes of our study we might conclude that sadomasochism and homosexuality threaten the power of patriarchy, and represent a challenge to the structures of culture.

There is an aspect of homotextuality that is extremely conservative. The assertion of homosexuality upholds all arbitrary distinctions between homo- and heterosexuality. To declare oneself "other" is to re-inforce the position of magisterial discourse. Lyotard notes that "When one externalizes oneself in order to avoid the magisterial discourse, one is just extending that position, nourishing it." To oppose and confront is to uphold. This seems to be the hopeless plight of discourse, and an instance of the critique/assertion duality discussed by Gallop.

In addition to other comments on homosexuality, it must be noted that homosexuality is not the opposite of heterosexuality; there is only one sexuality. Lacan emphasizes the unimportance of gender in choosing the object of desire: "quand on aime, il ne s'agit pas de sexe" [when one loves, sex is not an issue]. After all, he states, "l'homme, une femme... ce ne sont rien que signifiants" [a man, a woman... these are nothing but signifiers] (p. 39). Homotextuality is a function, a trope, an invention of
phallocentrism. It challenges the structure of power, but in challenging upholds that immutable law. As bearer of the phallus, the father controls and inhabits all discourse. Homotextuality is a threat to the discourse of the father, although it can never overthrow his reign, and is indeed created by his law. Homotextuality serves as a critique of patriarchy, and reveals the arbitrary, if rigid, nature of the system.
Notes


3 Freud writes, "science has so little to tell us about the origin of sexuality that we can liken the problem to a darkness into which not so much as a ray of a hypothesis has penetrated," Sigmund Freud, *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, trans. James Strachey, (New York: Norton and Co., 1961), p. 51.

4 Ficino neutered the genders, and used the terms "lover," and "beloved," to avoid the obvious homosexuality of the text.

5 "The love with which the dialogue is concerned, and which is accepted as a matter of course by all the speakers, including Socrates, is homosexual love; it is assumed without argument that this alone is capable of satisfying a man's highest and noblest aspirations, and the love of man and woman, when it is mentioned at all, is spoken of as altogether inferior, a purely physical impulse whose sole
object is the procreation of children." Plato, The Symposium, trans. W. Hamilton, (Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1951), p. 12. See also K.J. Dover: "Throughout The Symposium and Phaedrus it is taken for granted that eros which is significant as a step towards the world of Being is homosexual." K. J. Dover, Greek Homosexuality, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1978), p. 162. In terms of pederasty: "Plato takes homosexual desire and homosexual love as the starting-point from which to develop his metaphysical theory; and it is of particular importance that he regards philosophy not as an activity to be pursued in solitary meditation and communicated in ex cathedra pronouncements by a master to his disciples, but as a dialectical progress which may well begin in the response of an older male to the stimulus afforded by a younger male who combines bodily beauty with 'beauty of the soul'" (see Dover, p. 12).

6 Aristophanes seems to take the consequence for cause: perhaps he should say that the rupture of language causes the rupture in love. Problems of sex are problems of language. Only humans, talking animals, have difficulties in sexual relations.


8 Freud writes of sexual desire: "these instincts, in
which the chemical affinity of inanimate matter persisted, gradually succeeded, as they developed through the kingdom of the protista, in overcoming the difficulties put in the way of that endeavour by an environment charged with dangerous stimuli—stimuli which compelled them to form a protective cortical layer... that these splintered fragments of living substance in this way attained a multicellular condition and finally transferred the instinct for reuniting, in the most highly concentrated form, to the germ cells" (Beyond the P.P., p. 52).

9 At the end of the essay, Freud flirtatiously reassesses his position, and tells the reader, with a wink, that he has simply been playing an "advocatus diaboli, who is not on that account himself sold to the devil," (p. 54).

10 "The theory of biseuxuality is still surrounded by many obscurities and we cannot but feel it as a serious impediment in psychoanalysis that it has not yet found any link with the theory of the instincts. However this may be, if we assume it as a fact that each individual seeks to satisfy both male and female wishes in his sexual life, we are prepared for the possibility that those [two sets of] demands are not fulfilled by the same object." Sigmund Freud, Civilization and its Discontents, trans. James Strachey, (New York: Norton and Co., 1961), p. 53.

11 "From the very first we recognized the presence of a sadistic component in the sexual instinct. As we know, it
can make itself independent and can, in the form of a perversion, dominate an individual's sexual activity. It also emerges as a predominant component instinct in one of the 'pregenital organizations,' as I have named them" (Beyond, p. 48).

12 "Is it not plausible to suppose that this sadism is in fact a death instinct which, under the influence of the narcissistic libido, has been forced away from the ego and has consequently only emerged in relation to the object?" (Beyond, p. 48).


14 "This earliest state of society has never been an object of observation. The most primitive kind that we actually come across--- and one that is in force to this day in certain tribes--- consists of bands of males; these bands are composed of members with equal rights and are subject to the restrictions of the totemic system, including inheritance through the mother" (Totem, p. 141).


"I have no qualms in saying that men have always known... that once upon a time they had a primeval father and killed him" (Moses, p. 129).

Love of the father "set up the super-ego by identification with the father; it gave that agency the father's power, as though as a punishment for the deed of aggression they had carried out against him, and it created the restrictions which were intended to prevent a repetition of the deed. And since the inclination to aggressiveness against the father was repeated in the following generations, the sense of guilt, too, persisted, and it was re-inforced once more by every piece of aggressiveness that was suppressed and carried over to the super-ego. Now, I think, we can at last grasp two things perfectly clearly: the part played by love in the origin of conscience and the fatal inevitability of the sense of guilt. Whether one has killed one's father or has abstained from doing so is not really the decisive thing. One is bound to feel guilty in either case, for the sense of guilt is an expression of the conflict due to ambivalence, of the eternal struggle between Eros and the instinct of destruction or death" (Civilization and its Discontents, p.79).

Once again, see Foucault, L'usage des plaisirs for a detailed analysis.

Annie Leclerc writes that the question, "'Is life worth living or not worth living' is not the most basic of
human questions; it is the most profoundly stupid expression
and as it were ultimate image of thinking corrupted by
reason.... As if thought, that life alone makes possible,
could have any other task than serving life." Annie
Leclerc, excerpt from "Parole des femmes," New French
Feminisms, Marks and Courtivron, eds., (New York: Schocken

22 Jane Gallop, The Daughter's Seduction, (Ithaca:

23 The domain of inscription is in the super-ego.

However, Freud tells us in The Future of an Illusion and in
other places that not all people have internalized the
father to the same degree.


25 Homosexuality has often had to be merely suggested
or hinted at, especially at literature within the Anglo-
American tradition with its puritanical bias. It would be
another study completely to determine why homosexuality
(including in that term lesbianism) was so often depicted in
art and literature in nineteenth century France, and almost
never even suggested in the British novel of the period. It
is interesting to note that in the cinema, any reference to
homosexuality, no matter how veiled, was forbidden in
Hollywood until well into the 1960's. Even after a 1961
relaxing of the code, allowing "sexual aberration" to be
suggested but not "actually spelled out," the MPAA refused to grant its approval to Basil Dearden's 1962 film *Victim*, because the words "homosexual" and "homosexuality" were spelled out. (See Leigh Rutledge, "Gay Lists," *Playguy*, (August 1985), p. 60).


Chapter 3  Sade and the Law of Sodomy

I. The Power of Language and the Threat of Sade

Our first example of the sadomasochistic homotext can be found in the works of Sade. In texts such as *La Philosophie dans le boudoir* and *120 jours de Sodome* we find all of the characteristics of what we have defined as the sadomasochistic homotext. In each work, a group of rebels seek to overthrow the conventions of society, and homosexuality is an integral part of this rebellion. In this discussion of Sade we will consider the problem of language: Sade mixes levels of language (he is certainly not the only author to do so) in a strange way. Two distinct discourses can be seen in his work: a tendency to anarchy, to complete abolition of power, is juxtaposed with a desire to commandeer the locus of power. We have mentioned this conservative aspect of the sadomasochistic homotext; often the writer seeks to set himself up in the place of the primal father. A word might also be said about the homotextuality of Sade’s texts. The sexual acts Sade describes have little to do with actual biological activity. Sade is writing about the limits (to use Sollers’ terminology) of the body, and many of the homosexual acts described in Sade’s work are simply biologically impossible.
The very name "Sade" excites great controversy. As we saw in the first chapter, his name was appropriated by doctors to classify a certain kind of erotic pleasure which consists in causing pain.\(^1\) Since the eighteenth century, there has been great debate about the historical activities of this man: he spent a large part of his life imprisoned for crimes he probably did not commit. In the previously cited *Vie du marquis de Sade avec un examen de ses ouvrages*,\(^2\) Gilbert Lely scrupulously details the life of the marquis, and exonerates him from many of the murders and tortures of which he was accused. In a beautiful letter to his wife, Sade wrote from prison: "Oui, je suis libertin, je l'avoue; j'ai conçu tout ce qu'on peut concevoir dans ce genre-là, mais je n'ai sûrement pas fait tout ce que j'ai conçu et ne le ferai sûrement jamais. Je suis un libertin, mais je ne suis pas un criminel ni un meurtrier..."\(^3\) [Yes, I am a libertine, I admit it, I have conceived every possible fancy of that kind, but I have definitely not done all that I have thought of and certainly never will. I am a libertine, but I am neither a criminal nor a murderer]. In this same letter, written from Vincennes in February of 1781, he goes on to cite his "good" qualities, and the generous things he has done. He reminds his wife that he has never compromised her health or squandered the children's inheritance. One can only assume that his wife believed some part of this letter, for she was certainly his
most faithful visitor throughout the years he was in prison.4

In spite of the assumed historical innocence of the Marquis, his name is clouded by the scandal of what he writes about. More than anything else, Sade is guilty of the written word. As an author, he is blamed for the actions of his characters, and the narrative voice of his texts is naively identified with his own.5 In "Sade dans le texte," Sollers asks the question "how is it that the Sadian text doesn't exist as a text for our society and our culture? For what reasons does this society, this culture obstinately see in a corpus of fiction, a series of novels, a written ensemble, something so menacing that only a reality could be the cause?" Sollers continues to probe this question, and exclaims that Sade is one of few writers taken literally. Sade is seen as "he who says what he does and does what he says," (Sollers, p. 56). His writing is seen as more than "mere fiction." What Sade wrote is deemed more important than what he did. This reflects a profound belief in the power of words, a subject worthy of a longer study on its own. But obscenity charges and trials, which proceed well into our own day, illustrate the fact that mere writing is still thought to wield great power to corrupt.7

The confusion surrounding the Marquis is exemplified in his cataloguing. In the library Sade is split: his literary works appear in the PQ section of the library,
where the Library of Congress system puts other works of French literature, and stories of his life and philosophy are put in the HQ section of the library, the area of sexual deviance. Works such as Iwan Bloch's *Marquis de Sade: The Man and his Age* are placed in the sexual deviance section that follows the books on homosexuality. The library itself cannot make up its mind if Sade is an "innocent" writer, an author like Laclos or Voltaire, or whether he is a maniac.

The very ambiguity of Sade's writing seems to present a threat. Works such as *One Hundred-Twenty Days of Sodom* and *The Philosophy of the Bedroom* represent a curious melange of discourses, and blend genres: is Sade a philosopher, psychologist, or novelist? The Sadian corpus represents a list of perversions, and in this way blends sociology with the novel. Furthermore, Sade's work is considered by some to be pornographic, and thus the arbitrary boundary between "literature" and "pornography" is called into question.

The accusation of "pornography" almost kept Sade's works from being assembled and published. "Pornography" is another interesting nineteenth century word, from *porne*, the Greek word for prostitute, and "graphic," meaning writing or drawing. In the early nineteenth century "pornography" meant the writings, or memoirs, of a prostitute. It came to have the meaning "obscene" in the mid-nineteenth century. Definitions of the pornographic have fluctuated with the
times, and are a tool of magisterial discourse, a means of dismissing any work that challenges orthodox sexual myths. Many prominent authors of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries have been labelled obscene or pornographic: Baudelaire, Flaubert, Rimbaud, etc. Sade is "pornographic" because he challenges those things dearest to reigning ideologies, including the strict boundaries of literary genre. We will be discussing the question of genre in detail at a later point.

II. Sade as a Man of His Time

In The Marquis de Sade: The Man and his Age, Bloch describes the milieu in which Sade wrote, and discusses the fact that Sade was not an anomaly of his epoch. Sade was definitely a man of his time. As mentioned earlier, the eighteenth century was a period of great sexual exuberance; Hegel, in Philosophy of History writes "The whole state of France at that time is a ... mad state with which, at the same time, is bound the highest depravity of morals..." (Bloch, p. 15). Libertines of the period searched out new experiences, frenzies, and abandonments, and sexual pleasures were catalogued. Certainly in Sade's works this systematizing and cataloguing of pleasure can be seen. The regency period and the reign of Louis XV were times of great sexual energy, and from the monarch on down, sex was a
favored pastime.

The eighteenth century saw a repetition of some of the sexual hysteria of the medieval epoch. From 1727 to 1762 there were continual cases of erotic convulsions which centered at the courtyard of the St. Medardus church. Crowds from all over Paris would gather at the courtyard of St. Medardus to watch the young girls and women have convulsions, trances, and ecstasies. The only "cure" for these convulsions was the weight of ten or twelve men piled on top of the women. In fact, young women, doing erotic dances as part of their "fits" were usually scantily clad, and always asked for aid from strong young men. The hysteria and vapors constantly reported throughout the century are certainly signs of excited sexuality and tension.

"Debauchery" is the key noun of the eighteenth century, and that was declared by the people of the age themselves. Literary works, including those of the Marquis, reflect one of the great preoccupations of the time. Between 1770 and 1800 incredible amounts of pornography were written, and the market for this erotica was tremendous. In art and theatre, sexual interest was great. In 1791, a play was performed at the Palais Royal where a so-called "savage" and his mate actually copulated on stage.

It is in this cultural milieu that the works of Sade were published, (many of them being written while he was in
jail, preceding the Revolution). Bookstores of the time were veritable pornographic libraries. Thus, writing about sexuality and cataloguing sexual acts made Sade a very popular author. Although Napoléon ordered his books to be burned, the people of the Revolutionary period loved his work and perhaps found it to be too mild. During the 1790s, Sade was widely read, and his works were found in all the bookstores and catalogues of the period. Sade was able to give the public what they wanted to read. Klcssowski, among others, has noted that the post-Revolutionary works of Sade are bloodier than the pre-Revolutionary ones, indicating that Sade accomodated the increasingly blood-thirsty public. For instance, in the case of Justine, written in 1791, the first edition is simply erotic. But the 1797 edition contains much more sadomasochism. As the literate public grew more sanguinary, Sade’s writings did too.

Although Sade is very much a man of his age, it must be conceded that his writings go a little bit farther in depicting pleasure and pain than other pornographic writing of the time. While Voltaire, Rousseau, Diderot and others fashioned their works to suit the sexually active populace, Sade is specifically interested in perversion, and sodomy and sadomasochism play an important role. Other writers, such as deNerciat write of sexual libertinage and homosexuality, yet de Nerciat’s charming homotext, Monrose or a Libertine by Fate is totally different in tone from 120
Days of Sodom, for instance. De Nerciat and the others are always witty, and represent homosexuality in an off-handed way. When Félicia, de Nerciat's first heroine, engages in lesbian activity, it is because she is bored and there is no male around. Or, as in the writings of Diderot, homosexuality is depicted as a kind of weakness, as in the case of the poor damned Mother Superior. Sade is one of the boldest writers to deal with homosexuality and sadomasochism. Restif de la Bretonne comes close to the Marquis in his portrayal of violent, unleashed sexuality, but his work is considered literally inferior to the Marquis's. Sade is interested in carrying everything to its limit, including the sadomasochistic homotext. Indeed, Sade, for this study, is the originator of the sadomasochistic homotext. The two texts of Sade's we will be examining deal explicitly with homosexuality, sadomasochism, and revolt.

III. Sade and the Primal Horde

In the seventeenth century sexual "clubs" formed among the aristocracy, and homosexuality was a privileged vice. Two of the more famous clandestine societies were the "Ordre des Sodomites" and the "Société des Amis du Crièce." These organizations thrived in the seventeenth and
eighteenth centuries; in the eighteenth century lesbian secret societies began, such as "La secte des Anandrynes" and "Les Vestales de Vénus." Members of these groups would get together for orgies and sexual exploration. The clubs were exclusive, by invitation only, and often had secret passwords and symbols. Before the advent of "gay bars," these special societies served as a meeting place for those who were curious about homosexual activity. These clubs came to America as well: in the mid-nineteenth century the Golden Rule Pleasure Club was created in New York City. Let us not forget that homosexuality was punished by burning until the 1780's, and one could scarcely be open about such a proclivity. These clubs offered a safe place for sexual expression, and in addition had a prestigious appeal about them, often being organized by and for nobles and clergy.

In the works of Sade, one can find a reflection of these societies. For instance, Justine belongs to the Society of Friends of Crime. Although Sade's Society has historical origins in actual organizations, Sade takes these groups to unheard of (and quite illegal) excess. Unlike their historical counterparts, these groups have a special function in the works of Sade. These societies are fictional clubs which are organized by a linguistic system of description and gradation, obeying certain laws of taxonomy and language. In the 120 Days, the elite group of nobles set out to carry every perversion to its limit.
There are strict laws about what may and may not be done on certain days. Clinical virginity is preserved as long as possible, and the group ultimately permits itself to murder and devour the unfortunate prisoners of the Chateau de Silling. Thus, Sade parodies secret societies, carrying them to limits which would certainly never have been able to happen.

These special organizations have an important role in the works of Sade. In both 120 Days and Philosophy of the Bedroom these secret societies are an integral part of the text. These groups, or societies, represent the rebellious brothers who seek to subvert every law of the Father in their quest for pleasure. In 120 Days, the entire scenario is organized by four men: the Duc de Blangis, The Bishop of X***, his brother, the Président de Curval, and Durcet, the banker. All noblemen, these characters get together to form a secret society, high in the mountains, which will transgress all limits in the search for pleasure.

The group of people in the boudoir represent the same group as the secluded visitors at the Château de Silling. Both novels are peopled by a rebellious horde, seeking pleasure at all costs, and slapping the Father in the face by their conduct. Blanchot writes that "Sade's cast of characters is composed primarily of a tiny number of omnipotent men who have had the energy and initiative to raise themselves above the law and place themselves outside
the pale of prejudice, men who feel that Nature has singled them out and, feeling themselves worthy of this distinction, strive to assuage their passions by any and all means.\textsuperscript{16}

Blanchot notes that this group of people usually comes from the nobility or clergy: "These peerless men generally belong to a privileged class... they benefit from the advantages of their rank and fortune, and from the impunity which their high station confers upon them" (\textit{Philosophy}, p. 41). Once again, Sade is writing very much within his cultural cadre. The nobility of the early eighteenth century was exceedingly sexually active. Furthermore, nobility and clergy were interwined classes. In the eighteenth century, the clergy were frequently the poorer members of noble families, impoverished due to the laws of primogeniture. In pre-Revolutionary France, clergy and nobility made compatible bedfellows. (In \textit{Justine}, for instance, the pope is one of the prime expounders of libertinage.)

As we discussed in the previous chapter, homosexuality was associated with both the nobility and the clergy in pre-Revolutionary France. Once again, Sade departs from an historical reality, and gives it a fictional twist (for instance, the pope as libertine). Whereas in reality there were rumors of the homosexuality of the clergy and nobility, Sade insists upon the perversion of his characters. The social club/primal horde groups of the Chateau and
bedchamber are composed of homosexual nobles and clergy. At
one point Dolmancé discusses his own inclinations, and uses
the word "bougre." Dolmancé explains, "le cul d'un jeune
garçon, il faut en convenir, me donne encore plus de volupté
que celui d'une fille. On appelle bougres ceux qui se
livrent à cette passion; or, quand on fait tant que d'être
bougre, Eugénie, il faut l'être tout à fait. Foutre des
femmes en cul n'est l'être qu'a moitié: c'est dans l'homme
que la nature veut que l'homme serve cette fantaisie, et
c'est spécialement pour l'homme qu'elle nous en a donne le
goût."17 ["I'll confess a young lad's ass gives me yet more
pleasure than a girl's. Buggers is the appellation
designating those who are this fancy's adepts; now, Eugénie,
when one goes so far as to be a bugger, one must not stop
halfway. To fuck women in the rear is but the first part of
buggery; 'tis with men Nature wishes men to practice this
oddity, and it is especially for men she has given us an
inclination"] (Philosophy, p. 230). As we have seen,
homosexual" is a nineteenth century word: the word
"bugger," which is one of the few religious words Sade has
at his disposal, (he also uses the word "sodomie") is
ambiguous: women as well as men are buggered. Dolmancé
emphasizes the fact that he prefers this act with men, but
the salient aspect of his sexual preference is its heterodox
nature.

Of the four major characters of 120 Days, three at
least are "buggers" or "sodomites": the Bishop is "idolâtre de la sodomie active et passive"\(^{20}\) ["a faithful sectary of sodomy, active and passive"]; the Président is called a "pourceau de Sodome" [pig of Sodom] (120 journées, p. 15), and prefers the "derrière d'un jeune garçon" (p 15). Durcet "est taillé comme une femme et en a tous les goûts; privé par la petitesse de sa consistance de leur donner du plaisir, il l'a imité, et se fait foutre à tout instant du jour" (120 journées, p. 63) ["has the figure of a woman and all a woman's tastes: his little firmness deprived of giving women pleasure, he has imitated that sex and has himself fucked at any time of day or night"].\(^{19}\) Durcet thus has blended the border between masculinity and femininity in the same way that Dolmancé of Philosophy in the Bedroom does: Dolmancé has "un peu de mollesse dans sa taille et dans la tournure, par l'habitude, sans doute, qu'il a de prendre si souvent des airs féminins" (Philosophie, p. 372) ["a shade of softness about his figure and in his attitude, doubtless owing to his habit of taking on effeminate airs so often" (Philosophy, p. 187)]. Furthermore, "les délices de Sodome sont aussi chers comme agent que comme patient; il n'aime que les hommes dans ses plaisirs, et si quelquefois, néanmoins, il consent à essayer les femmes, ce n'est qu'aux conditions qu'elles seront assez complaisantes pour changer de sexe avec lui" (Philosophie; p. 373) ["Sodom's delights are as dear to him in their active as in their passive form.\]
For his pleasures, he cares for none but men; if however he sometimes deigns to employ women, it is only upon condition they be obliging enough to exchange sex with him" (Philosophy, p. 188).

Homosexual acts are associated with a disruption of sexual difference. Certainly part of the transgressive nature of the sex clubs was this abolition of categories. Dolmancé utilizes sodomy as a means of blurring gender distinctions. When Madame de Saint-Ange is using a dildo on him, Dolmancé cries out, "Et vous, madame, foutez-moi, foutez votre garce...oui, je la suis et je veux l'être" (Philosophie, p. 472) ["And you, Madame, do fuck me, fuck your slut...yes, I am she and wish to be" (Philosophy, p. 290). The seemingly steadfast divisions man/woman and homosexual/heterosexual are very much confused in the Sadian text. Furthermore, there is much transvestism in both texts: Duclos discusses a man who "ne voulait du féminin que l'habit, mais, dans le fait, il fallait que ce fût un homme, et pour m'expliquer mieux, c'était par un homme habillé en femme que le paillard voulait etre fessé" (120 journées, p. 245) ["would have nothing of the feminine but womanish dress: the wearer of the costume had to be a man; in other words, the roué wanted to be spanked by a man got up as girl" (Days, p. 456)]. At one point, there is a giant wedding where the boys are dressed as girls, and the girls dressed as boys. In the fourth section of the 120
Days, the narrator relates: "Ce soir-là, l'évêque, épouse lui comme femme Antinous en la qualité de mari" (120 journées, p. 407) ["In the character of a woman, that great histrionic, the Bishop, marries Antinous, whose role is that of a husband" (Days, p. 643)]. (This scene is repeated at the end of Justine where two men marry, one dressed as a woman). Sade playfully uses gender-encoded nouns to further confusion in the text: Duclos discusses a "vieux abbé de soixante ans, qu'on nommait du Coudrais et dont la maîtresse était un jeune garçon de seize ans" (120 journées, p. 192) ["abbot, sixty years old, Du Coudrais by name; his mistress was a lad of sixteen" (Days, p. 395)].

This is related to the whole problematic of gender and genre: the text, in blurring distinctions between sexes, also blurs distinctions between discourses: Philosophy and 120 Days are novels and philosophical tracts at the same time.22 (Sade is not the only author to blend discourses: certainly in Montaigne and Baudelaire one can find a mélange of kinds of discourse). Right in the heart of Philosophy a political tract is inserted: the Chevalier reads from a tract which is entitled "Français, encore un effort si vous voulez être républicains" ["Yet Another Effort, Frenchmen, If You Would Become Republicans."] This treatise is divided into two sections, "Religion" and "Moeurs" (Manners). "Yet Another Effort" is a kind of mise-en-abîme, or text within the text, revealing the multiple levels of discourse which
make up the text. 120 Days is as well a combination of discourses: it is both an outline and a finished work. At the end of the Introduction, for instance, Sade notes "Omissions que j'ai faites" [Omissions I have made]. The final section of the work is simply a series of lists, put in numerical order. The narrator frequently intrudes into the text with such apostrophes as "ami lecteur" (120 journées, p. 270) [friend reader], and re-writes oral discourse: "Duclos, très malade des excès de la veille, ne s'y offrit qu'en battant l'oeil, et ses récits furent si courts, elle y mêla si peu d'épisodes, que nous avons pris le parti de la suppler et d'extraitre au lecteur ce qu'elle dit aux amis" (120 journées, p. 272) [Duclos, weak and queasy after the preceding day's excesses, took her place with drooping eyelids, and her tales were so brief, they contained so few episodes, were recounted so listlessly, that we have taken it upon ourselves to supply them, and in the reader's behalf to clarify the somewhat confused speech she made to our friends (Days, p. 487)]. The narrator interrupts the text to give advice to libertines: "Je le dis en passant, afin que si quelque amateur veuille user de ce secret, il soit fermement persuadé qu'il n'en est pas de meilleur" (120 journées, p. 259) ['I mention this in passing so that, should any amateur be disposed to make use of the formula, he may be persuaded there is none superior" (Days, p. 472)].
A further confusion in the level of discourse is the use of vulgar language: Sade's texts are a combination of the ridiculous with the sublime. Duclos recounts an incident which is a model for the text itself: in an erotic encounter, one of her lovers intermingles trite love phrases with vulgar obscenities. "Etienne alors parut transporté de délire le plus voluptueux. Il baisait ma bouche avec ardeur, il maniait et branlait mon con et l'égarement de ses propos annonçait encore mieux son désordre. Les f... et les b..., enlacés aux noms les plus tendres, caractérisaient ce délire qui dura fort longtemps" (p. 86). ["Etienne seemed to go out of his mind, borne aloft in the most voluptuous delirium; ardently he kissed my mouth, he fondled and frigged my cunt, and the wildness in his speech still more emphatically declared his disorder. Gross expressions, mingling with others of the most endearing sort, characterized this transport, which lasted quite a while..." (Days, p. 279)]. This "mingling" is exemplary of the combination of language in the text, where we go from political musings to "piss-swallowing" in the same page. This double-level of language also illustrates the double level of the text, where expository language and representation of sexual activity are continually alternated.

Sade delights in playing with signifiers: in Eugénie's initiation, Dolmancé uses various levels of language. For
instance, he says, "ces globes de chair... on les nomme indifféremment gorge, seins, tétons" (Philosophie, p. 384) ["these globes of flesh... are indifferently known as bosoms, breasts, tits" (Philosophy, p. 200)]. Eugénie asks about Dolmancé's testicles, and is told that "le mot technique est couilles... testicules est celui de l'art" (p. 385) ["the technical term is genitals, male genitals... testicles belongs to art," (Philosophy, p. 201)]. Madame de Saint-Ange resists the discourse of biology: "nous appuierons peu sur ces détails, Eugénie, plus dépendant de la médecine que du libertinage. Une jolie fille ne doit s'occuper que de foutre et jamais d'engendrer" (p. 386) ["we will not stress these details, Eugénie, for they relate more to medicine than to libertinage. A pretty girl ought simply to concern herself with fucking, and never with engendering" (Philosophy, p. 201)]. Sade's works illustrate the arbitrary privilege of certain kinds of language. The reader is meant to be shocked by the rapid transition from philosophizing to pornography. Science and sex are juxtaposed.

Duality or double structure is very important in another aspect of the work as well: its very structure as a homotext. The four men discuss homosexuality, and the Bishop concludes, "Quand on a décidément le goût des hommes, on ne change point; la distance est si extreme qu'on n'est pas tenté de l'épreuve" (120 journées, p. 246) ["When one has a decided taste for men, there's no changing, the difference
between boy and girl is so extreme that one's not apt to be tempted to try what's patently inferior" (Days, p. 458). The reason for this preference is that sexual acts between men involve a doubling of genders. The discussion of homosexuality quickly turns into a discussion of evil: "Considérez-le du côté du mal, qui est presque toujours le véritable attrait du plaisir, le crime vous paraîtra plus grand avec un être absolument de votre espèce qu'avec un qui n'en est pas, et, de ce moment-là, la volupté est double" (120 journées, p. 247) ["Consider the problem from the point of view of evil, evil almost always being pleasure's true and major charm; considered thus, the crime must appear greater when perpetrated upon a being of your identical sort than when inflicted upon one which is not, and this once established, the delight automatically doubles" (Days, p. 458)]. Durcet agrees with the Bishop, and declares, "je crois l'abus de la force plus délicieux à exercer avec son semblable qu'avec un femme" (p. 247) ["I believe the abuse of power more delicious when exercised at the expense of one's peer than at a woman's" (Days, p. 459)]. This passage links masochism and narcissism with homosexual acts. By inflicting something upon one's double, one is able to enjoy it oneself. This doubling is important throughout the text. Furthermore, by vicariously enjoying the pain inflicted on one's double, the distinction between the self and the other is blurred. This illustrates the close alliance between
sadism and masochism: masochism is sadism directed toward the self. By torturing one's twin, one is vicariously torturing one's self. Clearly in this instance Durcet and the Bishop are identifying with their victims, who are but replicas (in their eyes) of themselves. For these characters, there is little distinction between the self and the other, and torturing the other is almost as gratifying as torturing the self.\textsuperscript{22}

This dualism is seen in the text in another way, already alluded to, as well: there are two types of transgressive discourse in Sade. On the one hand he opposes all law, all institutions, religious and moral; on the other hand, he upholds the law to a certain extent, and sets himself up as author(ity). This two-fold trend may be inherent in the homotext, where the radical theme of rebellion is tempered by a certain conservatism.

IV. Sade, the Law, and Transgression

The Law has a very ambivalent place in Sade's texts. On the one hand, Sade opposes law; Dolmancé seems to propose a kind of anarchy. On the other hand, Sadian characters are bound by a law that is stricter than anything that might be considered under the category of the law. The laws of patriarchy, seen in a Freudian light, are the laws which regulate pleasure. With the unconscious return of the
murdered father, laws were promulgated concerning morality, religion, etc. The laws of culture, the stone upon which civilization is built, might be called the laws of deferred gratification: they are the laws of duty toward one's fellow citizens and allegiance to God and king. In works such as the previously cited Civilization and its Discontents, Freud discusses the emotional toll exacted by these laws. In order for civilization to continue, laws of deferred gratification, prescribing morality, must exist.

Sade execrates these limits. He takes great pains to prove the arbitrary nature of prohibition: he reveals how notions of good and bad are cultural. In the tract, "Yet Another Effort," Dolmancé discusses the absurd laws concerning religion and manners (moeurs). Dolmancé coherently argues that traditional precepts of behavior restrict the individual, and are founded on absurd premises (for instance, the notions of God, heaven and hell). In place of these laws, which Dolmancé claims to be human creations, and therefore arbitrary, he would substitute the laws of Nature.

Sadian characters expound endlessly upon Nature in both 120 Days and Philosophy. "La seule (loi) qu'elle (la nature) imprime au fond de nos coeurs est de nous satisfaire n'importe aux dépens des autres" (120 journées, p. 314) ["The one commandment she {Nature} graves deep in our heart is to satisfy ourselves at no matter whose expense" (Days,
In Philosophy this idea is upheld and explained: "le premier et le plus sage des mouvements de la nature" [the first and wisest movement of nature] is "de conserver sa propre existence, n’importe aux dépens de qui" (Philosophie, p. 497) ["that of preserving one’s own existence at no matter whose expense" (Philosophy, p. 314)]. In addition to decreeing self preservation, Nature inspires what is commonly called vice, but which Sade considers to be the ultimate pleasure: the Duc declares, "Il arrive tous les jours qu’elle nous inspire l’inclination la plus violente pour ce que les hommes appellent crime... cette action dans vous n’eut jamais été que le résultat de ce penchant qu’elle vous aurait inspiré pour ce crime, penchant qu’elle vous dénotait en vous douant d’une si forte antipathie" (120 journées, p. 100) ["It happens every day that she [Nature] implants the most violent inclination to commit what mortals call crimes... this act would never have been anything but the result of the penchant for crime Nature put in you, a penchant she wished to draw your attention to by endowing you with such a powerful hostility" (Days, p. 293)]. Thus, if the law of Nature is pleasure at all costs, the only "crime" is in self-denial: "s’il y avait du crime à quelque chose, ce serait plutôt à résister aux penchants qu’elle nous inspire" (Philosophie, p. 499) ["we are fully convinced that if anything were criminal, it would be to resist the penchants she inspires in us"
The sufferings of others are irrelevant in the pursuit of pleasure, according to these characters: "nous devons, à quel prix que ce soit, préférer ce léger chatouillement qui nous délecte à cette somme immense des malheurs d'autrui" (120 journées, p. 466) ["we should, at whatever the price, prefer this most minor excitation which enchants us, to the immense sum of others' miseries" (Days, p. 283)].

In this world, the test to discover what is "natural" is whether or not pleasure is the result. Since Nature ordains pleasure, anything that brings pleasure is natural. Dolmancé exclaims, "je pars, moi, toujours d'un principe: si la nature défendait les jouissances sodomites, les jouissances incestueuses, les pollutions, etc., permettrait-elle que nous y trouvassions autant de plaisir? Il est impossible qu'elle puisse tolérer ce qui l'outrage" (Philosophie, p. 421) ["I base my attitude upon one principle: had Nature condemned sodomy's pleasure, incestuous correspondences, pollution, and so forth, would she have allowed us to find so much delight in them? That she may tolerate what outrages her is unthinkable" (Philosophy, p. 237)]. Furthermore, "la nature n'a pas deux voix, dont l'une fasse journellement le métier de condamner ce que l'autre inspire" (p. 457) ["Nature has not got two voices, you know, one of them condemning all day what the other commands" (p. 274)].
Sade's Nature is not a lawless state, as might be supposed: Nature is rigidly regulated by its own laws. Sexual pleasure is Nature's imperative; after all, desire is the voice of Nature. Nature ordains, for instance, that a woman let herself be "fucked": "Dans quelque état que se trouve une femme...elle ne doit jamais avoir d'autre but, d'autre occupation, d'autre désir que de se faire foutre...c'est pour cette unique fin que l'a créée la nature" (Philosophie, p. 406) ["In whatever circumstances, a woman... must never have for objective occupation, or desire anything save to have herself fucked... 'tis for this unique end Nature created her" (Philosophy, p. 222), and "nous sommes nés pour foutre, que nous accomplissons les lois de la nature en foutant, et que toute loi humaine qui contrarierait celles de la nature ne serait faite que pour le mépris" (p. 410) ["we are born to fuck, because by fucking we obey and fulfill Nature's ordinations, and because all man-made laws which would contravene Nature's are made for naught but our contempt" (Philosophy, p. 227)].

In the treatise, "Yet Another Effort," Dolmancé proposes that societal laws be brought into coordination with the imperatives of nature. Women and "buggers" especially should be "absolument rendues à l'état de nature; je veux que les lois leur permettent de se livrer à autant d'hommes que bon leur semblera" (Philosophie, p. 504) ["absolutely restored to a state of Nature; I want laws
permitting them to give themselves to as many men as they see fit" (Philosophy, p. 321)]. Sade wants to replace the law of civilization with the law of nature, which, as it turns out, is as artificial and arbitrary as the law it is designed to replace. Blanchot writes, "Sade's state principles---what we may term his basic philosophy---appears to be simplicity itself. This philosophy is one of self-interest, of absolute egoism: each of us must do exactly as he pleases, each of us is bound by one law alone, that of his own pleasure" (Philosophy, p. 40). The law of Nature is the law of self-gratification, as we have seen. The law of culture could be called the law of self-denial. Sade substitutes self-gratification for self-denial.

In the Seminaire XX Lacan writes, "Nothing forces people to enjoy or to have orgasm (jouir) except the superego. The superego, that is the imperative of orgasm---enjoy!" (Encore, p. 10). (This passage is exceedingly difficult to translate since the French verb jouir means to enjoy, to revel, and to have orgasm.) Whether the superego commands one to enjoy or not to enjoy is the same thing. The imperative "enjoy!" is the inverse of "don't enjoy!" and both commands are coming from the superego. The superego is of course the realm of the law. The law of Nature is just as imperious as the law of the father: being forced to enjoy, to experience pleasure, is just as despotic as being forced to abstain. 23 Lacan writes, in "Kant Avec Sade,"
"For Sade, one is always on the same side, the good or the bad." The law is the law, whether it is for pleasure or against it.

Sadian characters extol the law of pleasure, the law of Nature. Yet strangely enough, none of them live by this law. At the beginning of the stay at the Chateau de Silling, a number of statutes are created. These statutes regulate everything from the hour of arising to the menu. Each day of the month has a strict schedule, and there are plans for every moment of the day. "En sortant du souper, on passera dans le salon d'assemblée pour la célébration de ce qu'on appelle les orgies. Là, tout le monde se retrouvera....tou& serra vautré sur des carreaux par terre, et, à l'exemple des animaux, on changera, on se melera, on incestera, on adultera, on sodomisera et, toujours excepté les déflorations, on se livrera à tous les excès et à toutes les débauches..." (120 journées, p. 54) ["The evening meal concluded, Messieurs shall pass into the salon for the celebration of what are to be called the orgies. Everyone shall convene there... everyone shall be sprawled on the floor and, after the example of animals, shall change, shall commingle, entwine, couple incestuously, adulterously, sodomistically, deflowerings being at all times banned, the company shall give itself over to every excess and to every debauch" (Days, pp. 245-256). The four men sign this contract, and it is "legally" binding. The laws of the
Chateau greatly inhibit pleasure: "Curval, rentré et grumelant encore entre ses dents, disant que ces lois-là faisaient qu'on ne pouvait pas décharger à son aise" (120 journées, p. 270) ["And now Curval himself returns, grumbling between his teeth and swearing that all those dratted laws prevent a man from discharging at his ease, etc.," (Days, p. 485)]. Curval was the most rebellious against the law. One evening, "Curval... bandant comme un diable, déclara qu'il voulait faire sauter un pucelage, dut-il payer vingt amendes" (120 journées, p. 281) ["Curval, his prick as hard as a demon’s declared he’d be damned if it wasn’t a maidenhead he wanted to pop, even if he had to pay twenty fines" (Days, p. 496)]. However these three friends "le supplièrent de se soumettre à ce que lui-même avait prescrit, et que puisque eux, qui avaient pour le moins autant d’envie d’enfreindre ces lois, s’y soumettaient cependant" (p. 281) ["besought him to reconsider and submit to the law he had himself prescribed; and said they too had equally powerful urges to breach the contract, but held themselves somehow in check all the same" (Days, p. 497)].

Those who do not follow the "law" are punished. An example of this is the pious Zelmire who is caught "à prier Dieu" (120 journées, p. 166) [praying to God]. For this, she is "jugée à toute la rigueur des lois" (p. 167) [punished to the fullest extent of the law" (Days, p. 367)]. Poor Constance is constantly being punished as well. Her
husband, the Président lies about her conduct, but the law permits the four men to say what they will. For "les lois étaient formelles sur cela, et que jamais les femmes n'étaient crues" (120 journées, p. 234) ["the law was precise and formal on this point... women's speeches were given no credence in that society" (Days, p. 443)]. It would be impossible to say that pleasure reigns in the Chateau de Silling: laws prohibiting free sexuality are strict. The characters have not even instigated the law of Nature they preach about: rather, they have kept all the old laws. Sade is definitely not an anarchist: all of the characters are bound by the law. It is important to note that the characters themselves (at least the four major ones) created the laws and agreed to adhere to them in the same way that all society comes together to agree upon laws. The Chateau is just a microcosm of the society at large, where the powerful create laws in their best interest. Furthermore, the laws restricting sexual behavior serve to titillate: by momentarily foregoing pleasure, one is increasing anticipation. Thus we see that Sade has not taken us very far: we are once again back at the law of patriarchy. This law is not a completely negative thing: it holds the group together. In addition, it provokes transgression: the law of the father, which Sade is supposedly writing against, gives him a point of departure and a goal. In theory, then, Sade has proposed a law of
Nature, which is the exact reversal of the law of the father. In practice, he has maintained the law of the father, or at least a facsimile of it; it is a law which he enjoys transgressing. One clearly senses that much of the exuberance of Sade's texts would be decreased were there no notions of sin, crime, or vice.

In the *Philosophy*, Dolmancé continually preaches about pleasure and the law of Nature. Certainly he does not live by this new law: Dolmancé is first and foremost a man of principles. These principles serve the same function as the law serves in *120 Days*: they regulate what may be done, and what may not be done, and the precise ways that one may enjoy oneself. Principles are to the individual what laws are to the masses. Some mention of principles is made in *120 Days*: Curval was "ferme dans ses principes" (p. 315) and believed that "jamais le foutre ne doit ni dicter, ni diriger les principes: c'est aux principes à régler la manière de le perdre" ["Never ought fuck to be allowed to dictate or affect one's principles; 'tis for one's principles to regulate the manner of shedding it" (*Days*, p. 535)]. Duclos states that she has never made a single charitable distribution, and Durcet then exclaims, "mais tu as des principes!" (p. 219) [but you have principles!].

The insistence upon principles occurs for the first time in one of the orgies of *Philosophy*. The Chevalier is impatient to begin the festivities, but Dolmancé chides, "Ne
manquons à aucun des principes" (Philosophie, p. 453) [let's not fall short of any of our principles]. Sexual pleasure, the law of the bedchamber, is never completely spontaneous, as there are always principles (laws) to control this revelry. A further example of this is Dolmancé's reluctance to harvest the virginity of Eugénie. Eugénie possesses "le grand tort d'être un femme" (Philosophie, p. 451) [the large fault of being a woman]. Dolmancé apologizes for being unwilling to fuck Eugénie, and says, "nous autres bougres, nous ne nous piquons que de franchise et d'exactitude dans nos principes" (Philosophie, p. 462) ["we other buggers are very nice on the question of candor and the exactitude of our principles" (Philosophy, p. 278)]. Dolmancé's exacting principles will not permit him to fuck a woman. When Madame de Saint-Ange interrogates him as to whether he has truly permitted himself to commit murder and theft, he replies; "se refuse-t-on quelque chose avec mon tempérament et mes principes?" (Philosophy, p. 463) ["with a temperament and principles like mine, does one deny oneself anything?" (Philosophy, p. 279). This is a strange reply, since on the preceding page he has made it clear that he does deny himself some things. When he definitively declines Eugénie's maidenhead, Madame de Saint-Ange declares, "voilà ce qui s'appelle tenir un peu trop à ses principes!" (Philosophie, p. 474) ["that's what I call holding too closely to one's principles!" (Philosophy, p.
291]). Principles and laws bind even the most confirmed libertine: in Sade's world, there is actually very little liberty for the libertine. Punishments for infraction against the law of pleasure are strict, and there are principles which are not broken. It seems strange that the free-thinking Dolmancé should forego the pleasure of women for his principles: clearly he does not adhere to the law of Nature, which would demand that he get pleasure at all cost, at no matter whose expense. In the preface, "To Libertines," Sade writes of Dolmancé's "école" where one can learn to enjoy, "étendant la sphère de ses goûts et de ses fantaisies," [extending the sphere of his tastes and his fantasies]. Dolmancé, in the text, does just the opposite and narrows the scope of his enjoyment because of "principles." In the early pages of the Philosophy, the Chevalier defends Dolmancé's taste, and says it is ludicrous for men to be offended by his propositions (see pp 373-374). He admits that he is open to everything, and has given himself to Dolmancé. So, the Chevalier advocates openness to all sensations, but Dolmancé refuses some. It is just one of the many characteristic contradictions in Sade's texts.

In the Philosophy there are continual invectives uttered against the king; despotism is decried. Yet while the king may be dethroned, a new king is put in his place who is equally tyrannical. This new king is the sovereign
individual, who may murder and steal as "Nature" inspires him. In this new system, it is no longer corrupt government officials who pillage and murder in the name of the king, but individuals who murder and pillage in the name of Nature. The Father/king is not murdered and disposed of, but simply replaced. This aspect of the Sadian revolution is extremely conservative. Sade does reveal the arbitrary nature of law and power, however: whether the law is "enjoy!" or "don't enjoy!" is immaterial, it is the very same law. Sadian characters advocate the law of Nature, which is a reversal of the father's law, yet they do not practice it; in Sade's texts there is no liberation from law, but a different law, which regresses to the former. One truly finds the insistence of the law of the father in the behavior of Sadian personnages: pretending to overthrow one law for another, they behave in "the same old way."

V. The Revolt against God

God the Father is as despised as the law of the father is. At the Chateau, any sign of religion is severely punished. The Duc exhorts: "Vous avez vu à quel point on vous défend tout ce qui peut avoir l'air d'un acte de religion quelconque; je vous préviens qu'il y aura peu de crimes plus sévèrement puni... il n'y a pas vingt sectateurs aujourd'hui, et la religion qu'il invoque n'est qu'une fable
ridiculemment inventée par des fourbes dont l'intérêt à nous tromper n'est que trop visible à présent" (120 journées, p. 59-60) ["You have seen with what stringency you are forbidden anything resembling any act of religion whatsoever. I warn you: few crimes will be more severely punished than this one... in all the world there are not twenty persons today who cling to this mad notion of God's existence, and that the religion he invokes is nothing but a fable ludicrously invented by cheats and impostors, whose interest in deceiving us is only too clear in the present time" (Days, pp. 251-252). The intrusive narrator of 120 Days states: "C'est une véritable maladie de l'âme que la dévotion; on a beau faire, on ne s'en corrige point. Plus facile à s'imprégner dans l'âme des malheureux, parce qu'elle les console, parce qu'elle leur offre des chimères pour les consoler de leurs maux, il est bien plus difficile encore de l'extirper dans ces âmes-là que dans d'autres" (120 journées, p. 282) ["Piety is indeed a true disease of the soul. Apply whatever remedies you please, the fever will not subside, the patient never heals; finding readier entry into the souls of the woebegone and downtrodden, because to be devout consoles them for their other ills, it is far more difficult to cure in such persons than in others" (Days, p. 498)]. The Bishop of X*** himself is a profound atheist, as are the other men. (The Bishop is a typical bishop of his time.) In the "lawless" Chateau, "On
n'a plus là que Dieu et la conscience: or, de quelle force peut être le premier frein aux yeux d'un athée de cœur et de réflexion?" (120 journées, p. 207) ["nothing exists save God and one's conscience; well, what weight may the former exert, of what account may God be in the eyes of an atheist in heart and brain?" (Days, p. 412)]. For an atheist, "God" is a signifier without a referent. Nonetheless, great pleasure is taken in all of the insults heaped against Him. For instance, "Il est sévèrement défendu d'aller à la garde-robe ailleurs que dans la chapelle" (120 journées, p. 51) ["it is strictly forbidden to relieve oneself anywhere save in the chapel" (Days, p. 242)]. Blasphemies are continually uttered, and at the point of climax, the men utter such oaths as "By God's fuck," and "by God's balls," etc. If God is a meaningless signifier, then it is strange that such delight should be taken in defiling all vestiges of religion.

Dolmancé exclaims, "un de mes plus grands plaisirs est de jurer Dieu quand je bande. Il me semble que mon esprit, alors mille fois plus exalté, abhorré et méprise bien mieux cette dégoûtante chimère; je voudrais trouver une façon ou de la mieux inventer, ou de l'outrager davantage; et quand mes maudites réflexions m'amènent à la conviction de la nullité de ce dégoûtant objet de ma haine, je m'irrite et voudrais pouvoir aussitôt réédifier le fantôme, pour que ma rage au moins portât sur quelque chose". (Philosophie, p.
one of my largest pleasures is to swear in God’s name when I’m stiff. It seems then that my spirit, at such a moment exalted a thousand times more, abhors, scorns this disgusting fiction; I would like to discover some way better to revile it or to outrage it further; and when my accursed musings lead me to the conviction of the nullity of this repulsive object of my hatred, I am irritated and would instantly like to be able to re-edify the phantoms so that my rage might at least fall upon some target" (Philosophy, pp. 241-242)]. Dolmancé needs God in order to denigrate him, and he creates a space for God in the text by constantly blasphemying. Lacan discusses a curious paradox in the Story of Juliette: Saint-Fond, self-avowed atheist who scorns the idea of hell as "an instance of the subjection of religious tyranny" (Écrits II, p. 132), gives his victims a blasphemous extreme unction in order to assure their perpetual torment in hell. It is a surprising thing for an atheist to do. Lacan further observes that the "Sadian phantasm better situates itself within the bearings of the Christian ethic than elsewhere" (Écrits II, p. 147). Sade desperately needs God, and longs for God to show himself. God is present in Sadian texts by the continual insults the characters showered upon him.

When Sade was first imprisoned after the Rose Keller affair, he wrote in a letter to his wife: "As unhappy as I am, I do not bewail my fate; for I desire divine
punishment" (Bloch, p. 169). It is an interesting sadistic request, this desire for divine punishment. The scourges of the human judicial system are unsatisfying, and Sade desires something on a grander scale. Juliette says something similar at the end of her life story: "I would like to see the divine or human power that can stand in the way of my desires" (Bloch, p. 222). Juliette is throwing her gauntlet at God. Sadian invective against religion are a desire to make God manifest Himself: Sade, in his work, is challenging God to appear. Sade is challenging the Deity; his work deliberately tries to provoke God to anger. By insulting God, Sade is keeping Him present in the text. Thus, the figure he tries most to rebel against ends up occupying an important role. This is the same paradox encountered by Sade in his experience with the government: the King is replaced by sovereigns more despotic than any actual ruler could have been. By choosing to rebel against God, Sade actually creates His existence/consistence.

It must be noted that although Sadian voices continually degrade Father figures, and advocate total revolt against God and King, actual paternity is privileged. This can be seen time and time again in both 120 Days and Philosophy (as well as in Sade’s own life). This aggrandisement of physical paternity is linked with hatred toward the biological mother. Throughout 120 Days tales of matricide are interspersed among the tales of sexual
adventures. When one of her prostitutes is tempted to help her mother, Duclos exclaims, "je lui démontrai qu'une mère, pour nous avoir porté dans son sein, au lieu de mériter de nous quelque reconnaissance, ne méritait que de la haine, puisque, pour son seul plaisir, et au risque de nous exposer à tous les malheurs qui pouvaient nous atteindre dans le monde, elle nous avait cependant mis au jour dans la seule intention de satisfaire sa brutale lubricité" (120 journées, p. 262) ["I demonstrated to her that for having carried us in her womb, instead of deserving some gratitude, a mother merits nothing but hate, since 'twas for her pleasure alone and at the risk of exposing us to all the ills and sorrows the world has in store for us that she brought us into the light, with the sole object of satisfying her brutal lubricity’" (120 Days, p. 476)]. Madame de Saint-Ange explains, "il (est) néanmoins prouvé que ce foetus ne doive son existence qu'au foutre de l'homme...en ce cas,l'enfant formé de sang du père ne devait de tendresse qu'à lui" (120 journées, p. 390) ["it is proven that the fetus owes its existence only to the man’s sperm...such being the case, the child born of the father’s blood owes filial tenderness to him alone..." (Days, p. 206)]. Dolmancé continues along those same lines: "Uniquement formés du sang de nos pères, nous ne devons absolument rien à nos mères" (Philosophie, p. 391) ["uniquely formed of our sires’ blood, we owe absolutely nothing to our mothers" (Philosophy, p. 207)].
It seems paradoxical that Sade could reject the "law of the Father" but carefully, "scientifically" defend the role of the father. What can this mean except that Sade himself aspires to the role of the Father? Freud writes that the primal horde who murdered the father "not merely hated and feared their father, but also honoured him as an example to follow; in fact, each son wanted to place himself in his father's position." As we saw in our discussion of the law of the King, Sade wanted to replace the actual sovereign with the sovereign individual. Sade himself aspires to the throne of the Father, and accedes to it through writing, through being an author(ity).

In 120 Days of Sodom writing is explicitly allied with law. The noblemen compose the "Statutes," the written text-within-the-text. Four men control all the activities in the Chateau, and they do this through the power of the written word. The men have written the statutes, and none can go against their law. In the Philosophy, it is Dolmancé who is the father of the tract, "Yet Another Effort." This document, which serves as the law of text, expounds all the principles that control sexual activity in the bedchamber. It is this written law which inspires Eugénie to sew up the womb of her mother. The characters of the bedchamber receive a written note from Eugénie's father to punish her mother. Father figures orchestrate all sexual activity, and ultimately represent the law of the texts, through the
written word. In these works, it is the written word that is the source of power. Ultimately it is this power itself that the historical Sade possesses: dispossessed of all his land and property, it is through writing alone that Sade achieved the power that he enjoys today, both as the author of written texts and as the father of a certain kind of sexual activity. Sade sought to usurp the power of religion and government, and to ascend to the throne of the dead father --- not seek to destroy the father, but to assume his place. Sade proposes the law of "Nature," a mirror image of the law of culture, and in the final analysis stays close to the law of patriarchy.

Sade's writing represents both a failure and a success. Any attempt to overthrow the Father must end in failure; it is impossible to usurp a dead man. The act of writing itself is profoundly conservative, and Sade's writing is magisterial. He established his own legacy of fictional paternity through his writing; he is the father of sadomasochistic homotexts as well as the etymological father of perversion.
Notes


5 It is interesting to note that at least in American letters what an author writes is much more important than how he behaves. For instance, Benjamin Franklin and Horatio Algers are both cited as exemplary men because of what they wrote, their verbal self-depictions. The fact that Franklin was a libertine with a prodigious number of love children is seldom discussed, nor the fact that Algers was a flagrant homosexual.

All forms of art, while seemingly superfluous in our industrial society, are nonetheless given great power when it comes to the corruption of youth.

In the large Southern university where this is being written, many books in the HQ section are not available on the shelves, and if one is seeking a book on homosexuality or sadism, one is forced to retrieve books from a special place known as the "Locked Cage." In order to see one of these subversive texts one has to make a special request at the check-out desk, and these books can only be borrowed for short periods of time. Most libraries operate under this same system: at the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris, this special part of the library is called the "enfer" [hell].

Porné is also the root of the word "fornicator."


See Iwan Bloch, pp. 54-55 for a complete description of the Saint Medardus affair.

Bloch writes that in 1791 "there existed in the Palais Royal a public theatre where a so-called savage and his mate, both nude, before the eyes of a crowded audience of both sexes went through the act of coition" (Bloch, p. 73).
"The eighteenth century produced the greater part of the pornographic literature existing today.... The lion's share in the production of pornography falls in the period from 1770 to 1800 when only eroticism could move the public," Bloch p. 58. Bloch notes that "The bookstores were literally pornographic libraries," (p. 59), and adds later that in the 1790's "all the notorious works of the Marquis de Sade were publicly sold. They were found in all bookstores and catalogues" (p. 183). Bloch has been called a "francophobe," but his historical chronicling of the period is well-researched.

Jacob Stockinger, in "Homosexuality and the French Enlightenment" writes: "In the seventeenth century homosexuality had become an aristocratic privilege and clandestine societies had been formed, the most famous being the 'Ordre des Sodomites,' and the 'Société des Amis du Crièce.' The eighteenth century saw a proliferation of lesbian societies, one of which, 'Les Vestales de Vénus,' was reputed to have chapters throughout the nation," Homosexualities and French Literature, Stambolian and Marks, eds., (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1979), p. 173. Bloch writes that "There was (sic) in Paris secret clubs whose members united for the practical study of debauchery. They had their temple with a statue of Priapus, of Sappho and other symbols of sexual passion; they had also their own especial speech and symbols," (Bloch, p. 87). (Priapus was
a relatively obscure fertility god who was always depicted with an enormous penis.)


20 Many critics have made note of the text-within-a-text in this work, most notably Roland Barthes, in the previously cited _Sade, Fourier, Loyola_, and Pierre Klossowski in _Sade mon prochain_.

21 Blanchot, Klossowski and other have noted that in Sade's works there is only a footnote's difference between the victims and the torturers. The only distinction between the two is in the response: victims are repulsed and cry
out whereas the torturers are delighted when the same
treatment is administered to them. For instance, some of
the children scream and become ill when forced to eat shit
or when they are beaten; the Bishop, et al., voluntarily eat
shit and love being beaten. So, the important thing is not
the activity, rather it is the response.

22 A simplistic summary of the law of the father would
be the Sunday School maxim: God first, others second, self
last.

23 A "homey" example of this is experienced by all of
those tourists who take brief vacations and force themselves
to "have fun." There is nothing more constricting that to
have to be amused.


25 For a detailed account of the Rose Keller affair,
see Lely in the previously cited Vie du marquis de Sade avec
un examen de ses ouvrages. Rose Keller was a prostitute
whom Sade whipped. She escaped from the castle where this
happened and notified the authorities, presumably to get
money from Sade. This was the first incident which cause
his incarceration. It is speculated that Sade was a victim
of anti-nobility sentiments of the time, and was punished as
a scapegoat.

26 Sigmund Freud, Moses and Monotheism, trans.
Chapter 4 Vautrin, Paternity and Incest

I. Sade and Vautrin

The laws of patriarchy, to recapitulate, are articulated in a special way in the texts of Sade. Characters such as Dolmancé and the four men of the Château de Silling represent leaders of a primal horde which seek to overthrow the symbolic father and usurp his power for themselves. Law occupies an important role in the Sadian text: those who advocate an overthrow of law have no freedom in their lives. These men seek to institute a law of pleasure, which proves impossible. Paternity is privileged in the text, and Sade assumes power through being the father of the text, and the father of perversion.

Paternity is a central metaphor in several of the works in Balzac's Comédie humaine. Vautrin, in the tradition of Dolmancé and the men of Silling, tries to establish himself in a certain kind of symbolic paternity. Preying on the vulnerable Rastignac and later on the sensitive Lucien de Rubempré, Vautrin exploits their desire for a "father." The attempts to position himself as father of these two young men inevitably fail, and Vautrin has no more success in usurping the symbolic place of the father than do the personages of Sade's texts.

Vautrin is at the heart of three of the major novels of the Comédie: he is introduced in Le Père Goriot, reappears
in *Illusions perdues*, and quietly retires in *Splendeurs et misères des courtisanes*. He is also the main character in an unsuccessful play that bears his name as title. The question of paternity is an important one where Vautrin is concerned. Vautrin, like the characters in Sade, forms a kind of primal horde of criminals who seek to operate in defiance of the laws and constraints of culture. However, the revolt is insidious, and at times Vautrin operates within the context of the laws he seeks to overthrow (e.g., he pretends to be a priest). Language also has an important role in the texts dealing with Vautrin: characters manipulate language as part of their rebellion. Criminals, which serve as a remnant of the primal horde, have a special vocabulary, and Balzac exploits this in order to make a variety of observations about the nature of language. Homosexuality and sadomasochism are omnipresent in the texts: the novels which center around Vautrin are filled with murders, suicides, crimes and homosexual/paternal lust, and the problems of paternity, homosexuality and sadomasochism identify them as sadomasochistic homotexts in the tradition of Sade.

In discussing these works which center around Vautrin, there are three aspects which must be considered: first of all, the question of homosexuality must be dealt with. It is linked subversively with the issue of paternity, and rebellion toward the father. These two aspects are linked
inseparably with language: there is a continual play of signifiers, and both homosexuality and paternity become linguistic problems.

II. Homotextuality in the Balzacian text

There can be no doubt of the homosexuality of Vautrin, or of the major significance of homosexuality in Balzac's work. We must consider the Vautrin series to be a homotext because of the solid link between homosexuality and writing. Vautrin, the sodomite, is first and foremost a symbol of the writer: he has a strong relationship to language. Vautrin says to Lucien, "Je suis l'auteur, tu seras le drame," and he calls his scheming "prose" ("Nous faisons de la prose," p. 107). Lucien credits Vautrin with "la poésie du mal" (p. 464).

In "Balzac du côté de Sodome," Philippe Berthier discusses the ways in which the homotextuality of Vautrin can be examined. "One can, first of all, in order to reassure oneself in polite society, isolate it [homosexuality] as the dissolute character of an asocial sub-humanity, excluded from the community, pushed back into the bottom of jail... a sex which could never concern the reader... [who could say] 'I have nothing in common with those animals'" (my translation). The more "hypocritical" view of the "dominant society" is to see in the relationship
of Vautrin and Rastignac an "'idealistic' example of beautiful sentiments, a noble devotion" (Berthier, p. 170). These critics are loath to see the homosexual base of the relationship between Lucien and Vautrin, and choose to perceive it as a non-sexual friendship. Finally, there are those critics who deal with the significance of the expressed homosexuality in the text. This third reading, "the strongest and most interesting," sees the sodomy of Vautrin and Lucien as something which places the work in the "vast problematic of transgression and societal challenge" (p. 170). Berthier writes that there is an "organic link between the affirmation of a forbidden sexual desire and revolt against a certain moral and political order.... In society as it currently functions, there can be no place, except in the otherwhere (the nowhere) of prison, for an institutionalization of homosexuality. In the social corpus itself, it can only inscribe itself as masked, encoded, because it is the bearer of a terrible sign of contradiction and signifies a rupture of solidarity. It says no" (p. 170). Some critics have opted for a position midway between the second and third option. These critics will concede that homotextuality is present in Balzac's work, but relegate its importance to a very minor part. For instance, when an abstract of this chapter was presented to the editor of Romance Quarterly, he objected to the prominence given to the homosexuality of Vautrin, and
insisted that homosexuality was merely a "spice" of the text, and not one of the major factors.

Homosexuality is the "elsewhere" of mainstream society (and indeed mainstream criticism) that is never directly referred to, but always alluded to in the spaces of texts. As marginal sexuality, it is present only in the margins of the text. Although fascinated by "realism" and detail, Balzac merely hints at sexuality. The graphic depiction of sexual acts in general was banned, and certainly representations of homosexuality were considered even more transgressive. References to homosexuality had to be veiled and encoded. Hence we see that the problem of homosexuality is indeed a linguistic problem, and homosexuality transmigrates into homotextuality, its literary correlative. Berthier writes, "Homosexuality, without a doubt, can only express itself in and by these lags (décalages), which are both revealing and misleading, these elisions, these evasions, which constitute the 'codes' of a forbidden text" (Berthier, p. 157). 6 Balzac, although following in the footsteps of Sade, deals very differently with homosexuality. While Sade delights in giving detailed lists of all things sexual, Balzac gives detailed lists of all things non-sexual, and sexuality (especially homosexuality) is only hinted at.

This encoded homosexual discourse is found at the very beginning of Le Père Goriot. The Maison Vauquer has a sign
which reads, "Pension bourgeoise des deux sexes et autres" [Boarding house for the two sexes and others]. The "and others" is an example of a space in the text where homosexuality is present. This passage creates an opening for homosexuality to enter the text. It does not become any clearer until the mid part of the book, and even then it is only suggested.

In the third section of the book, entitled "Trompe-la-Mort," we discover the secrets of Vautrin. He is an escaped convict, a member of a primal horde called la Société des Dix Mille (the Society of the Ten Thousand), a group of high-class criminals who will not engage in any job that involves less than ten thousand francs. More will be said about this rebellious band at a later moment.

Mlle Michonneau, together with Poiret, is bribed by the police to trap Vautrin. She enthusiastically (vivement) suggests that they utilize a lovely young lady to snare him, but the inspector replies, "Apprenez un secret: il n'aime pas les femmes" [Learn a secret: he doesn't love women] (P.G., p. 189). The inspector does not clearly enunciate that Vautrin is homosexual (one major reason is that the word had not yet been invented); by suggesting that Vautrin does not like women, the other characters (and the reader) are invited to speculate about why this might be.

Once we have been given this clue, the text reads in a different way. Vautrin's early, emphatic statement to
Rastignac takes on a new signification: he declares, "Je vous aime," (P.G. p. 117). After drugging Rastignac, Vautrin, "plaçant la tête de l'étudiant sur la chaise, pour qu'il put dormir commodément, il le baisa chaleureusement au front, en chantant: 'Dormez, mes chères amours! Pour vous je veillerai toujours'" [placing the head of the student on the chair, so that he could sleep comfortably, he kissed him warmly on the forehead, singing, 'Sleep, my dear loves! I'll always look after you'] (P.G., p. 205). This kiss on the forehead may be an indication of further sexual activity. The kiss, like the declaration, "I love you," is ambiguous and creates the possibility of further interpretation.

In discussing the possibility of sexual relations between Vautrin and Rastignac one has to avoid the temptation to discuss them as if they had been "real." There is textual evidence to suggest that there was a physical relationship between Rastignac and Vautrin. Mlle Michonneau, who was the first, and perhaps only character in the Maison Vauquer to learn the secret of Vautrin, observes to Rastignac:

"Monsieur soutient Collin," répondit-elle en jetant sur l'étudiant un regard venimeux et interrogateur, "il n'est pas difficile de savoir pourquoi."

A ce mot, Eugène bondit comme pour se ruer à
la vieille fille et l’étrangler. Ce regard, dont il comprit les perfidies, venait de jeter une horrible lumière dans son âme (P.G., p. 228).

"Monsieur supports Collin," she responded, in throwing a venomous and interrogative look on the student, "It’s not difficult to know why.

At these words, Eugene leapt up as if to throw himself at the old spinster and strangle her. That look, whose perfidiousness he understood, had just thrown a horrible light into his soul.

That "look" infers a great deal. The "horrible light" in Rastignac’s soul seems to be the realization of Vautrin’s homosexuality, but it could reflect shame at being discovered. Michonneau clearly insinuates that there is some kind of intimate bond between the two men. Even if nothing physical had transpired between the two, Rastignac was symbolically seduced: when Vautrin proposed his schemes to Rastignac, Rastignac responds "avidement" (p. 127), and admits to him that "vous me feriez douter de moi-même," (p. 132) [you make me doubt myself] and later claims that "ma tête se perd"(p. 133) [I am losing my head]. If Rastignac seems to reject Vautrin’s plans, it may well be only because Vautrin is arrested and disappears from the text.

At the end of Les Illusions perdues, Vautrin appears again, disguised this time as Carlos Herrera, a Spanish
priest. ("Herrero" in Spanish means "iron-worker," and throughout Splendeurs et misères there are references to Vautrin's "main-de-fer" [iron hand].) When Vautrin first meets the suicidal Lucien, he immediately falls in love: Vautrin (or Carlos, as we must call him for the next part) "parut comme saisi de la beauté profondément mélancolique du poète, de son bouquet symbolique et de sa mise élégante. Ce voyageur ressemblait à un chasseur qui trouve une proie longtemps et inutilement cherchée" [Carlos appeared to be seized by the profoundly melancholy beauty of the poet, his symbolic bouquet and elegant dress. This traveller (Carlos) resembled a hunter who finds a prey he has vainly sought for a long time]. Carlos is smoking a phallic cigar, and offers one to Lucien with a "sorte de seduction" (I.P., p. 585). Carlos tells Lucien "Obéissez-moi comme une femme obéit à son mari, comme un enfant obéit à sa mère" [Obey me like a wife obeys her husband, like a child obeys his mother] (I.P., p. 597). Finally, Carlos explains to Lucien, "Enfant, dit l'Espagnol en prenant Lucien par le bras, as-tu médité la Venise sauvée d'Otway? As-tu compris cette amitié profonde, d'homme à homme, qui lie Pierre à Jaffier, qui fait pour eux d'une femme une bagatelle, et qui change entre eux tous les termes sociaux?" ["Child," said the Spaniard, taking Lucien by the arm, "are you familiar with the Venice Saved of Otway? Did you understand that deep friendship, between men, that links Pierre with
Jaffier, and makes a woman superfluous for them, and which changes between them all social terms?" (I.P., p. 601). Carlos takes Lucien by the arm when he says this, and Berthier in his article makes careful note of all the many times in the text where Carlos touches Lucien.

In Splendeurs et misères des courtisanes the relationship between Lucien and Carlos is compared with the Greek love of the past.

These passions, inexplicable to the masses, are perfectly explained by this thirst for the beautiful ideal that distinguished creative beings. These alliances, illustrated in the past by the example of Aristotle, Socrates, Plato, Alcibiades, Cethegus, and Pompey, and so monstrous in the eyes of the vulgar, are founded on the sentiment that caused Louis XIV to construct Versailles, that forces men into all
The relationship between Carlos and Lucien is certainly Greek in the purest sense of the word. Pederasty, the institution of education for young boys, is the model of Carlos and Lucien's behavior. Carlos is the mentor, the teacher, and certainly the more aged of the two, and Lucien is his disciple. Pederasty among the Greeks certainly did not exclude heterosexual intercourse and marriage: young men were expected to marry. Lucien's relationship to Carlos is not compromised by his love for Esther: Carlos encourages him to have women (although Carlos' motives are financial).  

Other characters in the novel seem to be well aware of the relationship between Lucien and Carlos. Mme Camusot proclaims, "Monsieur Camusot a la certitude que ce monstre a mis en lieu sûr les lettres les plus compromettantes des maîtresses de son... -Ami, dit vivement la duchesse" [Monsieur Camusot is certain that that monster put in a safe place the most compromising of the letters of the mistresses of his... -Friend, said the duchess quickly] (Splendeurs, p. 564). This particular ellipsis is one of the spaces in the text in which homotextuality is most evident. Balzac, whose texts contain such bold editorial comment from the narrator, is strangely reserved about homosexuality, but it seems unlikely that he refrains from detail because he is disgusted about homosexuality (it is said that he was
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exceedingly curious about it). Rather, his reticence and silence enforce a secrecy about homosexuality, and thus a certain titillation.

III. Problems of Paternity and Rebellion

What is more interesting and revealing about these texts than their coy homotextuality is the fact that this is linked implicitly with the problem of paternity. In all the works dealing with Collin, the sexually seductive side of paternity is made obvious. Balzac explains this link of paternity and sexuality: "Trompe-la-mort avait réalisé la superstition allemande DU DOUBLE par un phénomène de paternité morale que concevront les femmes qui, dans leur vie, ont aimé véritablement, qui ont senti leur âme passée dans celle de l'homme aimé, qui ont vécu sa vie..." [Trompe-la-mort made the German superstition of the Double come true by a phenomenon of moral paternity that women will understand, who have truly loved in their lives, and who have felt their soul pass into that of the loved man, who have lived his life...] (Splendeurs, p. 493). In this passage, the "paternal" love of Collin is compared to the love of a man for a woman. The "moral" side of paternity is underscored, and thus the symbolic role of paternity is made evident. Lucien considers himself to be the "fils spirituel" [spiritual son] of Collin, (Splendeurs, p. 463),
and in his last letter to Collin, makes reference to the
"paternelle tendresse que vous m'avez portée" [the paternal
tenderness that you have shown me] (Splendeurs, p. 464).
Paternity is not reduced to biology; rather, it is a
theoretical function. Fatherhood is a place of power, a
locus of protection, mixed with a certain arbitrary
despotism (see the quote from Freud in the second footnote).

During the trial, Carlos (who at this point in the
book is called Collin) poses as the actual father of Lucien.
He tries to persuade the judge that he is the natural father
of Lucien, and after the suicide, seeing his great grief,
the doctor says, "C'est bien son fils!" [That was truly his
son!] To which the director responds, "Vous croyez?" [You
think so?] which throws the doctor into a "reverie"
(Splendeurs, p. 498). This revery is another space in the
text, a blank in which homosexuality threatens to appear.

There is a sexual link between father and child. In
his Three Contributions to the Theory of Sex Freud
introduces the idea that there is an important sexual link
between the child and its parents, especially the mother.11
If the child's sexual relationship to the mother is a
literal one, his/her relationship to the father is a
symbolic one. The connection between paternity and
sexuality is not peculiar to Splendeur et misères, but has
first been introduced in Le Père Goriot. All of the
inhabitants of the Maison Vauquer believe that the two
daughters of Goriot, Delphine and Anastasie, are Goriot's mistresses. This is not a completely false assumption; Goriot himself admits that his daughters have been his "maitresses" and his "vice" (P.G., p. 292). While the comparison of his daughters to his mistresses is certainly metaphorical, it is a most significant one: certainly any metaphor for closeness could have been chosen, but in this instance, as in the ones cited earlier, Balzac uses images of sex. (Once again, see Family Plots for an interesting perspective on this sexual aspect of paternity.) At the apartment on the rue d'Artois, Goriot treats his daughter in an erotic manner: "Goriot se couchait aux pieds de sa fille pour les baiser; il la regardait longtemps dans les yeux; il frottait sa tête contre sa robe; enfin, il faisait des folies comme en aurait fait l'amant le plus jeune et le plus tendre" [Goriot lay down at the feet of his daughter in order to kiss them; he looked at her a long time in the eyes; he rubbed his head against her dress; in a word, he did all the foolishness that the youngest, most tender lover would have done] (P.G. p. 240). Certainly the comparative adverb "comme" is used, indicating that we are not to take this literally, but nonetheless there is a symbolic incestual tendency present. Certainly Balzac would not have us believe that actual incest was taking place: we must interpret him symbolically rather than literally.

The Maison Vauquer is indeed a "patriarchalorama" (P.
G., p. 171) where Vautrin and Goriot are vying for the symbolic paternity of Rastignac. The sexual overtones of the father-son relationship are similar to the ones present in pederasty. The son's sexual arousal by the father is primarily a symbolic one. Vautrin, whose sexual relationship with Rastignac has already been discussed, calls himself repeatedly "votre petit papa Vautrin" (P. G., p. 119). Goriot asks Rastignac, "Vous voulez donc être aussi mon cher enfant?" [Would you like to be my dear child too] (P. G., p. 170). Goriot transfers the metaphorically sexual fatherhood he gives his daughters onto Rastignac as well. When Goriot carries Rastignac back to the Maison Vauquer, he "parut l'enlever comme si c'eut été sa maîtresse" [seemed to lift him up as if it had been his mistress] (P. G., p. 232). Goriot and Vautrin seem to be offering two different kinds of paternity, Goriot's being traditional, Vautrin's being criminal, but in reality both men are offering Rastignac the same thing. Desire for the phallus becomes blurred with desire for the penis: sexual desire is not absent from the filial-paternal relationship.

The relationship between Vautrin and his paramours is complicated. Both Lucien and Rastignac are effeminate. Mme de Couture observes that Rastignac is "comme une jeune fille" (P. G. p. 206). Lucien is also androgynous and not clearly masculine: he is constantly described in feminine terms: his sister calls him "une jolie femme de la pire
"espèce" [a beautiful woman of the worst kind] (Splendeurs, p. 549). (Of course the major inference that Balzac would have us seize here is that Lucien has prostituted his creative talent as a writer.) Lucien is constantly referred to as "enfant" and "ange" in the same way that Rastignac and Esther are. One wonders if Vautrin's relationship to these two men is not really travestied heterosexuality. Luce Irigaray, in Speculum de l'autre femme, insists that male homosexuality is present in a sublimated way in all institutions: pedagogy, marriage, commerce, even orthodox heterosexuality (see Speculum de l'autre femme, Paris: Editions de Minuit, 1974, p. 106). However, it might be more appropriate to say that heterosexuality is present in a sublimated way in many homosexual relationships. Freud creates the paradigm of active/passive roles for sexuality where the male represents the active component and the female the passive. What is important in the Balzacian world is not the gender of the one dominated, but the domination. The domination expresses itself in a sadomasochistic way: sexuality is an exercise of power, not pleasure. It is a matter of being kept (whether male or female) and following the orders of the one who controls the relationship. Lucien's relationship to Esther is a mirror image of Vautrin's relationship to him. One dominates, and one submits.

Jacques Collin, whose initials associate him with Jesus
Christ, represents the leader of a primal horde in revolt against the law of the Father. Freud, in Moses and Monotheism observes that Christ functions as the "leader of the brother horde" (p. 110). Collin is himself trying to usurp the role of the father, and this is his rebellion. (As we have seen, no living person can aspire to the role of the dead Father.) In the Père Goriot, Vautrin seeks Rastignac's assistance in his plan:

Mon idée est d'aller vivre de la vie patriarcale au milieu d'un grand domaine, cent mille arpents, par exemple, aux États-Unis, dans le sud. Je veux m'y faire planteur, avoir des esclaves, gagner quelques bons petits millions... en vivant comme un souverain, en faisant mes volontés, en menant une vie qu'on ne conçoit pas ici.... Je suis un grand poète. Mes poésies, je ne les écris pas: elles consistent en actions et en sentiments. Je possède en ce moment cinquante mille francs, qui me donneraient à peine quarante nègres. J'ai besoin de deux cent mille francs, parce que je veux deux cents nègres, afin de satisfaire mon goût pour la vie patriarcale. Des nègres, voyez-vous? c'est des enfants tout venus dont on fait ce qu'on veut, sans qu'un curieux procureur du roi arrive vous en demander compte...

[My idea is to go live the patriarchal life in the
middle of a great estate, a hundred thousand acres, for example, in the United States, in the South. I want to make myself a planter, have slaves, make several good little millions... living like a sovereign, doing what I like, living a life that one cannot even conceive of here.... I'm a great poet. My poetry is not written, it consists in actions and sentiments. I possess right now fifty thousand francs, which would barely give me forty negroes. I need two hundred thousand francs, because I want two hundred negroes, in order to satisfy my taste for patriarchal life. Negroes, do you see? They are newly arrived children that you do what you want with, without some curious proxy of the king coming to trouble you... [P.G., p. 126]

Negroes, then, are like newly born children, with whom you can do what you want. Vautrin plans on starting his own plantation in another country, where the proxy of the king (the Father) will not trouble him. One of the "charms" of this plan, notes Berthier, is the "supremacy" Vautrin will have "over the bodies of his slaves" (Berthier, p. 160). Vautrin wants to set up a little homosexual colony in the South where he will be absolute Master/Father in a capitalistic as well as a sexual way. We must note carefully the line "Je suis un grand poète..." Vautrin's
actions are linked with the project of artistic (literary) creation. Thus in a strange way Vautrin is a mise-en-abîme of Balzac the writer. By calling himself a poet, Vautrin places his usurpation of the father within the domain of literary creation.

When he reappears in Illusions perdues, Vautrin disguises himself as one of society's most respected father figures, a priest. Carlos Herrera tells Lucien,

"Ne voyez dans les hommes, et surtout dans les femmes, que des instruments; mais ne le leur laissez pas voir. Adorez comme Dieu même celui qui, placé plus haut que vous, peut vous être utile, et ne le quittez pas qu'il n'ait payé très cher votre servilité. Dans le commerce du monde, soyez enfin âpre comme le juif et bas comme lui: faites pour la puissance tout ce qu'il fait pour l'argent.... Vous voulez dominer le monde, n'est-ce pas?"

[Don't see men, and especially women, as anything but instruments; but don't let them see it. Adore like God himself he who is placed above you and can be useful to you, and don't leave him until he has dearly paid for your servility. In the commerce of the world, be, in a word, rough like the Jew and be low like him: do
everything for power that he does for money....
You want to dominate the world, don't you?] (Splendeurs, p. 591).

This passage could be taken directly from Sade's *Philosophie dans le boudoir*. Herrera has Lucien vow to do everything he can for power. Lucien is, after all, the "vengeance" of Herrera (Splendeurs, p. 129). Vautrin has always been surrounded by a horde, be it the Dix Mille or the young men he is able to seduce. At the end of the text, Collin has not succeeded in any of his tentative rebellions; his hordes have all revolted against him. Rastignac has become too strong for him by the end of *Père Goriot*, and Esther and Lucien break out of the iron chain by committing suicide. By the end of Splendeurs, Collin is re-forming his primal horde: he still has the aid of his biological "tante" Jacqueline Collin (in the French, "tante" means both "aunt" and homosexual.)\(^{14}\) Collin also has Prudence Servien (Europe) and her husband, and well as presumably his new "tante," Theodore Calvi.

Vautrin's "Last Incarnation" involves his becoming a police agent, with the express aim of bringing his nemesis, Corentin, to ruin. It is in this last part of Splendeurs that the reader is educated about the former life of Collin; at the end of the Vautrin trilogy we meet the beginning. In the middle of *Le Père Goriot* we discover that Collin was an "homme de confiance" [confidence man] and "agent,"
"conseil," and "banquier" of the prison (P.G., p. 186). We also learn that Collin is nicknamed "Trompe-la-mort" [tricker of death]. At the end of Splendeurs this information is given again; for the first time, the reader sees Collin in his "element," the prison. Whereas in Père Goriot Collin is introduced as the confidence man of three prisons, in Splendeurs it becomes clear that he is the actual head of the Society of the Ten Thousand. Collin is known by the inmates of the prison as "Sa Majesté le Dab" (p. 521). "Dab" is slang for "the chief." Collin is the father of this rebellious horde, a group of mainly homosexual criminals. Before considering this last "incarnation," let us look at the importance of language in Vautrin's rebellion, for he is first and foremost, he reminds us, a "grand poète."

IV. The Ultimate Rebellion Against the Father's Discourse

The narrator "interrupts" the final dénouement of the novel for an "Essai philosophique, linguistique et littéraire sur l'argot, les filles, et les voleurs" [Philosophical, linguistic and literary essay on slang, prostitutes, and thieves] (Splendeurs, p. 507). In the world of the prison, the moral values of the bourgeoisie are mirrored: "l'aristocratie est la criminalité," (p. 507). They are called the "ducs et pairs du bagne" [dukes and
peers of the prison] (p. 512), and most of them were "en révolte contre la société depuis leur enfance" [in revolt against society since their childhood] (p. 513). In this essay on their slang, the narrator writes, "Reconnaissons d'ailleurs la haute antiquité de l'argot!" [Let us recognize, in addition, the great antiquity of slang!] (p. 510). He then explains the ancient sources of this jail slang: many words are from the "langue gauloise," some are from the "langue d'Oc," and others are from the "langue romane." Thus, crime is linked with the past. The very language of the criminals proceeds from a former era. The narrator further explains, "La prostitution et le vol sont deux protestations vivantes, mâle et femelle, de l'état naturel contre l'état social" [Prostitution and theft are two living protestations, male and female, of the natural state against the social state] (p. 510-511). This "natural state" would seem to mean a state of primordial union, before the law of the Father interposed to make personal property and marriage sacred. The narrator explains,

Le voleur ne met pas en question, dans les livres sophistiques, la propriété, l'hérité, les garanties sociales; il les supprime net. Pour lui, voler, c'est rentrer dans son bien. Il ne discute pas le mariage, il ne l'accuse pas, il ne demande pas, dans des utopies imprimées, ce consentement mutuel, cette alliance étroite des
The burglar wants to "rentrer" (return, restore, regain) what is properly his. The thief is a survivor of a former age (even his language is antique). The thief uses the old language of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.

Although the language is medieval, Collin's homosexuality fits into a much more ancient pattern: Berthier writes that Collin's "quest is for a love that would open the experience of primordial unity" (Berthier, p. 166). Certainly the androgyny of the rebellious characters cannot be overlooked. Vautrin claims, "Je suis tout" [I am everything] (P.G., p. 215). Yet clearly he is not complete unto himself, as he pretends to be, or he would not be in search of a partner. Collin says to Lucien, "Il s'agit de
mon beau moi, de toi..." [it is a question of my beautiful me, you...] (Splendeurs, p. 128). One could scarcely conceive of more Platonic language. Lucien is the beautiful side of the aging, scarred Collin. Pederasty presents something of a paradox: the older partner has wisdom, but is not beautiful: the younger partner has no wisdom but is.

Collin is a member of the severed race of men searching for their other half. (We are told repeatedly that Collin is of the race of Cain.) Berthier puts his discussion of Balzac's work in a Platonic problematic: he writes, "the real scandal of homosexuality is not there where society puts it: what is inadmissible is not that two beings of the same sex abandon themselves to forbidden physical acts, but that an unmatched (dépareillé) humanity is always trying to rejoin itself but never succeeds" (Berthier, p. 177).

Collin is searching for his other half: "Man's original body having been thus cut in two, each half yearned for the half from which it had been severed" (Symposium, p. 61). In the mythology of this text, the age of primordial unity was the hypothetical age in which language truly signified, before the signifier was split off from the signified. ("Half... of a female whole...is now called a woman" Symposium, p. 61.)

Part of Collin's search for the Other involves language. The "criminals" speak a language of the past, using the vocabulary of the Middle Ages. The narrator
exclaims of the prisoners, "Ces sauvages ne respectent ni la loi, ni la religion, rien, pas même l'histoire naturelle, dont la sainte nomenclature est, comme on le voit, parodiée par eux" [These savages respect neither law nor religion, nothing, not even natural history, whose sacred nomenclature is, as we see, parodied by them] (Splendeurs, p. 508). This is a very enigmatic passage, and must be read ironically.

The major reason that criminals distort language is so that they will not be understood by the law. The savages do not respect the edicts of culture, the institutions of law, religion, history, and language. The narrator subsequently tells us that these "savages" represent the "natural state" (p. 511). Thus, criminals live in a state that is opposed to civilization. The irony of this passage is that there is no one who "parodies sacred nomenclature" more than the narrator does. There is nothing sacred about the name in these texts. The name is forever shifting and changing: Collin is multinominous. The narrator writes, "Néanmoins, Jacques Collin ou Carlos Herrera (il est nécessaire de lui donner l'un ou l'autre de ces noms selon les nécessités de la situation) connaissait de longue main les façons de la Police..." [Nevertheless, Jacques Collin or Carlos Herrera (it is necessary to give him one or the other of these names according to the necessity of the situation) well knew the ways of the Police...] (Splendeurs, p. 348). What is the meaning of "necessary" and "necessity"? Why is it necessary
to change his name? It is the same character, and the reader is never fooled by the disguises. In the same way, Europe and Asie are called by a multitude of different names, and take on different names according to the circumstances. Even Lucien has not kept his name: he has rejected the name of his father, Chardon, and the king has given him the prerogative of using the name of his mother, Rubembpré. The narrator is himself one of those "savages" who does not respect "sacred nomenclature." He cannot even correctly name his own novel. Citron observes, in his introduction to the Garnier edition, that "le titre du roman, inchangé depuis 1844, ne correspond pas exactement à son contenu. Il ne recouvre pas la durée entière de l'action..." [the title of the novel, unchanged since 1844, does not exactly correspond to its contents. It does not cover the entire duration of the action] (Splendeurs, p. 23). The novel is not "appropriately" named. The novel is not about the splendors and miseries of courtesans: it is about Vautrin's rebellion. To borrow the terms of linguistics, the signifier, the title, has no rapport with the signified, the contents of the novel. The book is misnamed.

The language of the criminals is called "affreuse poésie," (p. 509); Balzac calls it "énergique" and praises the "vivacité d'images" (p. 509). While the politically conservative narrator at first appears to be horrified by
the criminal underworld, upon closer scrutiny he praises it and seems to be seduced by it. We must remember that Vautrin is identified with the writer/narrator of the text: he is the "grand poète." He manipulates words the same way the narrator does. At the end of Splendeurs, Collin and his aunt speak in "l'argot convenu entre la tante et le neveu" [the slang agreed upon between the aunt and nephew] (Splendeurs, p. 548). Their code language (chiffre) consisted in adding "ar," "or" "al" or "i" to certain words. In this way, Collin and his aunt carry on a secret conversation in the presence of Bibi-Lupin. Collin is the master of words, a criminal parody of the writer/narrator.

Collin finishes as a member of the police force, and he says to his superior, Monsieur de Granville: "Je me fie à vous comme un fils à son père" [I put my trust in you like a son does to his father] (Splendeurs, p. 620). Collin appears to have lost his battle in the revolt against society; he appears to have been subsumed by the police. Let us recall here what Lacan says of Sade: namely that he is always on the same side, good or evil. Genet was haunted by the fear that he might really have been "good" instead of "evil." It should be evident that the difference between the two (in the text) may seem at times a specular illusion. Whether Collin is a criminal or a policeman he is still defining himself in terms of the law.

The rebellious brothers ended up re-instating the
father's restraints. That Collin should become a policeman is thus not surprising from a Freudian perspective. When the brothers assume power, the father's law returns to rule over them. Collin, who has been seeking to establish himself as father, ends by operating within the system he once opposed.
Notes


2 Freud discusses the need for a father in Moses and Monotheism: "We know that the great majority of people have a strong need for authority which they can admire, to which they can submit, and which dominates and sometimes even ill-treats them. We have learned from the psychology of the individual whence comes this need of the masses. It is the longing for the father that lives in each of us from his childhood days, for the same father whom the hero of the legend boasts of having overcome. And now it begins to dawn on us that all the features with which we furnish the great man are traits of the father, that in this similarity lies the essence, which so far has eluded us, of the great man. The decisiveness of thought, the strength of will, the forcefulness of his deeds, belong to the picture of the father; above all things, however, the self-reliance and
independence of the great man, his divine conviction of
doing the right thing, which may pass into ruthlessness. He
must be admired, he may be trusted, but one cannot help also
being afraid of him. We should have taken a cue from the
word itself; who else but the father should in childhood
have been the great man?" Sigmund Freud, Moses and

While Freud discusses the life-long need for the
father, he does not delve deeply into the sexual desire
between father and son. Dr. Charles Silverstein in Man to
Man discusses incestuous desire between fathers and sons.
He writes, "What is really interesting about father/son
sexual fantasies and experiences is not that they occur, but
that they have so rarely been discussed." Dr. Charles
24. In the previously cited Phallos: a Symbol and its
History in the Male World, Thorkil Vangaard discusses some
of the son's sexual interest in the father, especially
curiosity about his genitals (see Chapter 2, "Men and Boys
in the Present Day.") Vangaard writes about the father/son
component in pederasty, and the ancient Greek view that
young men were made virile by anal sex.

Contemporary male gay pornography has exploited these
father/son fantasies. For instance, the January 1986 issue
of Honcho (vol. 8, number 10) has a section entitled "My
Hard Belongs to Daddy" and another publication, which claims to publish only actual sexual experiences has a story entitled "My Old Man's Meat" (The Best of FirstHand Letters, 1986). There is an incestuous, homosexual aspect to father/son relationships that pornography has preceded psychoanalysis in discussing.


One could argue that there is an institutionalization of homosexuality in the "gay ghettos" of San Francisco, New York, or New Orleans. However, large cities are not typical examples of mainstream society. Furthermore, open homosexuality must confine itself to precise geographical limits even in the "tolerant" cities: Haight-Ashbury, Christopher Street, the French Quarter. These sections, known as Boy's Town, The Swish Alps, etc., are certainly not institutionalized in the current of society any more than ethnic minorities are. If they are tolerated, it is in large urban areas, in strictly designated spots.

6 Berthier continues:

Thus, language of the body, with its pulsions, repulsions and lies, language within a language, with its faux-pas that trip upon a shameful truth which dare not be confronted
head-on, with its "things suppressed" (chooses tues) more significant than its "things known" (chooses sues) and its "things said" (chooses dites), with innumerable degrees and variations possible in the strategy of the oblique, disguised, turned-about, and inverted avowal; homosexual discourse in society appears as a codification of ambiguity (l'équivoque) demanding a subtle hermeneutic and not leading to any universally admissible or incontestable result, to the degree where the ambiguity itself is stated (Berthier pp 159-160).


8 Catherine Stimpson, in "The Lesbian Novel," writes If the lesbian writer wished to name her experience but still feared plain speech, she could encrypt her text in another sense and use codes. In the fallout of history, the words "code" and "zero" lie together. The Arabs translated the Hindu for "zero" as sifr ("empty space"), in English "cipher." As the Arabic grew in meanings, sifr came to represent a number system forbidden in several places but still secretly deployed, and cipher became "code." [It must be noted that in French
the word *chiffre* means both "cipher" and "code;" it is the word used by Berthier which we have translated "code." In some lesbian fiction, the encoding is allegorical, a straightforward shift from one set of terms to another, from a clitoris to a cow. Other acts are more resistant to any reading that might wholly reveal, or wholly deny, lesbian eroticism.

Take for example "the kiss," a staple of lesbian fiction. Because it has shared with women's writing in general a reticence about explicitly representing sexual activity, the kiss has had vast metonymic responsibilities. Simultaneously, its exact significance has been deliberately opaque. Catharine R. Stimpson, "Zero Degree Deviancy: The Lesbian Novel in English," *Writing and Sexual Difference*, Elizabeth Abel, ed., (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983), p. 246.

Although Stimpson is writing specifically about the kiss in lesbian fiction, her comments about encoding are remarkably similar to Berthier's, and can be applied to this discussion of male homosexual discourse. To illustrate the metonymic functions of the kiss, Stimpson cites passages from Virginia Woolf:

*Julia blazed. Julia Kindled. Out of the night*
she burnt like a dead white star. Julia opened her arms. Julia kissed her on the lips. Julia possessed it (Virginia Woolf, "Slater’s Pins Have No Points").

Then came the most exquisite moment of her whole life passing a stone urn with flowers in it. Sally stopped; picked a flower; kissed her on the lips. The whole world might have been turned upside down!... she felt that she had been given a present, wrapped up, and told just to keep it, not to look at it—- a diamond, something infinitely precious, wrapped up...she uncovered, or the radiance burnt through the revelation, the religious feeling! (Woolf, Mrs. Dalloway).

Stimpson continues, "Does the kiss encode transgression or permissibility? Singularity or repeatability? The same character, "O," can stand for both the zero of impossibility and for the possibilities of female sexuality. Does the kiss predict the beginning of the end, or the end of the beginning... Or is it the event that literally embraces contradictions?" (Writing and Sexual Difference, p. 247).


10 Thorkil Vanggaard, in Phallos: A Symbol and its History in the Male World discusses the important symbolic
role of pederasty in ancient Greece: "in the seventh century B.C., a Dorian nobleman through his phallus transferred to a boy the essence of his best qualities as a man. Since erotic pleasure was subordinated to a more important aim this was a genuinely symbolic act, the aim being to make of the boy a man with strength..." (New York: International Universities Press, 1972), p. 12.

11 See Castex's introduction to P.G., p. 8, where he refers to Balzac's "curiosity for the third sex."

12 "The intercourse between the child and his foster-parents is for the former an inexhaustible source of sexual excitation and gratification of erogenous zones, especially since the parents---as a rule, the mother---supplies the child with feelings which originate from her own sexual life; she pats him, kisses him and rocks him, plainly taking him as a substitute for a perfectly valid sexual object..."

Sigmund Freud, Three Contributions to the Theory of Sex, The Basic Writings of Sigmund Freud, A. A. Brill, ed., (New York: The Modern Library, 1938), p. 615. Earlier, Freud states, "the suckling of the child at the mother's breast has become a model for every love relation. Object finding is really a re-finding" (p. 614). Thus, heterosexuality, like homosexuality, represents a reversion to childhood.

13 Vanggaard discusses the "stealthy interest" of young boys in their father's genitals (see p. 54). Vanggaard does not make the Lacanian distinction between penis and phallus;
for him, interest in the literal penis is linked with the symbolism of the phallus.

^ Part of the endless doubling structure of Splendeurs is the fact that Collin has two "tantes," a biological aunt and a lover, Lucien. Balzac makes sure the reader knows that a "tante" is a member of the "troisième sexe," see Splendeurs, page 521).
Chapter 5  Proust, Inversion, and Fiction

I. Proustian Criticism and Homosexuality

Up to this point we have looked at a sadomasochistic homotext from the eighteenth century and a sadomasochistic homotext from the nineteenth century, and now we shall look at one from the twentieth century. In our definition of the sadomasochistic homotext we have considered four elements: sadomasochism and homotextuality as thematic motifs, the problematics of language, and the topos of paternity. These themes have been seen to operate within the Freudian paradigm of revolt against the father. In the writings of Proust, inverts, rebels who must cleverly disguise their desire in order to live within society, represent a trace of the same primal horde. Characters such as Charlus try to accede to the place of the father, but are undone by their own desire. Charlus is a father figure in at least two ways. First of all, he is the spiritual father of Morel, guiding him into correct society. Secondly, he is a "father" to society as well, dictating style and acceptability— for Proust, very empty goals. Proust's work, as a sadomasochistic homotext, involves a strange twist: by the end, nearly every major character is suspected of inversion---nearly every character has secret, unlawful desire. Social etiquette is revealed as a sham,
since the "proper" members of society have a true hidden nature. In the last analysis, the rules of conduct are broken by almost everyone, and we come to the conclusion that every member of society is part of the primal, rebellious horde, every person is trying to usurp the place of the father, and that, in Freudian terms, we are all homosexual to some extent: everyone has made at least an unconscious homosexual object choice.

Any discussion of Proust's massive A la Recherche du Temps perdu must take into account the pervasive presence of homosexuality in the text. Just as Baudelaire considered naming his entire work "Les Lesbiennes," so Proust contemplated naming his "Sodome et Gommorrhe," a title which he decided to reserve for the fourth volume alone of the Recherche. Homosexuality is such an integral part of the Recherche that Proust thought it necessary to warn his future publisher about it, writing to Gaston Gallimard in 1912 about the "shocking things in the second volume" (Rivers, p. 25). He describes a character, "M. de Fleurus," who later became Charlus: "in the second volume it will be seen that the old gentleman is not the lover of Mme Swann but a pederast. He is a type of character I think is rather new, the virile pederast, in love with virility, detesting effeminate young men.... This character is so scattered through absolutely different parts that the volume has in no way the appearance of a special monograph" (Rivers, p. 25).
Although Gallimard did decide to publish the work, the presence of homosexuality in the *Recherche* met critical resistance from the very beginning. Francis Jammes, a writer of Proust's time, was shocked by the lesbian scene from *Du côté de chez Swann* and wrote that he prayed daily for Proust after his death. The early twentieth-century critic Paul Souday was also dismayed by what he called the "useless" (see Rivers, p. 24) scene of *Du côté* and his dismay prompted Proust to write a letter to him that has now become famous, in which Proust declares the necessity of homosexuality in his work. Proust writes that the "scene between two girls... is the foundation of volumes IV and V (through the jealousy it inspires, etc.)." Proust continues, "In suppressing this scene, I would not have changed very much in the first volume; I would have, in return, because of the interdependence of the parts, caused two entire volumes, of which this scene is the cornerstone, to fall down around the reader's ears."^3

J.E. Rivers writes that critics preferred not to discuss the homotextual aspect of Proust's work for the first three decades after its appearance. Rivers writes that the "reason Proustian criticism has had so little to say on these matters is not far to seek. Until recently homosexuality was considered a taboo subject, no less among literary critics than among the general public, one that was discussed reluctantly and then, perforce, amid a host of
circumlocutions, apologies to the reader, and protestations of the critic's distaste" (Rivers, p. 2). In the late thirties, Robert Vigneron wrote of the impact of Proust's homosexuality on the *Recherche* in an article entitled "Genèse de Swann." This article dealt with Proust's research into homosexuality and his readings on the subject. One of the most important dates in Proustian criticism is 1949, when Justin O'Brien wrote a highly controversial article that appeared in December: "Albertine the Ambiguous: Notes on Proust's Transposition of Sexes." O'Brien states the view that Proust has transposed his homosexual affairs into heterosexual ones, that we should read "Albert" for "Albertine," and "Gilbert" for "Gilberte." Thus, O'Brien sees the work as an encoded or even counterfeit document. Harry Levin rapidly contested this idea, and said it was inconsistent; for instance, one could not read "François" for "Françoise" or see the Duchesse de Guermantes as a male. O'Brien believed that because the heterosexual love affair of the narrator with Albertine was really a transposed homosexual affair, this accounted for the dark, pessimistic view of love in *Recherche* (as if heterosexual love cannot be dark). O'Brien followed the orthodox position that it is impossible for homosexual love to be anything other than pathological.

Critics who have dealt with the homosexual aspect of the *Recherche* have for the most part used superannuated
stereotypes in their discussions. Critics have been obsessed with pointing out the imaginary flaws in the Recherche, flaws attributed mainly to Proust's own homosexuality, as reflected in his writing. This type of criticism is a prime example of the work so scorned by Wimsatt and Beardsley as the autobiographical "fallacy." Critics of that school see works of art as little more than symptoms of the author's personal neuroses.

In his biography of Proust, George Painter slips into the mode of pseudo-psychoanalytic discourse. While he takes great pains to prove that Proust had physical relationships with women, he believes that Proust was fundamentally homosexual. Painter loves to use psychoanalytic jargon, and tries to prove that Proust had an anal fixation.

In Nostalgia: a Psychoanalytic Study of Marcel Proust and Psychanalyse de Proust, Milton Miller, M.D. indulges in hundreds of pages of neo-Freudian analysis of Proust's work, which would be comical if Miller did not take himself so seriously. He writes that Proust created androgynous characters because "he wanted to assure himself that women had phalluses and men were really not potent; then he could identify, safely, with either one, and there was no danger of impregnating or being made pregnant, no identification with the completely submissive women or sadistically domineering men."
II. The Social Milieu of the Recherche

When Proust first conceived the Recherche, Europe was being rocked by several major sex scandals. At the end of the nineteenth century, England was in turmoil over the Oscar Wilde trials. Wilde was ultimately exiled to France, where he died a miserable death. Slightly after the Wilde incident, an officer in the British army, Sir Hector Archibald Macdonald, was also involved in a scandal involving homosexuality. Because of the adverse publicity, Macdonald shot himself. In Germany, at the same time Macdonald was being persecuted, Friedrich Alfred Krupp was proclaimed to be homosexual, and the papers were playing it up because of his political prominence. Like Macdonald, he also shot himself. But the most notorious incident of the time, and the one that may have most influenced Proust, was the Eulenberg scandal in Germany. Proust actually mentions this intrigue in the Recherche. Eulenberg's alleged homosexuality was very hard to prove, and he was put on trial numerous times. Although the Code Napoléon in France made it impossible to legally persecute homosexuals, Germany had a law called Paragraph 175 which did indeed outlaw homosexuality. Magnus Hirschfeld, the renowned sexologist of the time, was twice a witness in Eulenberg's trials.

The Eulenberg trials sparked great interest in homosexuality in France. In 1907 RémY de Gourmont published
an article in the Mercure de France entitled "Dialogue des Amateurs, L: L'Amour à l'envers." In this article he expounded upon the ideas of Havelock Ellis (see Chapter One for information concerning Ellis). In 1908 Gourmont published another article entitled "Dialogue des Amateurs, LII: Variétés." In this article he made distinctions between various types of homosexuality. Rivers observes that Proust was a regular reader of the Mercure and as such had no doubt read these articles. As we saw in Chapter One, pre-Freudian sexologists were obsessed with homosexuality: Rivers notes that Havelock Ellis was writing in England in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries; in Germany, Ulrichs, Hirschfeld and Krafft-Ebing were writing; in France there were Tardieu, Brouardel and Moreau.

Homosexuality permeated French letters during this period. In 1908 Lucien Daudet published Le Chemin mort, which dealt subtly with the theme of homosexuality. Proust did a review of this book. In 1910, Jean-Gustave Binet-Valmer published Lucien. This book dealt positively with the subject of homosexuality, and for once the protagonist does not commit suicide. (In homosexual literature of the early twentieth century, suicide is the inevitable outcome for the homosexual protagonist.) Proust himself wrote about homosexuality in his early works: in Jean Santeuil, Jean's mistress turns out to be lesbian. In the collection of short stories, Les Plaisirs et les jours, there is a story
entitled "Violante ou la mondanité" in which a princess makes lesbian advances to the heroine. In 1893 Proust published a story in *La Revue Blanche* called "Avant la nuit." Although suicide is presented as the only possible outcome for the homosexual protagonist of this story, it nonetheless defends homosexuality.

III. Voyeurism in the *Recherche*

The reader is introduced to homosexuality very early on in the *Recherche*. In the "Combray" section of "Du côté de chez Swann," the narrator spies upon Mlle Vinteuil and her lesbian lover. This incident serves as a paradigm for six other scenes of homosexual eroticism that follow in the text. The narrator always has a voyeuristic relationship to homosexuality: whenever scenes of eroticism are being described, they are described at a distance, that is to say that the reader sees them through the eyes of one of the characters. It is interesting and not irrelevant to note that Proust himself was considered by many to be personally involved in voyeurism: Painter and Rivers both discuss instances of voyeurism in Proust's life. According to a brothel-keeper, Said, "Proust liked to watch others in the act of love through a hole in the wall" (Rivers, p. 74). Céleste Albaret, Proust's housekeeper and invaluable source of Proustian trivia, reports Proust telling her, "My dear
Céleste, what I saw this evening is beyond imagining. I got to Le Cuziat's, as you know [Le Cuziat was the keeper of a male brothel, and friend of Proust's]. He had informed me that there was a man who came to his place to have himself flagellated. I witnessed the whole scene from another room, through a little window in the wall..." (Rivers, p. 81). It is of course impossible to verify these stories, but they are interesting in the light of the fact that homosexual scenes are always described through the eyes of a voyeur, and it may be one of the instances in which the personal life of Marcel Proust, the author, has a correlative with the voice of the narrator Marcel.

Although there are instances of voyeurism in the novel, and Proust the historical person may have been a voyeur, we must carefully note the distinction between the two personages. It is all too easy to confound Marcel the narrator with Marcel Proust. There are many important differences between the two: obviously, one is fictitious and one is "real." It is also important to note that one is heterosexual, and one is homosexual.

The young Marcel at Combray describes his first experience with homosexuality, calling it "sadisme." He claims that his idea of sadism was based on the lesbian scene at Montjouvain: "C'est peut-être d'une impression ressentie aussi auprès de Montjouvain, quelques années plus tard, impression restée obscure alors, qu'est sortie, bien
après, l'idée qu je me suis faite du sadisme" [It is perhaps from an impression I also felt near Montjouvain, several years later, an impression that remained obscure at the time, from which came, much later, the idea that I formed of sadism]. The scene that Marcel describes, in which Mlle Vinteuil's friend spits on her father's photograph, scarcely seems sadistic in the traditional sense of the word. Yet the narrator obviously considers the adjective appropriate. He writes, "dans les habitudes de Mlle Vinteuil l'apparence du mal était si entière qu'on aurait eu de la peine à la rencontrer réalisée à ce degré de perfection ailleurs que chez une sadique" [in the habits of Mlle Vinteuil the appearance of evil was so complete that one would have difficulty finding it carried to such a degree of perfection anywhere other than in a sadistic woman] (Swann, p. 196).

The father's photograph plays an important symbolic role as the sign (to use the terminology of Deleuze) of the father. In the vocabulary of linguistics, the photograph serves as a signifier for the dead father, the signified and the referent. The interesting thing about this photograph is that throughout the scene Marcel underscores the similarity in appearance between Mlle Vinteuil and her father, their "ressemblance de visage" (p. 197). As discussed in Chapter Two, masochism is sadism turned toward the self. Father and daughter are explicitly seen as almost mirror images: she speaks like him, and has the same
"gestes." Spitting on the replication of her father's appearance is like spitting on herself. The father's portrait serves as an image of the father, but also an exteriorization of the self. Through identification with the father, spitting on the portrait becomes a rejection of her own self.

Proust later says, "Une sadique comme elle est l'artiste du mal" [a sadistic woman like her is the artist of evil] (Swann, p. 196). Mlle Vinteuil's "sadistic" lesbianism is thus considered to be "artistic." Marcel compares her performance with her lover to a melodrama: "c'est à la lumière de la rampe des théâtres du boulevard plutôt que sous la lampe d'une maison de campagne véritable qu'on peut voir une fille faire cracher une amie sur le portrait d'un père qui n'a vécu que pour elle; et il n'y a guère que le sadisme qui donne un fondement dans la vie à l'esthétique du méloïdrame" [it is by the footlights of street theatres rather than under the lamp of a true country house that one can see a girl make her lover spit on the portrait of a father who has only lived for her; and there is hardly anything but sadism that gives life a foundation of melodramatic aesthetics] (Swann, p. 196). Thus, in this passage sadism is linked to the artistic process of theatre. One hesitates to consider melodrama as theatre, or art: certainly it is a low form for Proust. In the discussion of a young peasant girl he fantasized about, previous to this
lesbian episode, Marcel compared his love with the kind of novels one read on the train "pour tuer le temps" (p. 191). (One cannot ignore the use of the word "time" in this passage, but our present purposes do not allow us the space to delve into its significance.) Both scenes of love then are compared to low art: one to cheap novels and the other to cheap theatre. Perhaps the youthfulness of the protagonist at this time keeps the episodes from being true or high art: however, one never knows whether this episode is being told from the child's perspective or the adult's.

The sadistic lesbian lovemaking of Mlle Vinteuil and her friend is called an act of "symbolisme" (Swann, p. 196). The symbolism of this act is very complex: it is artistic as well as religious. The acts Mlle Vinteuil and her friend perform are ritualistic and quasi-religious: Marcel speaks of "profanations rituelles" and "réponses liturgiques" (Swann, p. 194). Furthermore, he calls Mlle Vinteuil's proposals "blasphématoires" (p. 197). Throughout the passage Proust uses religious terminology, and considers Mlle Vinteuil's behavior as "diabolique," and notes that in order to have sex she must identify with "Mal" (p. 197). By capitalizing evil, Proust is evoking Satan, and Mlle Vinteuil is identified with this figure of rebellion. It is clear that Mlle Vinteuil killed her father: Marcel's mother speaks of the "souffrances que celle-ci lui avait causées" [suffering that she caused him] (p. 191) and Marcel writes
that Mlle Vinteuil "à peu près tué son père" [practically killed her father] (p. 192). After killing her father, profanation of his memory is instituted, like the totem eating of the tribe. And, like the brothers who exalt their murdered father into God the Father, Mlle Vinteuil and her friend later on in the novel become devoted to the father's memory and transcribe all his music.

The "blasphemy" is an artistic process: it follows a prescribed "texte" (Swann, p.193). Profanation of the father's memory becomes a ritual that is linked with art and sex. It is theatrical, and part of the lesbian sex act. Thus, homosexual sex becomes an integral part of this revolt against the Father. The theatricality of sex act/act of rebellion is underscored by the voyeuristic nature of the scene: Marcel is the audience. The curtains are left deliberately open, and Mlle Vinteuil's friend says "quand même on nous verrait, ce n'en est que meilleur" [if they should see us, it would be even better] (p. 193).

Marcel says that this scene is important for future comprehension of the novel, just as he insisted in his letter to Souday: "On verra plus tard que, pour de tout autres raison, le souvenir de cette impression devait jouer un rôle important dans ma vie" [We will see later on, for other reasons, that this impression will play an important role in my life] (Swann, p. 191). Certainly the importance of this scene cannot be emphasized enough. This scene is an
emblem of homosexuality in the novel. It is linked with the artistic process (in this case low art), and with rebellion against the Father. This event of lesbian "sadism" is a text within the text: it is a work of theatre, a melodramatic aesthetic. Art is thus linked with perversion, and revolt. Sadism is linked integrally with homosexuality, and in the last scene of voyeurism in the novel, this link will be solidified.

The next inklings of homosexuality occur in "Un Amour de Swann." It is in this section that we first encounter M. de Charlus, and have a hint of his proclivities. The narrator simply states, "Entre M. de Charlus et elle [Odette], Swann savait qu'il ne pouvait rien se passer" [between M. de Charlus and her, Swann knew that nothing could happen] (Swann, p. 377). We learn that Charlus and Odette greatly enjoy each other’s company, and after this subtle entry of homosexuality in the text, Swann’s suspicions begin to be greatly aroused concerning Odette. Charlus is the herald of homosexuality in the novel. Swann meditates upon the character of Charlus, M. des Laumes, and M. d’Orsan, all three rumored to be homosexual. He thinks, "Au fond, cette race d’hommes est la pire de toutes" [at the bottom of it all, this race of men is the worst of all] (p. 426).

Swann receives an anonymous letter stating that "Odette avait été la maîtresse d’innombrables hommes (dont on lui
citait quelques-uns, parmi lesquels Forcheville, M. de Bréauté et le peintre), de femmes, et qu’elle fréquentait les maisons de passe" [Odette had been the mistress of innumerable men (of whom several were cited, among them Forcheville, M. de Bréauté and the painter), of women, and that she frequented houses of ill-repute] (Swann, p. 425). This hint of lesbianism comes to him via a written text. The anonymous letter serves as a paradigm for the text itself, which is always full of hints of homosexuality, and like the scene between Mlle Vinteuil and her lover, it constitutes a text-within-the-text. It is significant that this letter is without signature, without an acknowledged author. This letter, and this incident, prefigure the relationship of Marcel and Albertine.

More importantly, however, this anonymous letter makes it clear that homosexuality is integrally linked with the search for truth. Homosexuality is slowly unveiled in the Recherche in the same way that all truths are. Piece by piece, Swann discovers that everything in the anonymous letter is true. Homosexuality is the ultimate mystery, the ultimate secret that the reader discovers book by book. This is the true homotextuality of the novel: homosexuality, the great secret, the great truth, is slowly, surely revealed in the same way that all of the novel’s truths are.

After the letter suggests the possible lesbianism of
Odette, every act of hers becomes suspect. Lesbianism is once again associated with the theatre: Swann recalls a story Odette told him concerning a play, *Les Filles de Marbre* [The Marble Girls] by Théodore Barrière. After seeing the play, Mme Verdurin says to Odette, "prends garde, je saurai bien te dégeler, tu n'es pas de marbre" [Be on guard, I know how to thaw you, you aren't made of marble] (Swann, p. 431). This story takes on a new meaning for Swann after he reads the anonymous letter. He finally gets Odette to confess that she has had lesbian relations, "peut-être deux ou trois fois" [maybe two or three times] (p. 434).

In this section, "Un Amour de Swann," there are two different presentations of homosexuality, two opposing trains that will continue throughout the *Recherche* without ever being fully resolved. There is the view that men such as Charlus belong to a separate "race" of people, that homosexuals constitute a lost race, a remnant, a trace, and this is juxtaposed with a belief in fundamental bisexuality. Characters such as Robert de Saint-Loup, Odette, Albertine and Andrée are to be able to love members of both sexes, and as such are unclassifiable. These characters undo the theory of the "third sex" that the narrator so carefully expounds.

In the opening pages of *Sodome et Gomorrhe* Proust theorizes about the nature of homosexuals, or inverts, as he calls them. J. E. Rivers has accurately described the three
domains of Proust's arguments: "the mythological, the scientific, and the aesthetic." In the mythological area, Proust rewrites the biblical story of Sodom and Gomorrah. Proust considers Sodom to be the city of male homosexuals, and Gomorrah to be the city of lesbians. He cites Alfred de Vigny: "La femme aura Gomorrhe et l'homme aura Sodome". According to Proust's mythology, there were some Sodomites "qui furent épargnés par le feu du ciel" [who were spared from the heavenly fire] (Sodome, p. 7). This remnant of Sodomites have mysteriously bred followers up to this day. The plight of these Sodomites is similar to the plight of Jews in general, and Proust is continually comparing the remnant of Sodom with the remnant of the lost nation of Israel. The narrator writes, "certains juges supposent et excusent plus facilement l'assassinat chez les invertis et la trahison chez les Juifs pour des raisons du péché originel et de la fatalité de la race" [some judges expect and excuse murder among invertis and treason among Jews for reasons of original sin and fatality of the race] (Sodome, p. 23). Marcel confounds the two in this phrase since we expect to have original sin associated with Jews and fatality of the race associated with invertis. Marcel again uses the "exemple des Juifs" (p. 33) in relationship to invertis, since neither group can ever be fully socialized. Like the Jews, the descendants of Sodom are innumerable: "Ces descendants des Sodomistes, si nombreux qu'on peut leur
appliquer l'autre verset de la Genèse: "Si quelqu'un peut compter la poussière de la terre, il pourra aussi compter cette postérité" [These descendants of the Sodomites, so numerous that one can apply another verse of Genesis to them: 'If someone can count the dust of the earth, he can also count this posterity] (p. 41).

On the scientific level, things are very complicated. The German sexologist Karl Ulrichs originated the concept of the homosexual as "Zwischenstufen," third or intermediate sex (see Chapter One). According to Rivers, it is from Ulrichs that Proust got the idea of the invert as "man-woman." Marcel certainly seems to see some homosexuals in that light; from the very beginning he speaks of "hommes-femmes." When observing Charlus, Marcel is convinced he is seeing a woman; "De plus, je comprenais maintenant pourquoi tout à l'heure, quand je l'avais vu sortir de chez Mme de Villeparisis, j'avais pu trouver que M. de Charlus avait l'air d'une femme: c'en était une! Il appartenait à la race de ces êtres, moins contradictoires qu'ils n'en ont l'air, dont l'ideal est viril, justement parce que leur tempérament est féminin..." (Moreover, I understood now why recently, when I saw him leaving Mme de Villeparisis, I thought that M. de Charlus seemed like a woman: he was one! He belonged to that race of beings, less contradictory than it seems, whose ideal is virile, exactly because their temperament is feminine] (Sodome, p. 22). This concept of
the man-woman was the culmination of thought on homosexuality at the early twentieth century. Proust believed he was accurately, scientifically describing homosexuality: he wrote to Louis Robert of his obligation in *Sodome et Gomorrhe* to "dissect" homosexuality and report the results "with the good faith of a chemist" (*Homosexualities*, p. 267). These images of science reappear throughout the *Recherche*: Swann is called a "chirurgien" [surgeon], and the initial scene between Charlus and Jupien is seen from a botanist's perspective. The voyeur, from whose perspective we see homosexuality in the novel, is like a scientific observer. The search for truth is intimately linked with scientific endeavor.

This scientific aspect of homosexuality in the *Recherche* is extremely interesting, and Rivers does not fully exploit it. He does mention Aristophanes' story in the *Symposium* as the prototype for the intersection of myth and science in *Sodome*. This myth, so crucial to our study, is also the base myth for a thinker whose influence Rivers ignores: Sigmund Freud. Freud writes that the original, one-celled beings were non-sexual, and that sexuality is something that is not "very ancient" (*Pleasure Principle*, p. 50.) Freud mentions Darwin in this passage, and later of course refers to Plato's *Symposium*. There is a passage in this beginning part of *Sodome* which seems to be very Freudian, and it is important to remember that *Beyond the*
Pleasure Principle and Sodome et Gommorrhe appeared at almost exactly the same time: Pleasure Principle appeared in 1920, and Sodome was published in 1921.\(^\text{10}\) Marcel writes, "Enfin, l'inversion elle-même, venant de ce que l'inverti se rapproche trop de la femme pour pouvoir avoir des rapports utiles avec elle, se rattache par là à une loi plus haute qui fait que tant de fleurs hermaphrodites restent infécondes, c'est-à-dire à la stérilité de l'autofécondation" [Finally, inversion itself, coming from the fact that the invert is too similar to the woman to have productive rapport with her, is linked by that to a higher law that makes so many hermaphrodite flowers remain unfertilized, that is to say, the sterility of autofecundation] (Sodome, p. 39). Thus, inversion is linked with an ancient biological law, the law of hermaphrodism. Proust continues: "Il est vrai que les invertis à la recherche d'un mâle se contentent souvent d'un inverti aussi efféminé qu'eux. Mais il suffit qu'ils n'appartiennent pas au sexe féminin, dont ils ont en eux un embryon dont ils ne peuvent se servir, ce qui arrive à tant de fleurs hermaphrodites et même à certains animaux hermaphrodites, comme l'escargot, qui ne peuvent être fécondés par eux-mêmes, mais peuvent l'être par d'autres hermaphrodites" [It is true that inverts in search of a male often content themselves with a male as effeminate as themselves. But the important thing is that they don't belong to the female sex,
because the inverts have in themselves a female embryo, which they can’t use, which happens to so many hermaphrodite flowers and even certain hermaphrodite animals, like the snail, which can’t fertilize themselves, but can be by other hermaphrodites] (Sodome, p. 39). Thus, these hermaphrodites continually go about in search of other hermaphrodites, just as the figures in the Symposium are continually in search of their other half. Proust theorizes: "Par là les invertis, qui se rattachent volontiers à l’antique Orient ou à l’age d’or de la Grèce, remonteraient plus haut encore, à ces époques d’essai où n’existaient ni les fleurs dioiques ni les animaux unisexués, à ce hermaphroditisme initial dont quelques rudiments d’organes mâles dans l’anatomie de la femme et d’organes femelles dans l’anatomie de l’homme semblent conserver la trace" [Thus, inverts, who attach themselves willingly to the ancient Orient or the golden age of Greece, go back even further, to those experimental epochs where dioical flowers and sexualized animals didn’t exist, to that initial hermaphrodisim where several rudiments of male organs existed in the female and which the presence of female organs in the male anatomy seems to preserve a trace] (p. 39). Proust mentions the theories of Darwin in relationship to Charlus and Jupien. In the above passages, Marcel expounds a myth/science that parallels somewhat Freud’s theories. For both men, the writer and the psychiatrist, homosexuals are the remnant of a past,
bisexual era. This original era has mythic origins, and both men share a Platonic heritage.

Homosexuality is many things: it is the revolt against the father, it is a remnant of the past, it is a scientific and natural phenomenon. In the beginning of *Sodome*, Marcel spies upon Charlus, and makes a "discovery." Positioning himself on the stairway, he watches Charlus with the eye of a "botaniste" (*Sodome*, p. 8). The scene in which Charlus and Jupien meet is constantly compared to the confrontation between an orchid and a bee. Marcel uses the word "natural" several times in describing this encounter. "Cette scène n’était, du reste, pas positivement comique, elle était empreinte d’une étrangeté, ou si l’on veut, d’un naturel, dont la beauté allait croissant" [This scene was not, moreover, positively comical, it was stamped with a strangeness, or, if you will, a naturalness, whose beauty kept growing] (p. 12). Marcel uses imagery that will be close to "nature" in his comparison of Charlus and Jupien to a bee and an orchid.

Although this scene of homosexual love is described metaphorically as "natural," it is also full of secrets that only the initiated can understand. Like the relations between Mlle Vinteuil and her lover, there is something quasi-religious about this encounter. Marcel speaks of the "préludes rituels," (*Sodome*, p. 12) and meetings of homosexuals are described as "séances où nul profane n’est
plus admis" [gatherings where the profane are not admitted] (p. 27). Thus, while being perfectly "natural," homosexual encounters are the vestiges of some religion where the uninitiated have no part. 12

Once Jupien and Charlus have found each other, their behavior changes profoundly. Marcel notices that they operate according to the "lois d'un art secret" [laws of a secret art] (Sodome, p. 11). This is a crucial phrase. Just as Mlle Vinteuil and her friend performed a literary work, a drama, so homosexuals everywhere participate in a secret, ritual art form. The manifestation of this art form is the manipulation of language, and the real perversion of the "perverts" is the perversion of language. Marcel is obsessed with the naming of this vice: to call it "homosexualité" is to misname it ("ce qu'on appelle parfois fort mal l'homosexualité," p. 14). To give it a name is injurious: "le nom est la plus grande injure" [the name is the greatest insult] (p. 24). The language spoken by homosexuals is like the jargon of scientists, a " langue insolite" [bizarre language] (p. 36), and consists of "signes étrangers" [foreign signs] (p. 27). Homosexuals pervert language by changing the "genre" of "adjectifs" in their specialized "vocabulaire" (p. 26). In addition to strange words and blurred gender distinctions, inverts resort to (rather, they are forced into) the greatest perversion of language possible, the lie. "Race sur qui
pèse une malédiction et doit vivre dans le mensonge" [Race on whom weighs a curse and who must live in a lie] (p. 22).
The real perversion of the invert is the perversion of language. The lie is the ultimate vice: it is the inversion of speech where one thing is said and another is meant.

In *La Fugitive*, the narrator discusses the importance of lying. "Le mensonge est essentiel à l'humanité. Il y joue peut-être un aussi grand rôle que la recherche du plaisir, et d'ailleurs est commandé par cette recherche. On ment pour protéger son plaisir, ou son honneur si la divulgation du plaisir est contraire à l'honneur" [Lying is essential to humanity. It plays, perhaps, as great a role as the pursuit of pleasure, and is certainly necessitated by this quest. We lie to protect our pleasure, or our honor, if the revelation of pleasure is contrary to honor.] Proust links lying with the pursuit of secret pleasure, and homosexuality is the ultimate secret pleasure. Lying is thus integrally linked with homosexual enterprise, where honor must be protected.

Proust has been much criticized, especially by Gide, for portraying a negative view of homosexuality. Some feel he is unjust in his condemnation of "inverts." In reality, Marcel never condemns the homosexual: in a very important phrase, he makes it clear that "Il n'y avait pas d'anormaux quand l'homosexualité était la norme" [There were no
abnormal people when homosexuality was the norm] and most importantly "l'opprobre seul fait le crime" [only condemnation constitutes a crime] (Sodome, p. 25). If the narrator is forced to call homosexuality a vice, it is the fault of insufficient language. After naming "le vice," he adds parenthetically "on parle ainsi pour la commodité du langage" [we speak this way for the convenience of language] (p. 21). Homosexuality itself is unnameable, natural yet secretive, and has a peculiar relationship with language. The "vice" of homosexuals is not their sexuality, but the perversion of language. As we will continue to see throughout the rest of the text, the only real perversion is linguistic. The language of patriarchy, with its mania for naming and labelling, and with its fierce gender distinctions, is perverted by homosexuals, who exploit language for purposes of self-identification.

As we have mentioned, the lie is one of the greatest perversions in the text, and is linked with homosexuality. Homosexuality is a linguistic problem: Charlus, the emblematic homosexual of the Recherche, is a figure of language. In Le temps retrouvé, Proust writes that Charlus is the "poète" of the Verdurin circle. Charlus, the poet, claims "J'ai toujours honoré ceux qui défendent la grammaire ou la logique" [I have always honored those who defend grammar or logic] (Le temps, p. 138). Charlus is a scandalous poet, whose concern for correct appearance, for
"grammar" is at odds with his lying. Charlus lies continually, but always does so with perfect language. The shock is that language can be elegant, correct, and beautiful--and completely false. This is the scandal of Charlus. He respects grammar, propriety, he is the trendsetter of fashion, but it is all a front, an appearance. In reality he is a sadomasochistic homosexual, who respects the veneer of society. Charlus is a rebel, a "pervert," who appears to be the paragon of taste and virtue.

In the case of Mlle Vinteuil and her lover, rebellion against the father is very literal.15 Charlus and Jupien rebel against society in two very special ways. First of all, they rebel against the mainstream culture by perverting language. In the drama of their encounter, language is manipulated. Charlus asks Jupien for a light, acknowledging that he has no cigarettes. Obviously, conversation between the two men is a front, a façade, a lie: the two men are interested in sex, and words become the foreplay. All language becomes a sexual tool. (Certainly language can be a tool for seduction among heterosexual characters as well, but the inverts have developed it to a much greater degree of sophistication because of their need for secrecy.)

The second way that the law of the father is perverted is by the pederastic relationship between the two men. Charlus is clearly a father-figure, calling to mind Vautrin in Balzac's novels. Charlus is superior in social position,
education and wealth to the young Jupien, who prefers older men. Charlus is a father figure in society, defining what is fashionable and what is not. The affair between the two men is an example of the father/son, pederastic model. Jupien’s seduction is an emblem of the seductivity of the Father: instead of rebelling against the father, Jupien seduces him. Freud discusses the seduction of the mother, and the sexuality of the mother’s role, but neglects to mention the seduction of the father. The father, by virtue of his power, is in a perfect position to attract the son who wants to partake in his power. By sexualizing the relationship between the father and the son, the father’s power is diminished. In seducing the father, the son triumphs over him. At the end of the Recherche, the roles have become perfectly reversed, and Jupien is the father/caretaker of the sickly, senile Charlus. Jupien becomes wealthy and somewhat well-respected, while Charlus loses everything in his sexual pursuit of the son.

Homosexuals, however, are not the only ones who pervert language. As Sodome progresses, it becomes increasingly clear that the perversion of discourse occurs on a variety of levels. At the party at the Guermantes, Marcel forgets the proper name of Mme d’Arpajon. The proper name is the most magisterial of all names: it implies uniqueness and clarity. Part of the problem with homosexuals is that they cannot be named, and this unnameability is perverse. Unable
to remember the proper name of Mme d'Arpajon, Marcel writes, "Certes mon esprit aurait pu créer les noms les plus difficiles. Par malheur il n'avait pas à créer mais à reproduire" [Certainly my mind could have created the most difficult names. Unfortunately it wasn't a question of creating but of reproducing] (Sodome, p. 62). It is time that is responsible for this "perversion" of memory: "au fur et à mesure que nous vivons, nous passons notre temps à nous éloigner de la zone où un nom est distinct" [little by little as we live, we spend our time getting farther and farther away from the zone where a name is distinct] (p. 62). As we are trying to demonstrate, the true perversion of the novel is linguistic perversion. Closely linked to the perversion of language is the perversion brought about by time itself, one of the central concerns of the novel. We will not go into the question of time in depth since it has been done so thoroughly by so many others, but it must be noted that time perverts every character, every feeling in the novel. 16

At Balbec the narrator is once again in a voyeuristic relationship to homosexuality. In this case, Marcel is confronted with Albertine's supposed lesbianism. Once again, homosexuality is allied with a very modest form of art: Andrée and Albertine are waltzing together. Cottard remarks that it is through the breasts that women experience "jouissance," and the breasts of Andrée and Albertine are
touching. Marcel is very troubled by this scene, and notices that Albertine experiences "quelque frémissement voluptueux et secret. Il sonnait comme les premier ou les dernier accords d'un fête inconnue" [some voluptuous and secret shudder. It sounded like the first or last chord of some unknown festival] (Sodome, p. 224). Once again, the secretive aspect of homosexuality is underscored, as well as its association with art and ritual. Lesbianism is allied with a low kind of art: we have seen love compared to a cheap novel, a melodrama, and here it is linked with a waltz.

The relationship of art to homosexuality is again reiterated. In this case the medium is music and dance: once again, the encounter between the women has something of the mystical about it, reminding the narrator of an obscure "festival." 17 The religious aspects of homosexuality have been emphasized in all three scenes, as if homosexuality were the remnant of ecstatic, pagan rituals. Its association with art is an association with literature, and a reminder that the reader is caught up in a work of art. Homosexuality within the text is a fiction, a device or even a trope. It is a model perversion, and symbolizes the perversion of artistic work. If Proust seems to have ideas about being a "scientist" in his description of homosexuality, we cannot take him literally. Homosexuality is constantly associated with art forms (often with low art
forms) and it serves as a text-within-the-text, or even a symbol of the text (although Proust certainly did not consider the Recherche to be a low form of art).

In the long linguistic discussions at Raspelière the perverse nature of language is revealed. The ugliness of M. de Cambremer is compared to the corruption of names. The country parson is constantly finding Christian sources for the names of local towns, but this is an error attributable to the poor articulation of the peasants. Marcel speaks of the "barbarisms" to be found in the chartularies: these barbarisms are due to "un contre-sens et un vice de prononciation" [a misunderstanding and a vice of pronunciation] (Sodome, p. 355). It is significant that mispronunciation should be considered a vice. Mme de Cambremer consistently engaged in the "déformation des noms" [deformation of names] (p. 357), and from these passages it is clear that the misuse of language is seen as a perversion and a vice. Mme de Cambremer deforms names out of a sense of propriety, wanting to feign ignorance. This feigned ignorance is at once "le procédé semblable à celui des menteurs" [the process similar to that of liars] as well as its "inversion" (p. 358). Critics have observed that "inversion" is one of Marcel's favorite words, and he constantly applies it to linguistic situations. (Clearly, "inversion" is a rhetorical concept with a long history, but Proust is no doubt using the term with double meaning.)
The distortion of names is both a "vice" and an "inversion," just as the lie is a perversion.

Language is perverse, "inverted," when it does not signify. When M. de Cambremer mentions that he hunts at Chantepie, Brichot asks, "Mérite-t-elle son nom?" [Does it merit its name?] (Sodome, p. 363). In the long sections on etymology, Proust is gently mocking a naive view of language: that it is supposed to mirror its subject, that the signifier is supposed to reflect its signified. Brichot is obsessed with the "origin" of words; words are supposed to reflect a "natural" connection with origins and referents. The fact that they are no longer true to such a connection indicates that a perversion has taken place. At the "origin," in Roman or Celtic times, the name did simply and directly signify, in Brichot's popular view of language. It is only through the process of time and the vice of mispronunciation that perversion has occurred. Cottard finds the base, the ancient origin of each place name. And, just as each place name has a root that accords perfectly with the place, so individual names originally signified. For instance, M. d'Ormeson has his origin in the *ulmus*, M. de la Boulaye is from "le bouleau," M. d'Aunay is from "l'aulne," etc. At the beginning, all names signified, mirrored, reflected the object they were to represent. It is time that has perverted names, and made "Ormeson" out of *ulmus*. Even Cottard realizes the metaphorical functioning
of names, but he also reflects the popular view that at some point of "origin," names bore a natural "resemblance" to their referents.

Proust has a much more subtle understanding of language. Words conceal as much as they reveal. Marcel declares, "La conversation d'un femme qu'on aime ressemble à un sol qui recouvre une eau souterraine et dangereuse; on sent à tout moment derrière les mots la présence, le froid pénétrant d'un nappe invisible; on aperçoit ça et là son suintement perfide, mais elle-même reste cachée" [The conversation of a woman that one loves resembles ground that covers dangerous, subterranean waters; one feels at any given moment the presence, the penetrating cold of an invisible pool; here and there one can perceive the perfidious oozing, but it remains hidden] (Sodome, p. 472). Behind words are meanings that can only be guessed at.

Thus the lie is the ultimate perversion. Words often contradict what is meant. In addition, words have a double sense: in the hilarious "en être" scene between Verdurin and Charlus, Charlus supposes "en être" [to be one] to mean "be a homosexual." For Verdurin, it means to be artistically inclined. Charlus, like all the homosexuals in the text, has the "habitude de mentir" (Sodome, p. 399). Homosexuals are the perfect paradigm for words: they have an ancient, mythic origin, and do not always mean what they say. In addition, Marcel exploits a narcissistic side of
homosexuals that is similar to the linguistic process. Marcel exclaims, "D'ailleurs, l'inverti, mis en présence d'un inverti, voit non pas seulement une image déplaisante de lui-même, qui ne pourrait, purement inanimée, que faire souffrir son amour-propre, mais un autre lui-même, vivant, agissant dans le même sens, capable donc de la faire souffrir dans ses amours" [In addition, the invert, put in the presence of another invert, not only sees a displeasing image of himself, that can only, purely unanimated, make his self-love suffer, but another self, living, acting in the same way, capable of making him suffer in his loves] (p. 362). The invert sees an image of himself, just as in one view of language the signifier is supposed to be the image of the signified. At first, the image seems not to be alive, a mere reflection. But as it turns out, the image has a life of its own. In the same way words, which at first appear not to be alive, reflections of an "object," actually have their own life. The "mere" reflection has a life of its own. This is also a paradigm for the artistic process, and illustrates the threat of writing. The language of the text appears to be a mere reflection: the Recherche at first glance appears to be autobiographical, a reflection of its author/narrator's life. But the Recherche is not a mere reflection, not a mere image, but something that has its own life independent of what it reflects. This is the ultimate rebellion against the law of the father:
language that does not merely mimic, but creates and distorts. The language of civilization is supposed to be strictly representational, mimetic: in the artistic process, this one-to one relationship is belied. Fiction is not the mirror of "reality" any more than language itself actually is: in the words of Jacques Derrida,

"We are in front of a Mimic that imitates nothing, in front of, if one can say it, a double that doubles nothing simple, that nothing precedes, nothing that isn't already a double. No simple reference. That is why the operation of the mime makes an allusion, but an allusion to nothing, an allusion without breaking the glass.... This speculum reflects no reality, it only produces 'effects of reality'.... In this speculum without reality, in this mirror of a mirror, there is a difference, a dyad, because there is a mime and an image (fantôme). But it is a difference without a reference, or rather a reference without a referent, without first or final unity, an image that is the image of no flesh, wandering, without a past, without death, without birth and without presence." 18

Returning to voyeurism and homosexuality in the novel, let us note that the pederastic relationship of Morel and
Charlus mirrors the relationship between Jupien and Charlus. Once again there is the reversal of roles by the end of the Recherche. Morel ascends as high as Charlus descends, and again there is total usurpation of the father by the son.

When Charlus arranges to spy on Morel at a brothel, we see an echo of the two other voyeuristic scenes of homosexuality in the Recherche. Charlus is disappointed, however; he is kept waiting, and Morel is warned that there is a gentleman who has paid to watch him. Morel has just had sex with the Prince de Guermantes. The Prince is another problematic figure in the Recherche, appearing to be as bisexual as Morel himself. This voyeuristic scene is thus thwarted, and Charlus does not get to catch Morel in an infidelity. This episode has a strange mirror, however: the next night, the Prince has arranged for Morel to come to his villa. When Morel enters the salon, he notices a photograph of Charlus, who "semblait immobiliser sur Morel un regard étrange et fixe" [seemed to stare at Morel in an immobilized way with a strange and fixed look] (Sodome, p. 543). This was enough to send Morel into a panic, thinking that the Baron had arranged this as a test of his fidelity. He leapt out of the room and ran down the street. In this second episode, an image suffices to scare Morel, and the scene repeats the action of the earlier voyeurism. When Charlus spies on Morel the first time, he sees only what appears to be an image of Morel: "une apparition de Morel,
un fantôme de Morel" [a ghost of Morel, a phantom of Morel] (p. 542). The first time, Morel is the image, while in the second scene, he becomes the voyeur and the Baron is the image, functioning as a sort of talisman. (Both scenes are mysterious and have something of the pagan about them, "comme si les mystères paiens et les enchantements existaient encore" [as if pagan mysteries and spells still existed] (p. 542). Once again, the primitive pagan roots of homosexuality are recalled, and the whole voyeuristic project has something of a spell or rite about it.) This says something subversive about the very nature of reading. Reading itself is a "voyeuristic" activity. In the first scene, Charlus is essentially engaged in an act of reading: he is observing an image, a phantom. But just as Charlus is reading the text, Morel, so Morel is reading him. The reader, Charlus, has also become an image and affects the text he is supposed to be observing. Reading is not a pure, neutral activity. The reader is being read by the text in the same way that he seems to be passively reading. Marcel has told us that in Morel, Charlus sees an image of the masculine side of himself. Thus by observing Morel, Charlus is really seeing himself. The reader thus seems to read himself. But the image he reads is a fiction, an artistic creation. Instead of seeing the self, he sees a creative image which perceives him as an image, a photograph. Therefore, the reader is himself a fiction, a creation, a
"mere" image. This is one of the ultimate perversions of literature: the reader, trying to read himself, sees nothing but a fiction, an image. Proust shatters the concept of a unified, "real" self by suggesting that the reader is an image, an imaginary construct, in the same way that the characters of the text are a fiction. In the mirroring of language, there is no escape from fiction: the signified itself is a signifier.

In *La Fugitive* the narrator is again involved in lesbian voyeurism. In a house of prostitution Marcel observes two launderesses. This scene of lesbian eroticism has a parallel in *À l'ombre des junes filles en fleur*, where Marcel saw a lesbian painting by Elstir. This painting was in the studio just before he met Albertine. "Sous les caresses de l'une, l'autre commença tout d'un coup à faire entendre ce dont je ne pus distinguer d'abord ce que c'était, car on ne comprend jamais exactement la signification d'un bruit original, expressif d'une sensation que nous n'éprouvons pas" [While being caressed by the one, the other suddenly began to make a noise that at first I couldn't understand, because one never understands the meaning of a new sound, expressing a sensation that we don't experience] (*La fugitive*, p. 550). Marcel comes to the conclusion that these "sounds" are the sounds of pleasure, and writes, "celui-ci [le plaisir] devait être bien fort pour bouleverser à ce point l'être qui le ressentait et
tirer de lui ce langage inconnu qui semble désigner et commenter toutes les phases du drame délicieux que vivait la petite femme" [it (the pleasure) must have been very strong, to overwhelm the being who was feeling it to such a degree, and to draw from her that unknown language which seemed to designate and comment upon all the phases of that delicious drama lived by the little woman] (Fugitive, p. 550).

Lesbian activity is like a foreign language, a language to be understood only by the initiated. Certainly hearing the sounds of heterosexual love could also appear hermetic to the uninitiated; the problem is one of interpretation.

The final scene of voyeurism in the novel, the culmination, in a sense, of the other scenes, takes place in Le temps retrouvé. It occurs after time and the war have had a perverting effect upon society. Certain words no longer have any meaning; "Les mots de dreyfusard et d'anti-dreyfusard n'avaient plus de sens" [the words Dreyfusard and anti-Dreyfusard no longer had any meaning] (Le temps, p. 53). Because of the war, nations speak "mots vides" [empty words] (p. 105). The war has made the corruption of language evident, because of the loss of meaning of certain words. In a way the war has revealed the naïveté of a simplistic view of language.

After encountering Charlus on the deserted streets, Marcel overhears some soldiers talking about a beating, and is convinced that he has stumbled upon a group of spies.
Marcel enters the hotel, but the incident has "une apparence de rêve, de conte, et c'est à la fois avec une fierté de justicier et une volupté de poète que j'entrai délibérément dans l'hôtel" [an appearance of a dream, a story, and I deliberately entered the hotel feeling the pride of a justiciary and the voluptuousness of a poet at the same time] (Temps, p. 155). This episode has the feeling of a dream or story: of course it is a story that we are reading. Marcel refers to himself as a poet, and we are reminded once again of art, and its relationship to homosexuality throughout the Recherche. The reference to himself as "justicier" balances the association with poetry and brings us strangely back to the realm of melodrama.

Marcel hears someone begging for mercy near the room he has rented, and conveniently there is a small, oval window where the curtain has not been drawn. Marcel is able to discern the Baron. Once again Marcel has a voyeuristic relationship to homosexual eroticism. This scene is a mirror of the first scene of homosexuality at Montjouvain. Like Mlle Vinteuil, Charlus is referred to as a "sadique" (Temps, p. 173), although he is in fact, in this instance, a masochist. Just as Mlle Vinteuil’s sexual relations are compared to something artistic as well as something primitive, so are Charlus’s experiences at Jupien’s house of prostitution. Marcel is reminded of the Arabian Nights, (Mille et une Nuits), and says to Jupien, "J’avais cru comme
le calife des *Mille et une Nuits* arriver à point aux secours d’un homme qu’on frappait, et c’est un autre conte des *Mille et une Nuits* que j’ai vu devant moi, celui où une femme, transformée en chienne, se fait frapper volontairement pour retrouver sa forme première" [I thought I had arrived in time to help a man who was being beaten, like the caliph in the *Arabian Nights*, and it was another story from the *Arabian Nights* I saw acted out in front of me, the one where a woman, changed into a dog, has herself beaten to regain her original form" (Temps, p. 180). These scenes of violent homosexual acts are always compared to literature or art, which reminds us that we are not reading accounts of actual homosexuality, but rather are engaged in the sadomasochistic homotext, where sadomasochism and homosexuality are subsumed in the literary. The beating of Charlus is, like Mlle Vinteuil spitting on the portrait of the father, emblematic. It is in this last work that we see the downfall of Charlus, who always appeared to be the father-figure, and to have the upper-hand. Charlus is a victim of his own desire.

Homosexuality is related to the artistic process. Violent homosexuality represents the usurpation of the father, and the disruption of magisterial discourse. This is exactly what the writer does. In *Le temps retrouvé*, Marcel discovers his vocation as a writer. This vocation, we must remember, comes from the mother and is a rejection of his father’s goals for him. The homosexual is also in
search of his other half, his mirror image, as Plato reminds us via Proust. Proust claims that the work of a writer is to mirror his own life: "Si j'avais compris jadis que ce n'est pas le plus spirituel, le plus instruit, le mieux relationné des hommes, mais celui qui sait devenir miroir et peut refléter ainsi sa vie, fût-elle mediocre, qui devient un Bergotte (les contemporains le tinsent-ils pour moins homme d'esprit que Swann et moins savant que Bréauté)..."

[If I had only understood then that it is not the wittiest, the best educated, the most sociable of men, but he who knows how to become a mirror and can thus reflect his life, even if it is mediocre, who becomes a Bergotte (his contemporaries considered him less witty than Swann and less knowledgeable than Bréauté)] (Temps, p. 45). We have already seen how the homosexual sees a mirror of himself in another homosexual, and thus is a figure for the mirroring artist. (This is not, of course, to say that only the homosexual can mirror or look for his mirror half.) This particular text of Proust's is problematic, and certainly cannot be taken literally. Marcel is a fiction: the Recherche is not an autobiography of the actual Marcel Proust. The Recherche is a fiction, and Marcel the artist is a fiction, mirroring a fictitious life: "il n'y a pas un seul fait qui ne soit fictif...il n'y a pas un seul personnage 'à clefs'... tout a été inventé par moi selon les besoins de ma démonstration" [there is not a single fact
that is not fictitious... a single person "à clefs"...

everything was invented by me according to the needs of my demonstration (Temps, p. 197). Certainly we know that this statement is itself a fiction, for in some instances, the Recherche is a "roman à clefs." Once again, we are faced with the mirror that Derrida writes of, which reflects nothing. But even more importantly, the reader himself is just a fiction: "En réalité, chaque lecteur est, quand il lit, le propre lecteur de soi-même. L'ouvrage de l'écrivain n'est qu'un espèce d'instrument optique qu'il offre au lecteur afin de lui permettre de discerner ce que, sans ce livre, il n'eût peut-être pas vu en soi-même" [In reality, each reader is, when he reads, the reader of himself. The work of the writer is just a kind of optical instrument which he offers to the reader in order to permit him to discern that which, without the book, he might not have seen in himself" (p. 276). Although Proust does not seem to be referring to fiction here, we must remember that the reader is reading a self-avowed fictitious work. Marcel continues, "La reconnaissance en soi-même, par le lecteur, de ce que dit le livre, est la preuve de la vérité de celui-ci, et vice versa, au moins dans une certaine mesure, la différence entre les deux textes pouvant être souvent imputée non à l'auteur mais au lecteur" [The recognition in himself, by the reader, of what the book says, is the proof of the truth of the book, and vice versa, except in a certain way, the
difference between the two texts can often be imputed not to
the author, but to the reader] (p. 276). The reader himself
is called a "text," and Marcel seems to be saying that the
life of the reader is as fictitious as the life of the
writer. "Inversion" is one of the rhetorical and sexual
glasses the writer holds up to the reader, and the reader
must decide whether it helps him to see better or not.

In the Recherche, which we can consider as a
sadomasochistic homotext because of the symbolic role of
sadism and homosexuality, inversion functions in a special
way. It is considered a vice, but only because society
labels it thus. Homosexuals are the remnant of a former,
 bissexual era, and homosexual acts are associated with art,
especially writing. The homosexual, in a narcissistic way,
sees himself, or what he would like to perceive of himself,
in another homosexual. This is an emblem of the "mirroring
view of language: Proust mocks belief in a simple
correlation between signifier and signified. The signified
as "real" is a myth. Language can never properly reflect
"reality," since "reality" itself is a fiction, an artistic
creation. The writer, like the homosexual, seems to find
his mirror in literature. But he is not reflecting anything
that is not already a reflection, a fiction.20

The voyeuristic ways in which homosexuality is
described in the Recherche remind the reader that he is
observing a performance, reading a text. Homosexual
eroticism is always seen through the eye of the narrator, who mirrors the activity of the reader. The reader is "seeing" a fiction, that has little to do with actual homosexuality, just as the narrator Marcel has little relation to the Marcel Proust. The violence of homosexuality within the text is a mirror of the violence of all mirroring activity, especially the mirror of language, which distorts and perverts. Instead of simply representing and communicating, language, like the literary work, is a fictitious replication of what is already a fiction.
Notes

1 Leo Bersani notes the "increasingly larger role that homosexuality plays in the novel from Sodome et Gomorrhe on..." Leo Bersani, Marcel Proust, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1965), p. 173.

2 J. E. Rivers writes that "Homosexuality, in Proust as in Baudelaire, is integrally related to the overall enterprise of artistic creation, and in both cases that enterprise cannot be fully understood without understanding the role of homosexuality within it." J. E. Rivers, Proust and the Art of Love, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1980), p. 28.


4 Milton Hindus writes, in his discussion of Proust, that homosexuality is the "quintessential perversity," and that it "naturally attaches itself to creatures more morally obtuse than any that can be found among normal lovers" (Milton Hindus, "The Pattern of Proustian Love," New Mexico Quarterly, [1951], 21, p. 398). Hindus believes that since
Morel is a criminal type, he is naturally prone to homosexuality. MacDonald Allen writes that "the important difference between Joyce and Proust is that the first could look both ways psychologically, but Proust, the invert, failed. His females, such as Albertine, are but males in transvestist [sic] garb, and the device wears thin. They react like male lovers, as did their models..." (D. G. MacDonald Allen, The Janus Sex: The Androgynous Challenge, [Hicksville: Exposition, 1975], p. 93).

Other critics see homosexuality as irrelevant to the Recherche: Jocelyn Brooke argues that if "Proust had made Charlus a womanizer, and Albertine a perfectly normal heterosexual girl, the novel would have been, qua novel, neither better nor worse than it is." But, Brooke attributes the "shoddiness of the later volumes" to the blatant homosexuality discussed in them. (Jocelyn Brooke, "Proust and Joyce: The Case for the Prosecution," Adam:International Review, [1961], 29, p. 7.)

J.-B. Boulanger writes that "Under the name of love, Marcel Proust described nothing but a guilty sexual inversion. Love as he understands it and as it is practiced by his heroes always presents homosexual characteristics: a fundamental narcissism, dissociation between tenderness and physical desire, morbid jealousy, absence of woman and permanence of the mother figure" (J.-B. Boulanger, "Un cas d'inversion coupable: Marcel Proust," L'Union Médicale du
Canada, [1951], 80, p.483). Edmund Bergler writes that the negative experiences of love in the Recherche are due to Proust's oral-masochistic tendencies.


7 In his autobiography Painter reports that Proust himself had lovers spit on the portrait of his mother. Clearly there was a strong link and identification between mother and child, and this could be an example of symbolic self-abuse.


11 It must be noted that in Freud's theory, bisexuality is a developmental stage in the life of the child.


13 Marcel Proust, La Fugitive, A la Recherche du temps
In this particular case it must be noted that the father is divided into the father as guarantor of morality and the father as composer.

In terms of the perversion of the proper name, the elevator boy at the hotel at Balbec consistently perverts the name Cambremer into "Camembert." This is a complicated "perversion" and a subject of mockery for Marcel. By disfiguring the name, the elevator boy is in some way diminishing the aristocracy.

See Georges Bataille, *L'érotisme* for the connection between festivals, mystery, and transgression.


See Barbara Johnson, *The Critical Difference* where she asserts that in the first reading of a text, one is simply reading one's self.

Gide was highly offended by Proust's work. He thought that it gave homosexuality a bad name, and his book *Corydon* is an attempt to counter the information presented in *Sodome et Gomorrhe*. But, as we have seen, Proust never comes to any definitive position about homosexuality: the *Recherche* is not a sociological textbook. The real perversions of *Sodome et Gomorrhe* are the perversion of time.
and of language. Homosexuality is used as a paradigm for the artistic process.

In works such as *L’immoraliste*, Gide uses the same first person narrative that Proust does. The first person narrator of Gide’s writing is as fictitious as Marcel is. In "Male Homosexuality and Lesbianism in the Works of Proust and Gide," Karla Jay discusses some of the differences between Proust and Gide. The most notable difference is the way in which the two deal with homosexual jargon. Jay notes that conversation between homosexuals in Proust is "like two spies meeting to exchange information, each word is greeted by another password, and the conversation is as unnatural and as heavy as watchwords among sentries."

Thus, in Proust, there is a special, unnatural language for homosexuals. In Gide, on the other hand, there is no homosexual jargon, and the discourse remains magisterial. Jay writes that in the *Faux-monnayeurs* there is a lack of homosexual discourse. She observes, "the relationship between Edouard and Olivier... is plagued by a lack of communication, probably enhanced by the generation gap. Olivier continually misunderstands Edouard’s intentions and vice-versa.... Such embarrassment would be avoided if Edouard and Olivier used the subcultural homosexual language of a Charlus or if they used Jupien’s physical gestures to convey their sexuality. But since Gide seems to detest femininity in homosexuals, Edouard and Olivier cannot
communicate in this fashion either. They even lack Saint-Loup's telling glances. The result is that Olivier and Edouard are continually misunderstanding, embarrassing, angering, and even alienating one another (Jay, p. 235)."

Conclusions

I. The Paradigm

In this study we have outlined a mythic paradigm, based on the writings of Freud, Plato, and several works of anthropology. We have examined the traumatic transition from matriarchy to patriarchy, and we have noted that outlooks on sexuality changed drastically during this transformation. In several of Freud’s most controversial works, notably *Totem and Taboo*, Freud discusses the murder of the primal father, the principal cause of the shift to patriarchy. At a given point in history, the rebellious brothers, living in a homosexual band, murdered the all-powerful father, and sought to usurp his revered position. This rebellion was ultimately a failure, as guilt for their act, as well as their ambiguous love for the father, caused the law of the father to make itself manifest in systems of both conscious and unconscious thought. The dead father became more powerful than the living father had ever been.

Before the mythical murder of the father, society may have been matriarchal. It was during this primeval period that bisexuality flourished. Freud cites Plato’s *Symposium* in an effort to understand this primary disposition to bisexuality, which he finds in children and "savages." Freud never fully developed his theory of bisexuality.
Plato, on the other hand, poetically develops a myth of primordial unity and bisexuality. In an early period of bisexuality, language truly signified. When human beings were split asunder, the nature of language changed as well. This could correspond to the time when the father was murdered. When patriarchy was inscribing itself in systems of thought, a view of language and speech developed which some have called "phallocentric," others have called "logocentric." This great mythical shift in sexuality, from bisexuality to monosexuality, is linked with a certain kind of language.

Problems of sexuality become problems of discourse. As we have seen in the previous chapters, Sade uses language to take the place of God. In Balzac, the rebellious horde uses a special kind of jargon that is linked with their criminality. For Proust, the question of inversion is both rhetorical and sexual. The language of the father is concerned with control of sexuality, and Foucault notes the Western obsession with verbalizing all aspects of sexuality. According to Foucault, Eastern writers discuss sex when there are issues of pleasure involved: it is from the East that manuals on technique appear, such as the Kama-Sutra. In the West, on the other hand, writers compose lists of sexual sins. Sex is seen as a problem of language: transgressive sexuality must be codified. The obsession with lists is related to the imperative of confession: the
penitent sinner must verbalize all his sexual sins. The later sexologists, following in this tradition, catalog all sexual deviance. Writing about sex is a way of controlling sex, a way of containing desire. Sex becomes "mere" writing.

Homosexuality was a subject of great interest in the Middle Ages, and it is from the sixteenth century that the word "sodomite" takes on a sexual meaning. It is during this period as well that persecution of homosexuals began; lesbianism in particular was associated with witchcraft, and witches, heretics and sodomites began to be burned at the stake. (Persecution of witches and sodomites began with the publication of *Malleus Maleficarum* [The Hammer of Witches] in the fifteenth century.)

During the late eighteenth century there was again great interest in homosexuality; the last public burning of a sodomite in France was in 1783. Although Napoleon ceased to legally punish homosexuals, the war against them began again in the nineteenth century, from "science." Vern Bullough has noted that in the latter half of the nineteenth century, more than a thousand medical and psychological articles were written on the deviance that was codified in 1869: homosexuality. The nineteenth century was obsessed with listing all forms of same-sex desire. During this period a plethora of neologisms are created: "homosexual," "invert," "lesbian" (a word previously used without sexual
connotation), "uranian," "third sex" (zwischenstufen). It is important to note that in both the Middle Ages and the nineteenth century, persecution of homosexuals began with increased writing on the subject.

At the same time that "science" is so obsessed, it seems odd to find a similar preoccupation in literature, but this is exactly what happens from the late eighteenth through the early twentieth century. Homosexuality is a major, if somewhat repressed, preoccupation with Sade, Balzac, and Proust.

In the writings of Sade, Balzac, and Proust, homosexuality is linked with discussions of sadomasochism and the role of the father. In the texts of these three authors, sexuality is linked with discourse, as well as with rebellion. Using the murder of the primal father as model, we have developed the concept of the sadomasochistic homotext. In the sadomasochistic homotext, a group, (like the homosexual band of brothers in Freud's texts) seeks to usurp the place of the father. This revolt is always doomed to failure: "One cannot kill the Father who is already dead" (see The Daughter's Seduction, p. 14).

Sade's primal horde consists of a group of privileged noblemen (sometimes there are women as well) who try to outrage "God." The rebellion is not particularly subtle in Sade's works. There is no concept in Sade of homosexuality as an orientation: sodomy is a deliberate "sin," a
calculated "lapse" that is part of the revolt. The pleasure of sodomy is not physical as much as it is moral: it is a crime.

Balzac's rebellious characters are usually criminals like Vautrin, who recruit from the marginal members of society. Vautrin almost appears to have a homosexual character: it is during the nineteenth century that homosexuality becomes an orientation rather than an act. Vautrin is a rebellious criminal whose homosexual proclivities are almost a metaphor for his wickedness. The young men he seduces seem to be latently bisexual: Lucien and Rastignac have affairs with women as well as being attracted to Vautrin.

Proust is very subtle. In his works, the rebellion is much less obvious, and far more widespread. Proust seems to maintain that homosexuals are a separate race, like the Jews, but by the end of the novel, almost everyone is suspected of homosexual tendencies. Proust uses medical models of his time carefully: he pretends to report "scientifically" about homosexuality, but in reality inversion is linked with language.

For all three writers the rebellion is in the domain of language. Sadian characters rebel against the world in the texts, and Sade as a writer seeks to usurp the place of God. Balzac links homosexuality and criminality with a certain misuse of language, in which he himself indulges. In
Proust, the ultimate perversion is the perversion of language. Thus, in all three cases, rebellion and perversion are in the realm of discourse.

Sade, Balzac and Proust play with a naive view of language. The mainstream, patriarchal statement on language is that language reveals, that it clearly signifies. All three writers deconstruct this logocentric perspective. For these authors, words conceal as much as they reveal, and distort as much as they actually signify. Language is not "pure" but rather perverse and inverted. Balzac's criminals have their own special language, as do Proust's inverts. These "perverters" of language lie and mislead with words. They do not respect the sanctity of the word, but then, neither do the authors themselves, who manipulate language and engage in deliberate lying. Fiction itself is a perversion of referentiality. Clearly homosexuality, revolt and sadomasochism are ideal themes, perfect emblems of the fictional enterprise. There is some degree to which all literature (fiction) is perverse---a perversion of referentiality---and so akin to the sadomasochistic homotext. The sadomasochistic homotext is an enlarged speculum of literature itself; fiction is the great "lie," the ultimate perversion/inversion of reality. (There is some extent to which the study of literature is considered perverse as well: "why don't you read something practical?") Each of the authors in this study is a
particularly self-conscious fictionalist. In Proust we see the most extreme case, in which words mislead, distort, conceal, as much as they signify and clarify.

The rebellion within the sadomasochistic homotext functions in two ways as well. This revolt against the father is doomed to be reiterated in language time and time again. The recurrence of this theme is like the compulsion to repeat: texts deal over and over again with the rebellion against the father. The writing of the rebellion serves as an ever-present reminder of the arbitrary nature of the system. Homosexuality serves as an unpleasant reminder of the primal predisposition to bisexuality, being linked with the mythical early period of matriarchy. If the sadomasochistic homotext is an emblem of literature in general, then fiction is the last refuge of pre-patriarchal systems of thought. But there is another aspect to this rebellion that cannot be overlooked. As noted, all rebellion against the father is inevitably pyrrhic. The father’s murder is inscribed in the unconscious. So while this revolt is continually being narrated, its failure is also being told, serving as a reminder that rebellion is ultimately doomed. The power of sadomasochism and homosexuality is diminished by its continual unsuccessfulness. The final thrust of these texts is thus ambiguous: they tell the tale of rebellion and dissent, but the revolts told are all ineffectual ones. Thus, there is a
dynamic involved that is both radical and conservative: on the one hand, homosexuality and sadomasochism are drastic threats to patriarchy. On the other hand, patriarchy is constituted in such a way that threats only confirm it.
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